

## 5.6 Quarry Hills Parkland Naming

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

**Report Author:** Open Space Planner

**In Attendance:** Acting Manager Urban Design & Transport  
Open Space Planner

### Executive Summary

Quarry Hills Parkland is the defining open space in the City of Whittlesea; a stunning natural landscape with breathtaking views and rich biodiversity. It's rich and unique cultural heritage with unparalleled connection to country make it the ideal location for the Aboriginal Gathering Place which is currently being constructed on the site. This report seeks to recognise the significant cultural heritage of the parkland through the formal endorsement of a traditional Woi-wurrung language name.

The Quarry Hills Parkland Future Directions Plan, endorsed by Council on August 15, 2023, included an action to adopt a name for the site that uses 'bunjil nganga' which means 'eagle view' to honour Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung custodianship of the land and help to inform the community of the significant cultural heritage of the site. This action was a recommendation from the Woi-wurrung Cultural Values Study, which identified the parklands as the bunjil nganga cultural landscape. In accordance with Aboriginal Naming Rules, the name "bunjil nganga Parkland" was chosen and supported by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC).

"bunjil nganga (Eagle View) is situated in Narrm (Melbourne) rising to over 200 meters above sea level. The western ridgeline of the parkland provides panoramic views across the landscape, reaching out to the west, to the Melbourne CBD in the south, and east beyond the Henderson's Creek Wetlands. It lies within the suburbs of Epping and South Morang. Morang is a Woi-wurrung word that in some records is interpreted as 'sky' – and this is a place well situated for an eagle's eye view across Wurundjeri Country"

*Quotation from bunjil nganga Woi-wurrung Cultural Values Study' prepared by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation*

Renaming the parkland holds significant social and cultural implications. It acknowledges and demonstrates respect for the rich Aboriginal heritage of the site, contributes to reconciliation efforts and fosters a sense of belonging for Aboriginal communities and promotes cultural diversity and inclusivity within the broader community.

The traditional name is proposed to be used in conjunction with 'Quarry Hills' for a period of up to five years as we support the community to transition to the new name. The traditional name is always to be given precedence in use for example:

**bunjil nganga Parkland**

Quarry Hills

The Council Naming for Features Committee, at the 24 July 2023 and 23 May 2024, meetings, supported progressing with formally naming the site bunjil nganga Parkland and the supported the transition approach.

Community consultation to commence the formal naming process was undertaken in early 2024.

The purpose of this report is to:

- provide an update on the outcomes of the community consultation for Quarry Hills Parkland naming
- seek Council endorsement of the proposed name and the transition approach.

### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

- 1. Approve the formal naming process of the Quarry Hills Parkland, to be known as 'bunjil nganga Parkland,' with Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) in accordance with the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*.**
- 2. Note the formal application process with Geographic Names Victoria, and associated audit, gazettal and notification period, is estimated to take one to two months.**
- 3. Approve the new name, 'bunjil nganga Parkland' to take effect upon the name being formally approved following the process outlined in point 2 above.**
- 4. Thank community members for their contributions, and the support of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation for nominating the preferred name 'bunjil nganga Parkland'.**



## Background / Key Information

Quarry Hills Parkland is the largest regional park in the City of Whittlesea. It is identified as a regional parkland of significance by the State Government and is a defining open space feature in our municipality.

The 330-hectare parkland will ultimately expand to cover approximately 1100 hectares and will be home to an Aboriginal Gathering Place, the Granite Hills Major Community Park and an extensive trail network.

### Parklands naming process

1. As part of the development of the Quarry Hills Parklands Future Directions Plan, a Cultural Values Study was commissioned, and following the Aboriginal Naming Rules, Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung names were selected by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Naming Committee.
2. The Cultural Values Study states “To help visitors better understand and appreciate Woi-wurrung custodianship it is recommended that the name Quarry Hills Regional Parkland be replaced with a Woi-wurrung language name. bunjil nganga (meaning ‘eagle view’), or garra darrang (meaning ‘windy trees’) were suggested.
3. These names were considered on Country by the traditional owners participating in the development of the Cultural Values Study and bunjil nganga was selected as the preferred name.
4. The name proposal with recording was then presented to the WWCHAC who supported bunjil nganga as the preferred name.
5. Regular briefings have been provided to the WWCHAC on the development of the Future Directions Plan and the naming process. Consultation has also been undertaken with the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group WRG and the Wurundjeri Environmental Sub-committee as part of the partnership arrangement.
6. Briefings have been provided to the Council Naming for Features Committee on 24 July 2023 and 23 May 2024, respectively, outlining the Quarry Hills Parkland naming process and outcome of the community consultation. The committee supported progressing with renaming the Quarry Hills Parkland to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung name ‘bunjil nganga Parkland’ and supported a transition approach where ‘Quarry Hills’ is used in conjunction with the new name for a period of up to five years.
7. At the 15 August 2023 meeting Council endorsed the Quarry Hills Parkland Future Directions Plan and commenced with the formal naming process of Quarry Hills Parkland to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung name bunjil nganga in early 2024.
8. A 30-day community consultation on the Quarry Hills Parkland Re-naming was undertaken from 26 February to 25 March 2024 as a requirement of the ‘Naming rules for places in Victoria.’

9. The Council Naming Committee has sought further advice from GNV, which confirmed that Quarry Hills has never been formally registered. The GNV recommended applying through the naming process, not the “renaming” process.
10. Officers have confirmed with WWCHAC the transition approach is supported.

### Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

#### Connected Communities

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

#### High Performing Organisation

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

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

#### Financial Management

No implications.

#### Community Consultation and Engagement

- Facilitation of the proposed name has occurred through Future Directions Plan monthly briefings to the WWCHAC and Whittlesea Reconciliation Group.
- The name proposal and process were presented to and supported by the WWCHAC Environmental Sub-committee, who as a project partner, have been integral to the Future Directions Plan, Implementation Plan, and naming proposal.
- A standard 30-day consultation was housed on the Engage Whittlesea platform. The project page provided details on the proposed name change including the origins/meaning of the proposed new name as well as its pronunciation, demonstrated through a voice recording by Aunty Gail Smith.
  - The community were invited to provide feedback in accordance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria, by answering a few questions online or alternatively, email feedback directly to the project team's shared inbox.
  - The project engage page received 517 visitors with a total of 160 community members participated in the digital consultation by voting to indicate whether they supported the proposed name. 100 submissions (62.5%) voted in support of the proposal and 60 submissions (37.5%) voted they did not support the proposal.
  - Participants who voted against the proposed name were invited to provide feedback on their reasons. Their comments offered valuable insights into the concerns and preferences within the community, the below table provides a summary of these themes with responses from Council.

<b>Common themes from the community feedback</b>	<b>Response</b>
Difficulty in pronunciation and remembering	Council will undertake community education to support the community to learn the correct pronunciation of 'bunjil nganga' and assist with the transition to the new name; such as the MP3 featuring the voice of Aunty Gail Smith available on the project engage page.
Concerns about cost and priority	Signage for Quarry Hills Parkland is yet to be implemented. Cost associated with signage have already been budgeted and programmed; the name does not impact these costs.
Preference for simplicity and keeping the Quarry Hills name	Quarry Hills is not an official name for the parkland though it is widely used by the local community. The Naming Rules for Places in Victoria, dictate that names should have a link to place to ensure the preservation of our cultural heritage. The proposed name, <b>bunjil nganga Parkland</b> seeks to deepen connection between the name and place by acknowledging the significant Aboriginal heritage associated with the area. Council is proposing to use the name <b>bunjil nganga Parkland</b> supported by the commonly used name of Quarry Hills for a period of time – approximately five years – to assist the community to transition to the new name.
Preference for English Names, not supportive of Aboriginal name	The Naming Rules for Places in Victoria outlines 13 principles, one of which, is <i>Recognition and use of Traditional Owner languages</i> . Following this principle acknowledges and demonstrates respect for the rich Aboriginal heritage of the site, contributes to reconciliation efforts and fosters a sense of belonging for Aboriginal communities, promotes cultural diversity and inclusivity within the broader community.
Questioning real reconciliation benefits through Aboriginal renaming	While we understand that renaming alone may not directly foster reconciliation, it is part of a broader commitment to acknowledging and honouring Aboriginal culture and language, which are integral to reconciliation efforts. The proposed name reflects our commitment to honouring and preserving Aboriginal languages and heritage, contributing to reconciliation and cultural understanding.

Common themes from the community feedback	Response
Limited consultation and options	Council has followed the Aboriginal Place naming and formal naming processes as per the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria.
Preference for dual naming	Council is proposing to support the community to transition to the use of the new name through community education and adopting a transition approach which supports the new name being used in conjunction with the existing name for a period of up to five years.
Overuse of the word bunjil	A name check has been conducted, and no duplication was found. The most similar other name registered on the Register of Geographic Names is Bunjil Reserve in Panton Hill, within the Shire of Nillumbik.

### Other Principles for Consideration

#### Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

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

#### Public Transparency Principles

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

### Council Policy Considerations

#### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

Renaming the parkland presents an opportunity to highlight Aboriginal land management practices, fostering a deeper connection to the environment and promoting ecological conservation. It encourages stewardship efforts to preserve biodiversity and geological features while educating the community about environmental sustainability. Engaging with Traditional Owners facilitates sharing Aboriginal ecological knowledge, enriching contemporary environmental management.

**Social, Cultural and Health**

Renaming the parkland holds significant social and cultural implications. It acknowledges and demonstrates respect for Aboriginal culture, contributes to reconciliation efforts and fosters a sense of belonging for our local Aboriginal communities. By recognising the parkland as the bunjil nganga cultural landscape and naming the park with the Woi-wurrung language we embrace Aboriginal language and heritage, promote cultural diversity and inclusivity within our broader community.

**Economic**

No implications.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

No implications.

**Implementation Strategy****Communication**

The community and stakeholder consultations were undertaken as follows:

- 2022-2023: Partnership with WWCHAC on the development of the Quarry Hills Future Directions Plan and the adherence to the Aboriginal Naming Rules, through the Wurundjeri Environmental Sub-committee and in consultation with Whittlesea Reconciliation Group, on the proposed name as part of the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan development.
- 26 February to 25 March 2024: A standard 30-day community consultation has been undertaken on Quarry Hills Parkland re-naming as per the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria, including advice of consultation to all Aboriginal Community Groups and organisations operating within the City of Whittlesea.

Communication will be undertaken to inform the community of the new name for the parkland; this will include a strong education component to strengthen understanding of the cultural significance of the new name and the site more broadly.

**Critical dates**

- July 2024: Notify submitters and objectors
- August 2024: Submit the proposal to GNV
- 2024: GNV audit, gazette and notification which may take 30-60 days

### Declaration of Conflict of Interest

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

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

### Attachments

Nil

## 5.7 Draft Mill Park Place Framework

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

**Report Author:** Senior Urban Designer

**In Attendance:** Acting Manager Urban Design & Transport  
Senior Urban Designer

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement to undertake community consultation between the period 22 July 2024 to 25 August 2024.

### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

- 1. Endorse the draft Mill Park Place Framework at Attachment 1 to go out for community consultation between the period 22 July 2024 to 25 August 2024.**
- 2. Note as part of the community consultation process, officers will also seek feedback from the Youth Council.**
- 3. Note following community consultation, a subsequent report will be presented back to Council seeking approval for the adoption of the Mill Park Place Framework.**

## Background / Key Information

### Background

Mill Park Place Framework was identified through research and internal engagement as the next Place Framework to be undertaken. The Framework aims to build on the success of the Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework 2023. It is a Community Action Plan 2024-2025 item: *“Develop the Mill Park Place Framework to enhance our investment planning and prioritise city shaping opportunities”*.

A Council Briefing memo was provided on November 28, 2023, titled “Place Framework 2.0” identifying that Mill Park was the next Place Framework to be developed and a community reference group was to be established to help develop the draft report.

### Place Framework Overview

The draft Mill Park Place Framework (the draft Framework) outlines a vision, themes, key focus areas and place projects to locally translate Whittlesea 2040’s goals to Mill Park. This will guide and support future priority projects, activities, and drive change.

The key drivers for the draft Framework are to:

- Translate the Whittlesea 2040 vision to Mill Park by identifying local challenges and opportunities.
- Establish a local, place responsive vision that connects to community aspirations.
- Fill the gap in strategic direction for the established area and aging infrastructure and articulate a clear Council direction for priority projects.
- Ensure Council planning and delivery considers the unique qualities of Mill Park and enhances this over time.

### **Place Projects**

There are four themes and (eleven) key place-shaping projects within the draft Framework for various Council departments, teams, and units to collaborate and deliver the final vision of the document. The community will be asked to prioritise these opportunities. A summary is presented below that demonstrates alignment to Council’s Goals.

### **Short and medium term place project ideas:**

1. Safer streets to walk or ride to school.
2. Improvement to community hubs.
3. Revitalise Key Destinations.
4. Re-imagining transmission line easements.
5. Upgrading parks and improving residential interfaces.
6. Improving walkability through future development.



**Long term projects and advocacy ideas:**

1. McKimmies Road improvements.
2. Advocacy for Child's Road improvements.
3. Advocacy for Plenty Road Upgrades.
4. Darebin creek and Plenty River corridor.
5. Town centre activation and upgrades, including improvements to shopfronts and planning controls to improve quality of development around town centres.

Please note, final outcomes may vary due to factors such as existing projects, availability for funding, investigations required, budgets, etc.

**Draft Framework development process**

1. November 2023 – Internal research and engagement to identify the next Place Framework, identifying Mill Park as the priority suburb.
2. December 2023 - A workshop was conducted with Council officers from Local Area Team East. Officers provided their insights about Mill Park and shared their experiences. An engage page to collect broader feedback and insights was created. This was only accessible by internal staff shared via Staff Matters and internal communication.
3. February 2024 - A workshop was conducted with the community reference group (CRG). The group was established with 10 members of the local community who either work, study or live in the suburbs of Mill Park. The group provided input about their lived experience in Mill Park. There were approximately 100 contributions made from this group through the workshop and online portal, which was only accessible to members.
4. February 2024 - May 2024 - An Opportunities and Challenges Report was prepared by the Urban Design Team which summarised background analysis, internal and external stakeholder workshops and over 400 contributions which have informed the draft Framework's direction.
5. May 2024 - An early draft of the Framework was prepared and released for review by the project's Project Working Group, Project Control Group and CRG for feedback. A second CRG workshop was conducted to ensure Council place projects and report were heading in the right direction. Feedback from the above has been integrated into the draft Framework attached to this report.
6. Next steps - The draft Framework will be used in the community engagement in August 2024. Input received from the community, authorities and internal stakeholders will inform the final document, its direction and main project ideas which aims to be finalised for Council endorsement by the end of the 2024-2025 financial year.

## Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

### **Liveable Neighbourhoods**

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

### **Alignment to Whittlesea 2040**

The draft Framework aligns to the Whittlesea 2040 Goals which are translated to Mill Park through four key themes:

- Sustainable Environment: Greener spaces.
- Liveable Neighbourhoods: Connected places.
- Connected Community: Thriving community hubs.
- Strong Local Economy: Land use and built form.
- Liveable Neighbourhoods: Land use and built form.

Each theme identifies key goals and opportunities that have been derived from analysis and stakeholder feedback. The draft Framework illustrates areas and corridors that have clear opportunities for improvement. It provides place specific guidelines to improve Mill Park and incrementally deliver the local vision over time.

The draft Framework incorporates a high-level implementation plan which identifies key partners, community priorities and broad timeframes for opportunities to be undertaken by Council. Discussions have started to be supported and discussed with other departments and units within Council.

### **Alignment to Community Plan 2024-2025**

Key Direction 2.2

- Develop the Mill Park Place Framework to enhance our investment planning and prioritise city shaping opportunities.

### **Alignment to the Integrated Planning Framework and Place Based Approach**

The Framework is situated within Level Three of the Integrated Planning Framework (IPF) under Long Term Plans and aligns with the Place Based Approach at a Precinct level.

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

### Financial Management

The draft and Final Report are being developed entirely in-house by the Urban Design Team.

The draft Framework identifies 'place projects' to deliver the vision for the area. The opportunities are intended to inform Integrated Planning Framework Strategy Action Plans and budget processes which may have financial implications for Council in the future.

Some opportunities are the responsibility of other agencies to deliver or require more considered investigation from Council to implement.

### Community Consultation and Engagement

The draft Mill Park Place Framework, has been developed in consultation with internal stakeholders, including Local Area East team, Project Working Group and Project Control Group and external stakeholders, which consisted of the Community Reference Group (CRG).

The project team has met with the Community Reference group twice, which includes key community stakeholders from Mill Park. A project page on Council's Engage Whittlesea site has been active since early December 2023 for internal staff and CRG members comments and information only.

Following the Council Meeting on 16 July 2024, it is intended to release the draft Framework report to the community for comment for at least three weeks. Community consultation is to be conducted in the month of August 2024 and will be finalised before local government elections caretaker period. The engagement dates are as follows:

- Stables Shopping Centre, 8 August 2024, 3:30- 5:30pm
- Millers Community Centre, 12 August 2024, 2:30- 4:30pm
- Mill Park Library, 15 August 2024, 5:30- 7:30pm
- Mill Park Leisure Centre, 20 August 2024, 9:30- 11:30pm
- Plenty Valley Westfield, 23 August 2024, 11:00- 12:30pm

## Other Principles for Consideration

### Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

- (a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.
- (b) Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.
- (c) The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

- (d) The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.
- (e) Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.
- (f) Collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought.
- (g) The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.
- (h) Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.
- (i) The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

### **Public Transparency Principles**

- (a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act.
- (c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community.

## **Council Policy Considerations**

### **Environmental Sustainability Considerations**

The draft Framework highlights priorities for Mill Park to incorporate increased tree canopy cover, consider climate change impacts and re-establish biodiversity.

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

The draft Framework identifies place projects and opportunities to improve social, cultural and health outcomes in Mill Park.

### **Economic**

The draft Framework identifies place projects to improve economic outcomes in Mill Park.

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

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

The draft Framework identifies place projects to prioritise infrastructure projects that will have a positive impact on community wellbeing. The draft Framework will also better inform a wide variety of service and infrastructure planning to consider the local place qualities of Mill Park.

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

The draft Framework provides a coordinated approach to asset management by providing an overarching strategic direction and vision for the area. The draft Framework identifies key assets that should be prioritised for renewal or delivery to maximise community use such as access to path networks, open spaces, and community facilities.

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

The draft Framework provides the community an opportunity to help shape the vision and priorities for their local area. Through this the community will have an improved understanding of Council's strategic direction and how it applies to Mill Park.

### **Resources**

The project is currently resourced by 0.5 FTE of one Senior Urban Designer (Band 7) and 0.6 FTE of one Urban Designer (Band 5).

## **Implementation Strategy**

### **Communication**

If the draft Framework is endorsed by Council, the document will be released publicly, and community and stakeholders involved will be informed of its release. The draft Framework will help guide Council's future actions, budgets and priorities. See Attachment 2 for more detailed information.

### **Critical Dates**

- Council caretaker period from 17 September – 26 October 2024.
- Finalise the Mill Park Place Framework for Council endorsement by end of June 2025:
  - To ensure this is achievable with the election of a new Council in November 2024, community engagement is proposed in August 2024 prior to the local government elections caretaker period. If delayed, this may impact the ability to finalise the report by June 2025.

## **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

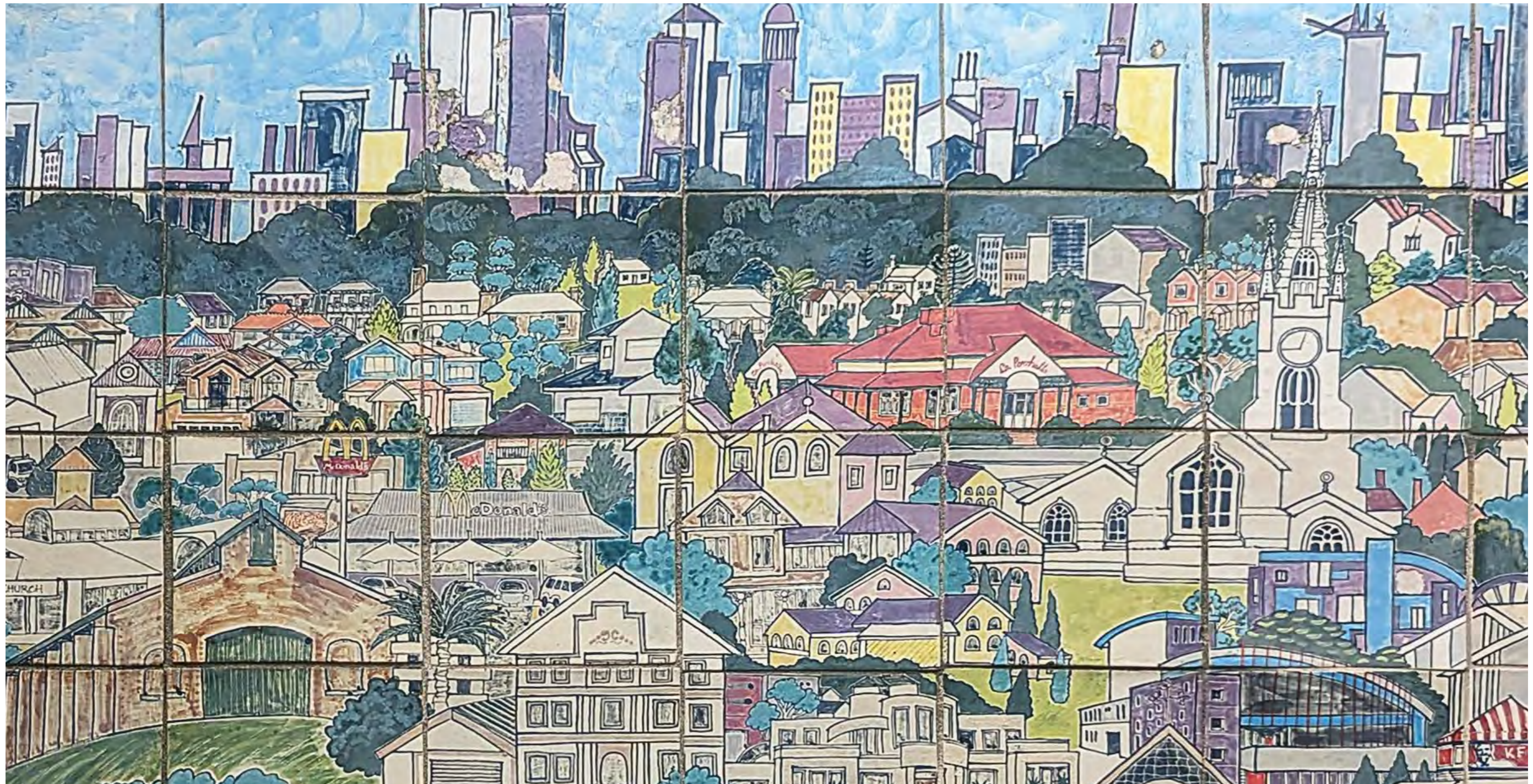
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The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

## Attachments

1. Draft Mill Park Place Framework [5.7.1 - 48 pages]





# Draft Mill Park Place Framework

June 2024





# DRAFT

## Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea

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## Executive summary

The Mill Park Place Framework outlines a comprehensive strategy for the development and management of Mill Park, a prime urban area slated for redevelopment. This framework has been crafted to serve as a blueprint for stakeholders to collaborate effectively in revitalising the Mill Park area. Stakeholders include government entities, developers, community organisations, and residents.

### Neighbourhood Vision

- 01 A network of open spaces and streets that help minimise the negative impacts of climate change.
- 02 Walkable and legible neighbourhoods that promote movement through a range of transport options.
- 03 An equitable and thriving community with places to gather and socialise.
- 04 Vibrant and attractive neighbourhood centres with distinct and diverse built environment.



# DRAFT

## 01 | Introduction

### The Mill Park Place Framework will help identify community's aspirations and ideas for their suburb.

The Mill Park Opportunities and Challenges report provides an overview of Mill Park and identifies existing challenges and opportunities for improvement.

The report is prepared by mapping various data sets across the suburb and consulting with a number of stakeholders. This includes internal consultation with Council officers who work in the area and external consultation with a Community Reference Group, comprising of diverse community members that work, live or play in Mill Park.

This report will influence the next stage of developing a draft framework by identifying potential areas of collaboration and intervention to make Mill Park a great place to live.

#### Key Stats

**38%** over the age of 50

**10.8%** Mill Park population has needs for assistance

**2<sup>ND</sup>** Household Neighbourhood Safety survey

**AVERAGE** SEIFA (Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas) performance for municipality

### Urban context

Situated 18 kilometres northeast of Melbourne's Central Business District, Mill Park has experienced significant transformation from farmland in the 1980s into the suburban area we see today.

Mill Park's public transport system relies on an extensive bus network. South Morang train station is to the north and Tram 86 line terminates at University Hill, to the south.

The Metropolitan Ring Road, situated to the south accessible via Plenty Road, further integrates Mill Park into the broader metropolitan landscape.

Within its boundaries, the Plenty Valley Major Activity Centre is located to the north, anchoring Mill Park as a significant hub. There are other Neighbourhood Activity Centres such as the historic Mill Park Stables nestled along Childs Road and Rivergum Village on Plenty Road and Development Boulevard.

### Why now?

In this evolving context, the lack of clear strategy coupled with ageing infrastructure in Mill Park requires urgent attention. The potential increase in housing demand from Victoria's Housing Statement 2023, proposed tram line extensions, and the E6 corridors highlight the need for a comprehensive place framework.

This framework will guide the suburb's development, address community needs, and ensure sustainable blueprint for future development. Addressing these challenges and opportunities is crucial for effective strategic planning and collaboration to shape Mill Park's future.

Notwithstanding, there are several projects currently underway in Mill Park. Please refer to appendix 1 for a comprehensive list.

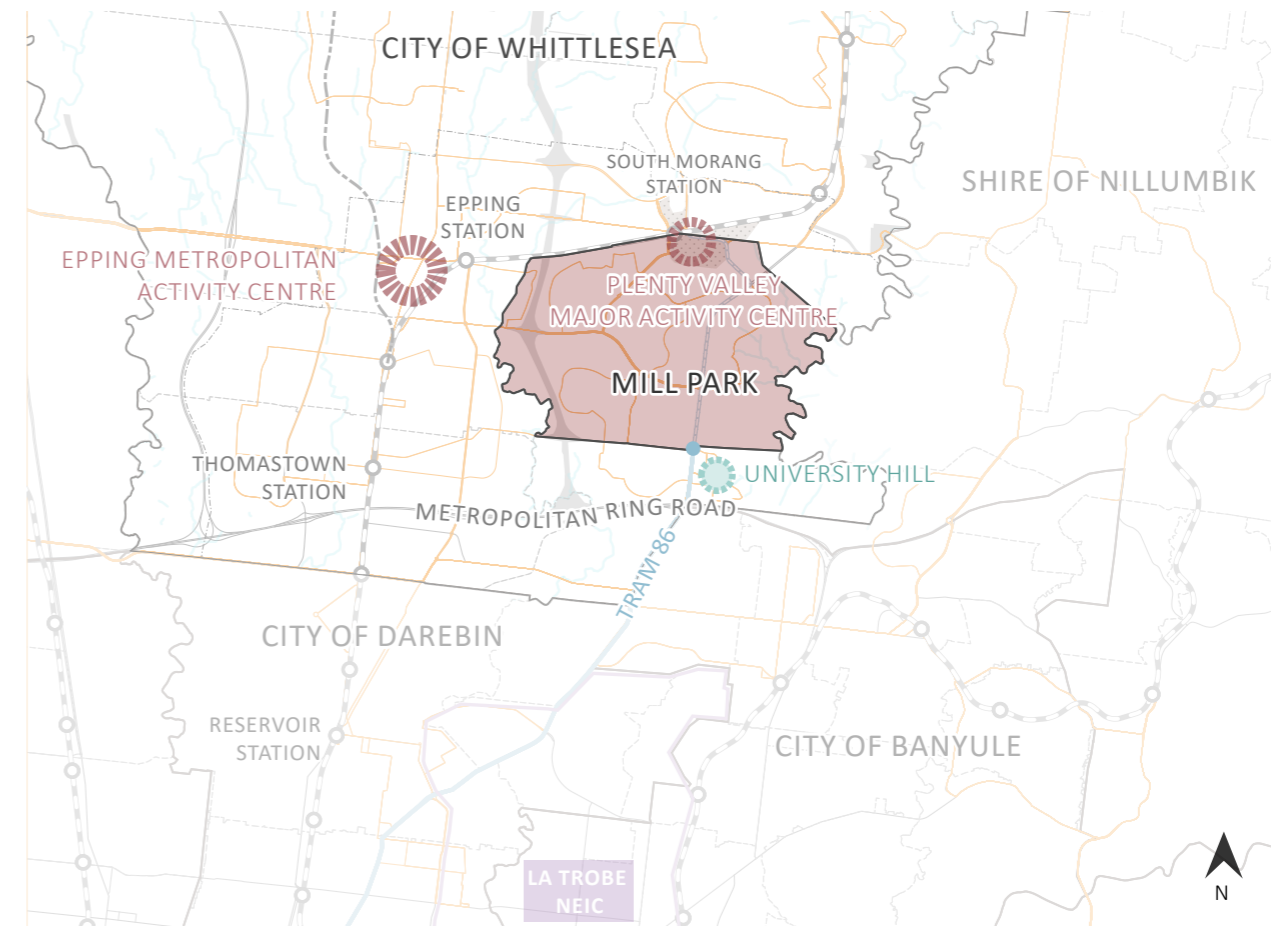


Figure 1 Strategic context map of Mill Park.



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# Study area



Figure 2 Study area - Mill Park suburb.



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## Brief history



Figure 3 Mill on Plenty River



Figure 4 Mill Park Stables (1947)



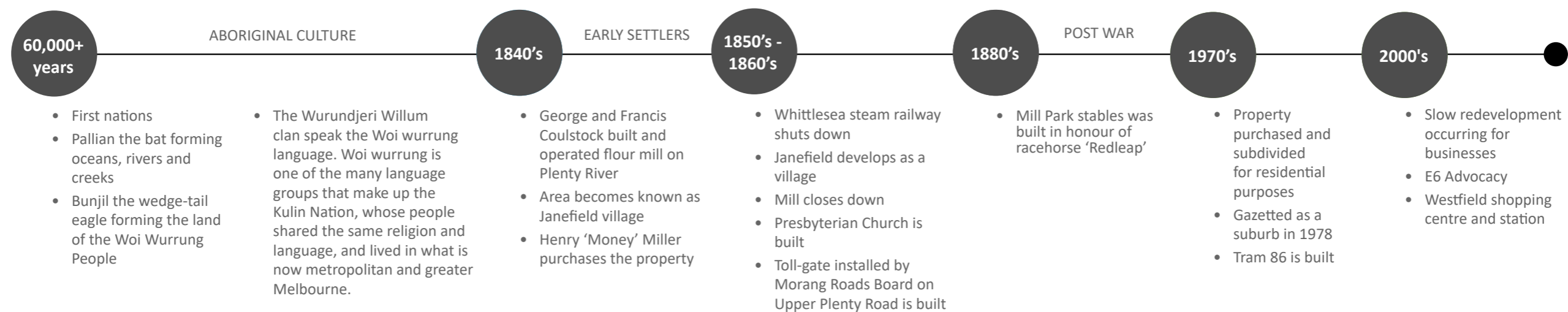
Figure 5 Mill Park Stables (2023)



Figure 6 Mill Park Drive (1947)



Figure 7 Mill Park Drive (2023)



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# The Place Framework

## What is a Place Framework?

The Place Framework embodies a collective vision between the community and the Council to steer the future development of Mill Park. This framework strives to recognise priority opportunities identified by the community, shaping local spaces and establishing connections to implement a series of improvements gradually over time.

The project is an ongoing collaborative approach to improve streets, public spaces, community precincts, infrastructure and built form over time.

The implementation of the framework will be subject to further detailed design, availability of funding, consultation with stakeholders and the community.

The Place Framework is designed to support and deliver concepts and strategic directions from the following:

- Whittlesea's 2040 Vision: A Place for All
- Plan Melbourne
- Urban Design and Placemaking related research
- Other relevant State and local policies.

### Objectives

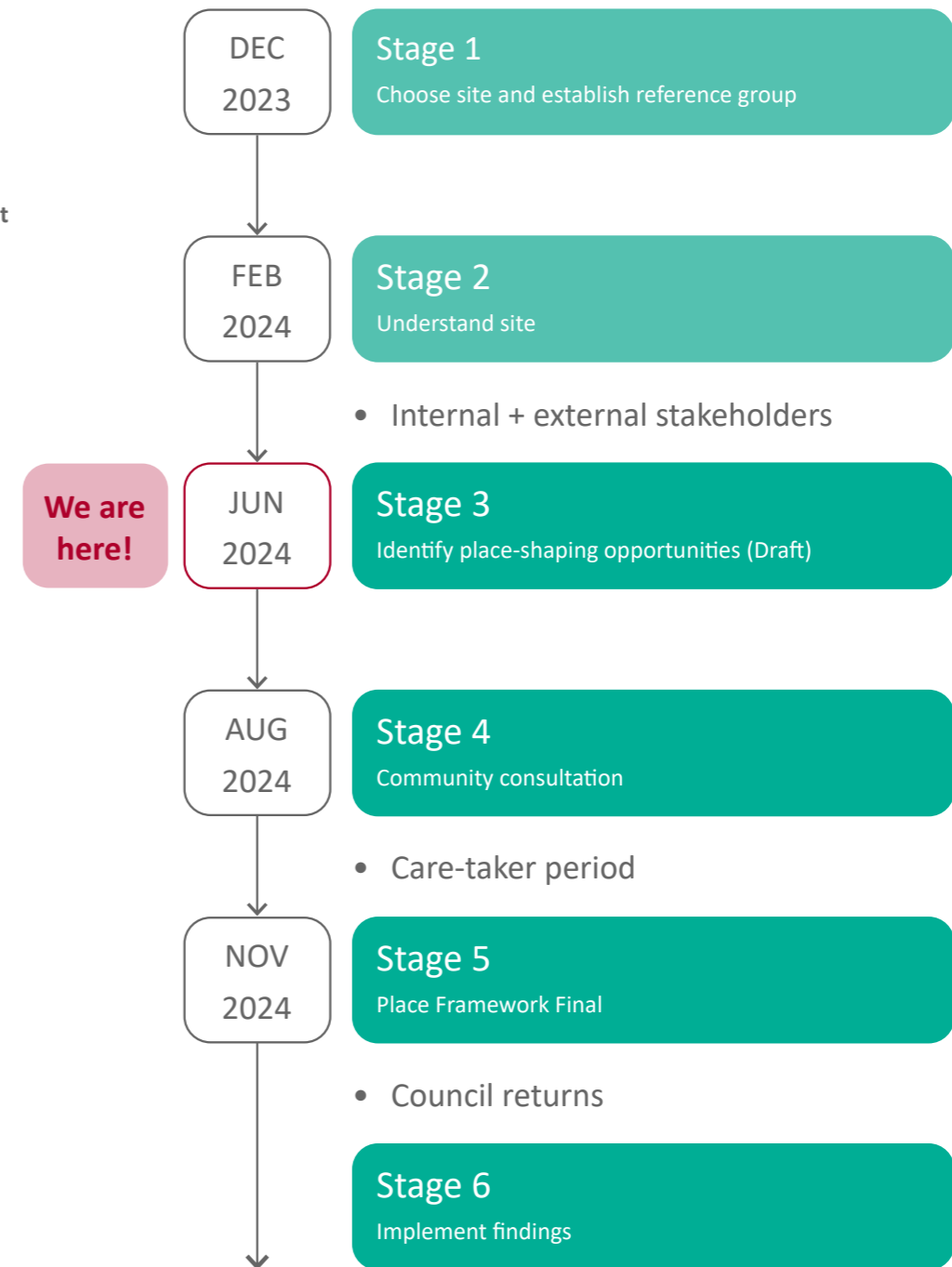
- Develop a clear and strategic Council led vision supported by Mill Park community
- Identify opportunities, key action areas and important relationships
- Guide future decision making
- Develop planning and design tools that are responsive to local needs
- Translate the vision for Mill Park's future into objectives and actions to guide the development of the area in the short, medium, and long term
- Visualise key design concepts
- Recommend improvements to infrastructure
- Prepare a detailed Implementation Plan.

A plan for the area or place that responds to local needs and insights

Efficiently combining multiple ideas, streamlining projects and consolidating expert advice



## Our Timeline





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## Policy context

### Plan Melbourne

Plan Melbourne is the Victorian Government's long-term plan to ensure Melbourne grows more sustainable, productive and liveable.

The plan includes:

- 9 principles to guide policies and actions
- 7 outcomes to strive for in creating a competitive, liveable and sustainable city
- 32 directions outlining how these outcomes will be achieved
- 90 policies detailing how these directions will be turned into action.

Plan Melbourne aims to create diverse, healthy, and inclusive communities. It focuses on safe and walkable neighborhoods with access to daily necessities. The outcomes include providing housing diversity (Outcome 2.5), improving local travel options for 20-minute neighborhoods (Outcome 3.3), strengthening community participation in city planning (Outcome 4.6), and transitioning to a low-carbon city to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (Outcome 6.1).



Figure 8 Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

### Whittlesea 2040: A Place for All

The Place Framework translates Whittlesea's 2040 Vision: A Place for All to Mill Park considering the five key goals – Connected community, Liveable neighbourhoods, Strong local economy, Sustainable environment, and High performing organisation to deliver local outcomes.

Over time, the framework will assist to develop local actions to deliver the seven strategies outlined in Council's Integrated Planning Framework.



Figure 9 City Of Whittlesea 2040 Goals. Source City Of Whittlesea.

### Whittlesea Planning Scheme

The Victorian Government and City of Whittlesea's policies and strategies call for quality urban environments. Good urban design is not optional, it is a requirement, in order to:

- Create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity (Clause 15.01-15 Urban Design's objective, Whittlesea Planning Scheme)
- Create a distinctive and liveable city with quality design and amenity (Clause 15.01-1R Urban Design's objective, Whittlesea Planning Scheme)
- Create more great public places across Melbourne (Direction 4.1, Plan Melbourne 2017-2050)



Figure 10 City Of Whittlesea documents.

### Plenty Valley Structure Plan

The recently amended (2021) Plenty Valley Structure Plan is a comprehensive document that guides development and investment in the Plenty Valley Town Centre over the next two decades. Recently consulted upon, it specifically focuses on the northern area, outlining strategies and actions to achieve an appealing, accessible, and lively Town Centre.

The framework will be informed by previous work to ensure consistency across projects.



Figure 11 Plenty Valley Structure Plan. Source City of Whittlesea

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## How we engaged...

Between December 2023 and February 2024, the Council conducted comprehensive feedback collection and desktop analysis involving both the community and Council officers. This involved multiple activities, including an online survey, social mapping, meetings with a community reference group, and workshops with Council officers that work in the area, also known as the Internal Local Area Team (East). Through these engagements, stakeholders were presented with data and information about Mill Park, enabling them to provide detailed and tailored responses.

The insights gathered, stemming from both internal and external sources, have been captured online. They are organised based on their relevance to the specific location and categorised into appropriate themes for clarity and ease of reference.

### Internal stakeholder engagement

Council internal stakeholders and staff provided various expertise, experiences and insights for Mill Park. A workshop was held with officers working in the eastern suburbs. This was designed to help officers understand Mill Park and its surrounding areas, and provide their issues and opportunities.

Through this engagement there were over 200 internal staff contributions provided for the Mill Park.

The Mill Park Framework Plan and online portal was shared more broadly within the organisation for comment also. This received 208 contributions.

### External stakeholder engagement Community Reference Group

The Community Reference Group consists of members of the local community who either work, study, live or play in the suburb of Mill Park.

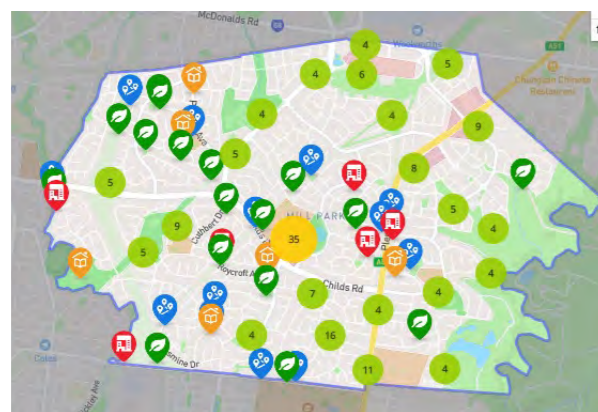
The group has members from different parts of the community to ensure diverse groups have representation.

The group provides input about Mill Park through their lived experiences in the area. This allows a more nuanced approach to place.

There were approximately 100 contributions made from this group through a workshop and also online.

### Internal vs. external consultation comparison

Comments were diverse across a broad range of topics, but ultimately converged on key opportunities and issues. This led to the identification of key areas and corridors. See below for emerging areas and corridors based on provided feedback.



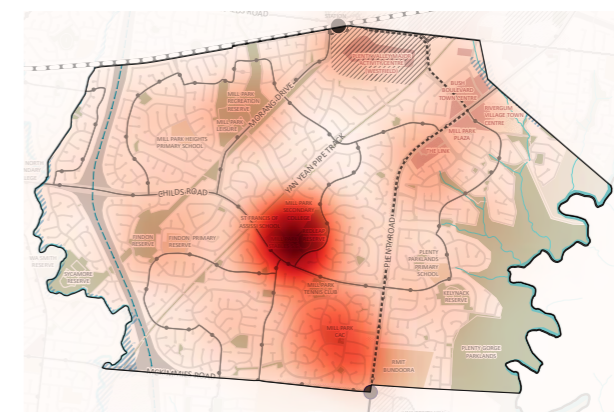
**Figure 12** The online social pins maps provided a platform to provide comments, either positive or negative to place.



**Figure 13** Photo of Local Area Team (east) Mill Park Opportunities and Challenges presentation and workshop 1.



**Figure 14** Photo of the Community Reference Group Opportunities and Challenges presentation and workshop 1.



**Figure 15** Heat Map of comments provided by community members and internal stakeholders.



# DRAFT

## Emerging themes and insights

### Themes identified

#### Greener spaces

Greener spaces means open space, active travel, green infrastructure, trees, vegetation, biodiversity, green links, connection to nature and community.

#### Connected places

Connected spaces means transport, connectivity, people and paths, public transport, safe crossings, direct or indirect routes, cycling, easy and direct routes, streets as a whole (cars, trees and parking).

#### Thriving community hubs

Thriving community and culture means places to meet up, learn and to belong, these places to focus on being local, be interesting drawing many people to use the space, they should be interesting and focus on individuals and groups.

#### Land use and built form

Land-use and built form means architecture, location of buildings and space, building entries, building quality, the balance of commercial, residential, open spaces, retail and perception of safety.

The above themes are further explored in the following chapter.

### Overview

Following the conclusion of the engagement, there were overall emerging insights, and themes that provide a better understanding of place.

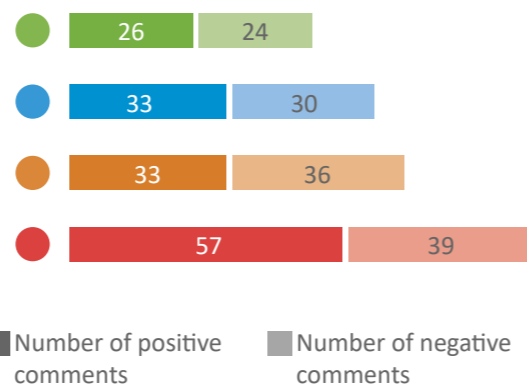


Figure 16 Number of comments based on themes.

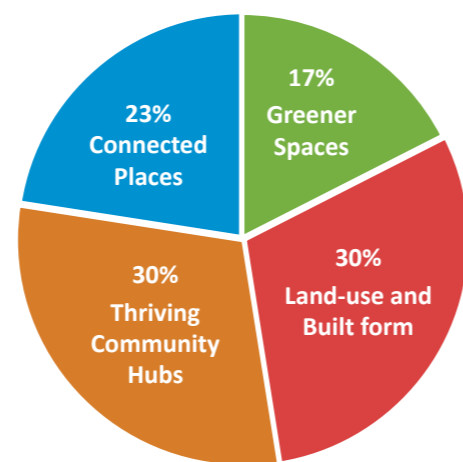


Figure 17 Percentage of comments based on focus areas. Please refer to appendix for more information.

- Concerns for new housing and housing reform
- Various places for young people
- Need for shop upgrades and enhancements
- Community input from businesses and community to resolve Mill Park Stables

- High percentage of population living with long term health condition.
- Strong safety concerns
- Need for tailored services to future demographics
- Aging facilities and population

- Although many parks, people tend to drive to All Abilities Park
- Aging trees need maintenance
- High vulnerability to heat

- Most people rather drive than walk or take public transport
- Underutilised and lack of trust in public transport
- Poor connectivity
- Need for improving connectivity for walking and cycling

Figure 18 Feedback from community and internal stakeholders.



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# 02

## Challenges and opportunities

### Overview

The following chapter identifies opportunities and challenges based on the four themes, incorporating feedback received through internal and external stakeholder workshops.

Opportunities and challenges | 11



# DRAFT

## Theme 01 : Greener spaces

The Sustainable Environment Strategy ensures we are creating a liveable and sustainable environment for our residents for generations to come.

### Our role

City of Whittlesea plays a pivotal role in providing the community with recreational spaces that offer a multitude of activities including exercise, sports, exploration, play, socialisation, relaxation, and unwinding.

It is also tasked with the protection of unique ecological values, such as remnant River Red Gums, native grasslands, and waterways.

Additionally, council is responsible for protecting and promoting the cultural heritage and contemporary cultural values of the community.

### Key policies and documents

The document has been informed by policies and strategies from the Victorian Government and the City of Whittlesea, including but not limited to:

- Whittlesea Planning Scheme
- Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
- Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032
- Draft Open Space Plan 2025-2035
- Greening Whittlesea City Forest Strategy 2020-2040
- Biodiversity Strategy 2019-2029
- Climate Change Plan 2022-2032

### Context

Mill Park is surrounded by various recreational areas like Mill Park Recreation Reserve, Findon Reserve, and Redleap Reserve, offering a diversity of activities for residents.

Plenty River lies to the east and Darebin Creek lies along the western boundary.

Yan Yean Pipe Track and Transmission line cut across, offering opportunities for active transport.

Facilities like the Mill Park All Abilities Play Space and Mill Park Leisure Centre act as a focal point for the community.

Challenges include lack of tree cover and vulnerability to heat, flood risks and a lack of accessible paths to open spaces. Signage to Plenty River needs improvement and smaller parks aren't fully utilised.

"Greenery and feeling of country attracted us to the area"

Community Member

"Trees, greenery of suburban streets. Sense of community"

Community Member



Figure 19 Kelynock Recreation Reserve.



Figure 20 The Plenty River is a beautiful and biodiverse trail, which could be celebrated more.



Figure 21 Sensitive treatment to waterways that connect people to nature.



Figure 22 The All Abilities Playground is heavily utilised and loved by the community.



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**Opportunities**

- 1 Creating green corridors and increasing canopy cover. (e.g. Yan Yean pipe track, transmission easement)
- 2 Improve connections and signage to Plenty Gorge parklands and Darebin creek.
- 3 Preserve and enhance biodiversity corridors.
- 4 Programming and minor improvements to smaller parks to increase their patronage.
- 5 Promote and support active lifestyles within the community.
- 6 Address open space gaps through new connections or new parks.

**Challenges**

- 7 Limited access to parks and green spaces, especially in the west.
- 8 Lack of dedicated, protected paths through trails.
- 9 Poor interfaces to open spaces.
- 10 Ensuring ongoing maintenance around trees.
- 11 People tend to drive places than walk.

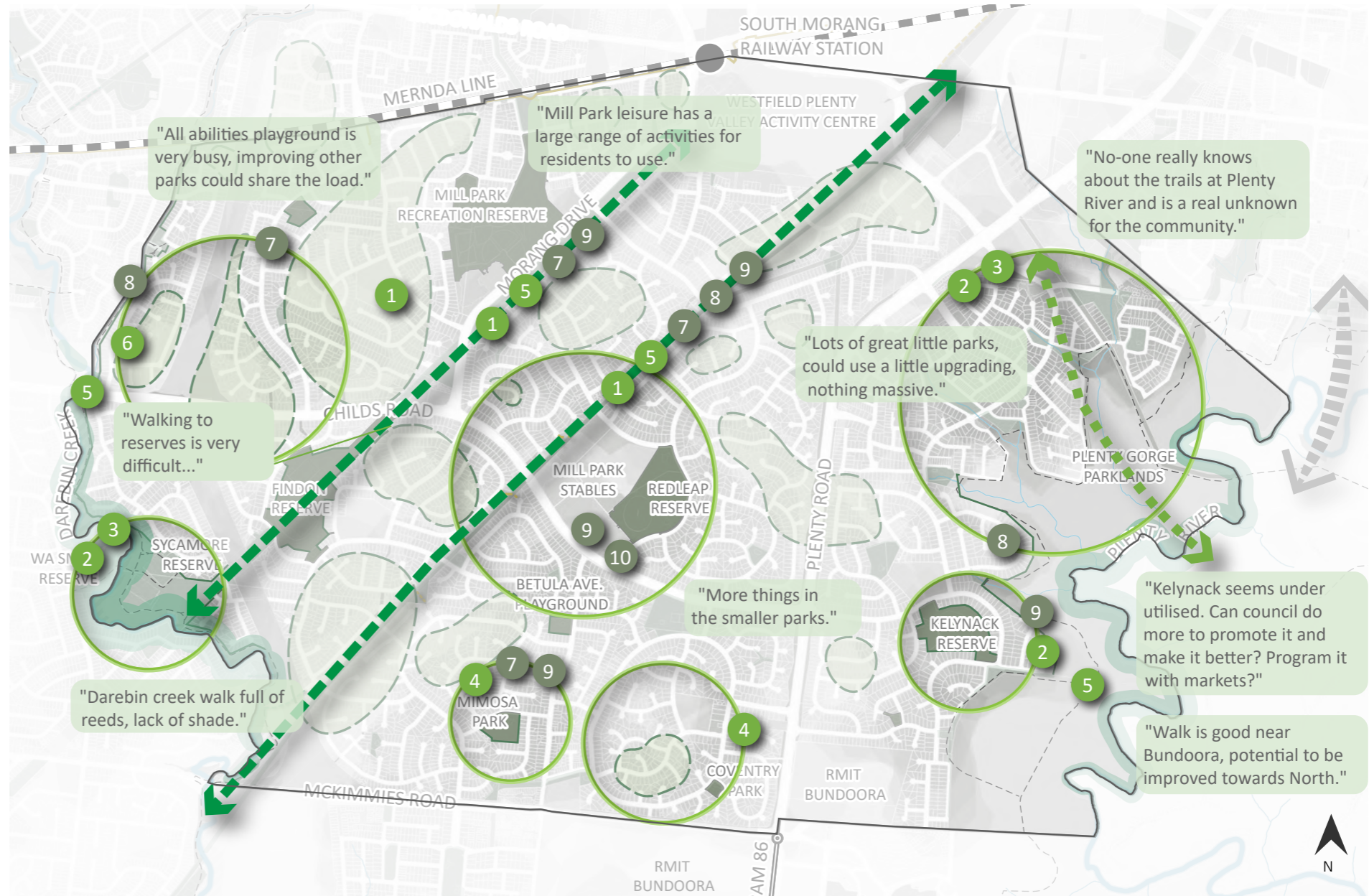
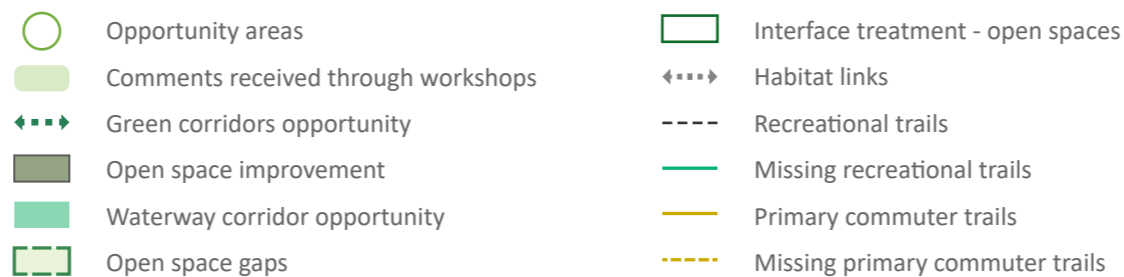


Figure 23 Greener spaces summary map. Refer appendix for more information.





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## Theme 02 : Connected places

The ability for people to get where they need to go by a range of well-connected transport options is key to liveability, sustainability, health and wellbeing.

Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy 2023-2033

### Our role

City of Whittlesea is tasked with ensuring equitable access for all community members by developing and maintaining a comprehensive network that includes public transport, roads, walking paths, and bike pathways.

Additionally, council advocates to the State Government for the development of transport infrastructure and services. This advocacy aims to connect localities with essential services, infrastructure, local activities, places of employment, and the broader metropolitan Melbourne.

Furthermore, council works to enhance sustainable transport options in established areas and champions community transport services to address local transport needs.

### Key policies and documents

The document has been informed by policies and strategies from the Victorian Government and the City of Whittlesea, including but not limited to:

- Whittlesea Planning Scheme
- Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
- Draft Open Space Plan 2025-2035
- Northern Regional Trails Strategy 2016
- Walking and Cycling Plan 2022-2027
- Place and Movement Plan 2023

### Context

Mill Park has a court bowl road network resulting in quiet residential streets, but the network poses a challenge to walkability.

Public transport includes Tram 86 and buses, but there are concerns about safety, reliability, and access.

Plenty Road provides North-South connectivity and Childs Road connects Mill Park to the east.

There is ongoing advocacy for Tram 86 extension and future E6 freeway.

There are recreational trails along Darebin Creek and there are proposed trails along Plenty Gorge Parklands.

State Government's Movement and Place Framework aims to make streets and public spaces safer and more accessible.

"A lot more people are cycling now"

Community Member

"Tram needs to happen! Why hasn't it already?"

Community Member



Figure 24 Illustrative example from Global Street Guide of a transport corridor balancing the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and cars.



Figure 25 Unsafe crossings along Child's Road



Figure 26 Linear park playground under elevated rail corridor between Bell and Preston station



Figure 27 Traffic conflicts at Mill Park Stables during peak hours and school drop-off.



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**Opportunities**

- 1 Improve walking and cycling paths and connections.
- 2 Improving wayfinding and signage to important destinations.
- 3 Advocate to State Government on road safety issues on Childs Road and Plenty Road.
- 4 Advocacy for Tram 86 to be extended to South Morang Station.
- 5 Upgrade streetscapes in town centre environments.
- 6 Improve permeability and short-term activation across the proposed E6 corridor.

**Challenges**

- 7 Poor bus connectivity (east-west), timing and reliability issues.
- 8 Lack of options for public transport.
- 9 Safety concerns on roads, including unsafe crossings and traffic issues.
- 10 Poor passive surveillance in public realm, lack of people walking around.
- 11 Cul-de-sacs and winding roads make navigation and walking to destinations difficult.

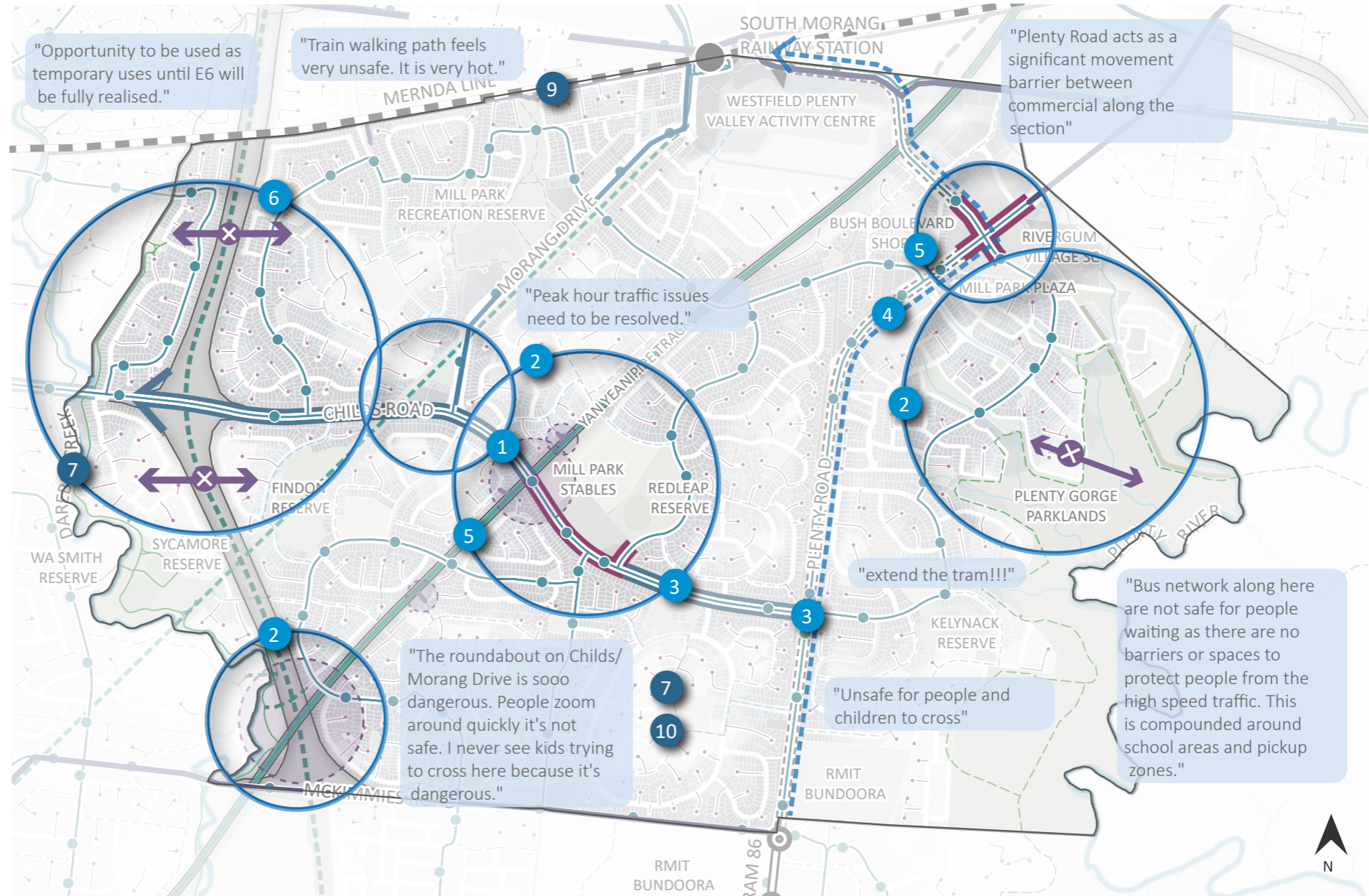
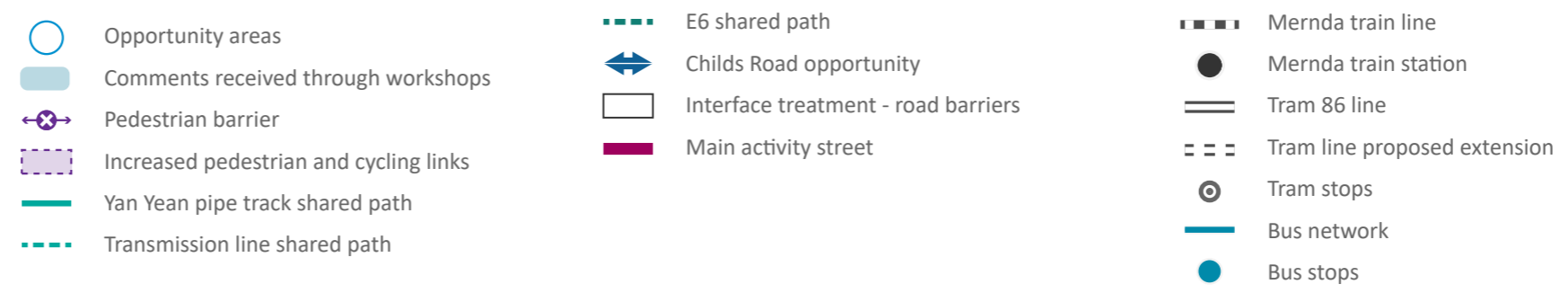


Figure 28 Connected places summary map. Refer appendix for more information.





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## Theme 03 : Thriving community and culture

"...facilitate equal opportunities for community members to participate and engage within their local areas, fostering strong social connections and building resilience within our communities."

Connected Community Strategy 2023-2033

### Our role

City of Whittlesea is mandated under the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 to plan for the community's health and wellbeing needs, encompassing social, physical, economic, and environmental domains.

Through places, spaces, and events, council facilitates socialisation and access to services. These are instrumental in building community and fostering an appreciation for our diversity.

Community hubs, parks, and recreational facilities are central to council's strategy to enhance wellbeing and unity among the city's diverse communities. These spaces offer venues for gatherings, events, and celebrations, fostering a sense of heritage and togetherness.

### Key policies and documents

The document has been informed by policies and strategies from the Victorian Government and the City of Whittlesea, including but not limited to:

- Whittlesea Planning Scheme
- Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
- Community Plan 2021-2025
- Connected Community Strategy 2023-2033

### Context

The Stables, located centrally, offers various facilities and services for the community, but its popularity has declined, including the once vibrant market scene.

The Miller Centre on Mill Park Drive is frequently visited by members of the community but lacks pedestrian and public transport access and is difficult for people to locate.

The Mill Park Leisure Centre also provides a range of services. The All Abilities Play Space has added to the popularity of the centre.

The Mill Park Library is popular but primarily accessible by car. Public transport access to the library is very poor when travelling from the eastern suburbs.

Older areas lack access to community facilities, and many services are not conveniently located together.

"Mill Park library uses green spaces well, has a variety of activities, creates a safe and productive environment."

Community Member



Figure 29 Improving awareness, wayfinding and signage for community centres.



Figure 30 Mill Park Library is a great place with diverse programs.

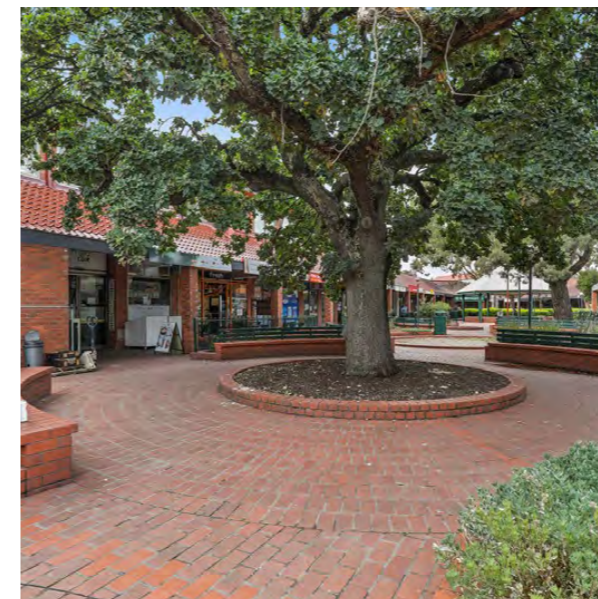


Figure 31 Mill Park Stables courtyard used to hold events, markets and live music in the past.

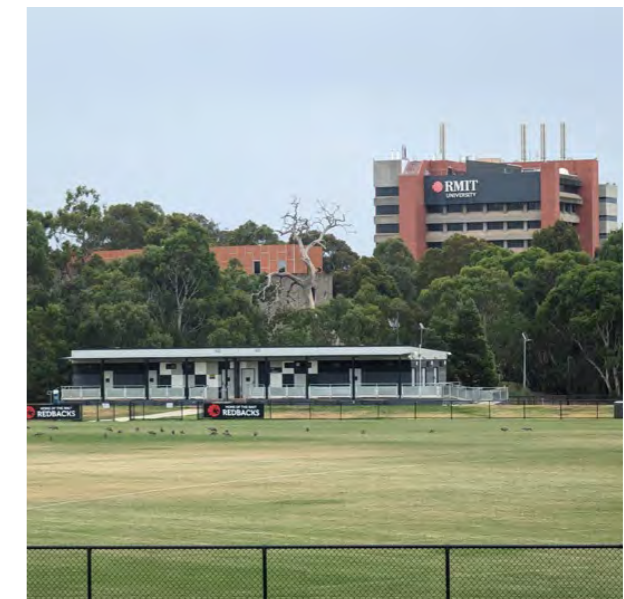


Figure 32 Opportunity to explore partnerships with universities to improve services for the community.



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**Opportunities**

- 1 Exploring opportunities to upgrade Stables shopping centre by collaborating with the owners.
- 2 Mill Park library as a focal point for the community.
- 3 Potential to improve ageing infrastructure and facilities, co-locate services (childcare, MCH etc)
- 4 Tapping into the potential of the young people, services provided and RMIT.
- 5 Encourage programming of spaces with events, markets or support social enterprise to draw people and re-activate these hubs.

**Challenges**

- 6 Lack of walkability, parking spaces and management of traffic conflict around schools and community areas.
- 7 Lack of spaces for young people.
- 8 Insufficient Wi-Fi access at key community locations.
- 9 Lack of gathering spaces for functions.
- 10 Limited public transport and pedestrian access to services.
- 11 Gaps in services and amenities south of Childs Road.

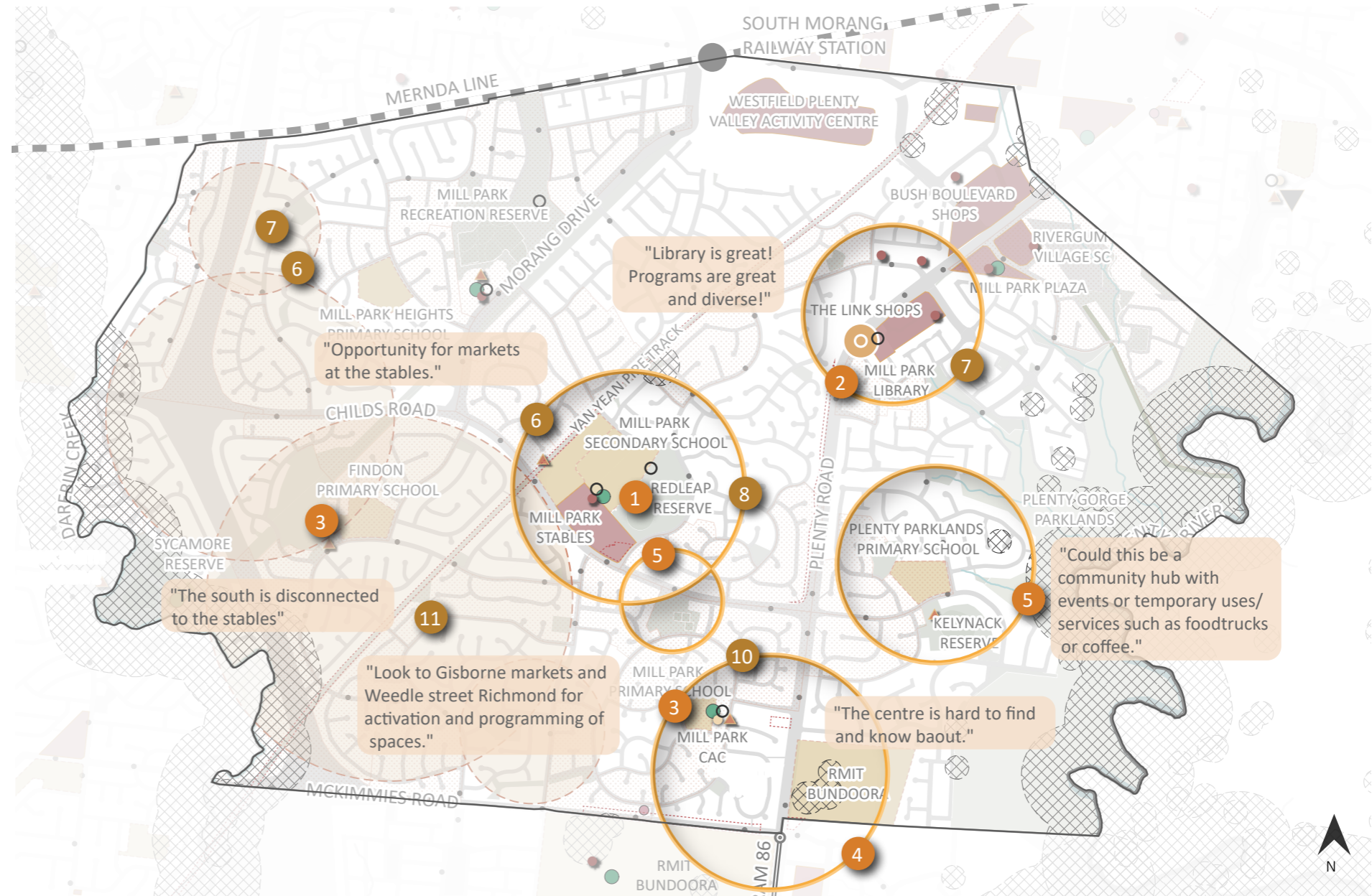
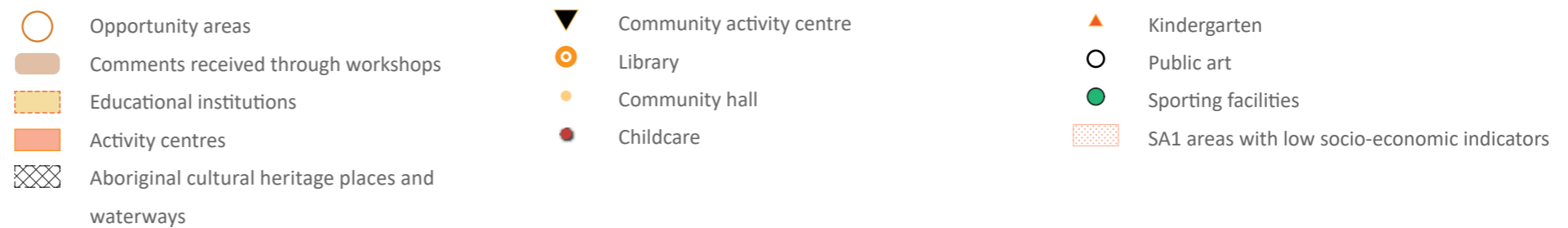


Figure 33 Thriving community and culture summary map. Refer appendix for more information.





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## Theme 04 : Land use and built form

"...change should be managed carefully to ensure the diverse needs of our residents are met, while our suburbs continue to be vibrant, attractive places to live."

Housing Diversity Strategy 2013 - 2033

### Our role

Local governments have many roles and legislated responsibilities that influence the provision of affordable housing. For example, through land-use planning, social and physical infrastructure planning, economic planning and development, community engagement and advocacy.

Council is instrumental in adopting a role of partnership, brokerage, and facilitation, essential for uniting various stakeholders on targeted projects.

A collaborative approach is necessary, involving landowners, schools, and public transport authorities like PTV, to thoroughly redevelop areas such as Mill Park. This collaboration aims to draw economic investment for enhancements and to tackle safety issues. Additionally, it focuses on improving various aspects such as safety measures, the layout of buildings, access routes, and pickup areas.

### Key policies and documents

The document has been informed by policies and strategies from the Victorian Government and the City of Whittlesea, including but not limited to:

- Whittlesea Planning Scheme
- Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
- Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy 2023-2033
- Strong Local Economy Strategy 2022-2026
- Housing Diversity Strategy 2013-2033

### Context

Mill Park has a mix of old and new buildings, with some areas undergoing ad-hoc renewal. There is an opportunity to strategically increase appropriate density along Plenty Road and around town centres.

The Stables and Plenty Valley are the key town centres, but the Stables has been experiencing fewer visitors and vacant shops. Other town centres like Bush Boulevard and Rivergum also need improvements.

Improved lighting and active frontages to open spaces are crucial to fostering a sense of security and community well-being.

Overall, the ongoing transformation of Mill Park underscores the importance of balancing affordability, appropriate development, and community revitalisation efforts to create a vibrant and inclusive urban environment.

"...affordability and diversity is really important, but it needs to stay green and natural"

Community Member



Figure 34 Example of Future Homes Initiative and building typology by the Victorian Government



Figure 35 Gentle density that supports affordable housing, enhances greenery and considers history.



Figure 36 Greening the Greyfields concept by Maroondah Council and Swinburne University



Figure 37 Safety issues due to reduced passive surveillance to open spaces.



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**Opportunities**

- 1 Investigate planning controls to improve appropriate density and mixed uses along Plenty Road corridor and near town centres.
- 2 Investigate gentle density or 'Greening the Greyfields' approach around key cul-de-sacs to improve walkability.
- 3 Place activation measures (e.g. mobile libraries) around community facilities to make people and parents stay there longer.
- 4 Need for strategic direction for Mill Park Stables, to reduce conflicts, public transport access, trees, and draw investment.
- 5 Celebration of Aboriginal and local culture through the built environment.
- 6 Plenty Valley is one of only areas to go to at night time, this could be an opportunity for other centres also.

**Challenges**

- 7 Cul-de-sacs are the dominant pattern in established areas, with limited subdivision opportunities.
- 8 Lack of perceived identity and appeal for non-residents visiting Mill Park.
- 9 Resistance to upgrade, hindering building, investment and community development.
- 10 Addressing the issue of disconnected spaces and safety in Mill Park, a lot of back fences facing roads and reserves.
- 11 Aging facades and streetscapes within town centres.

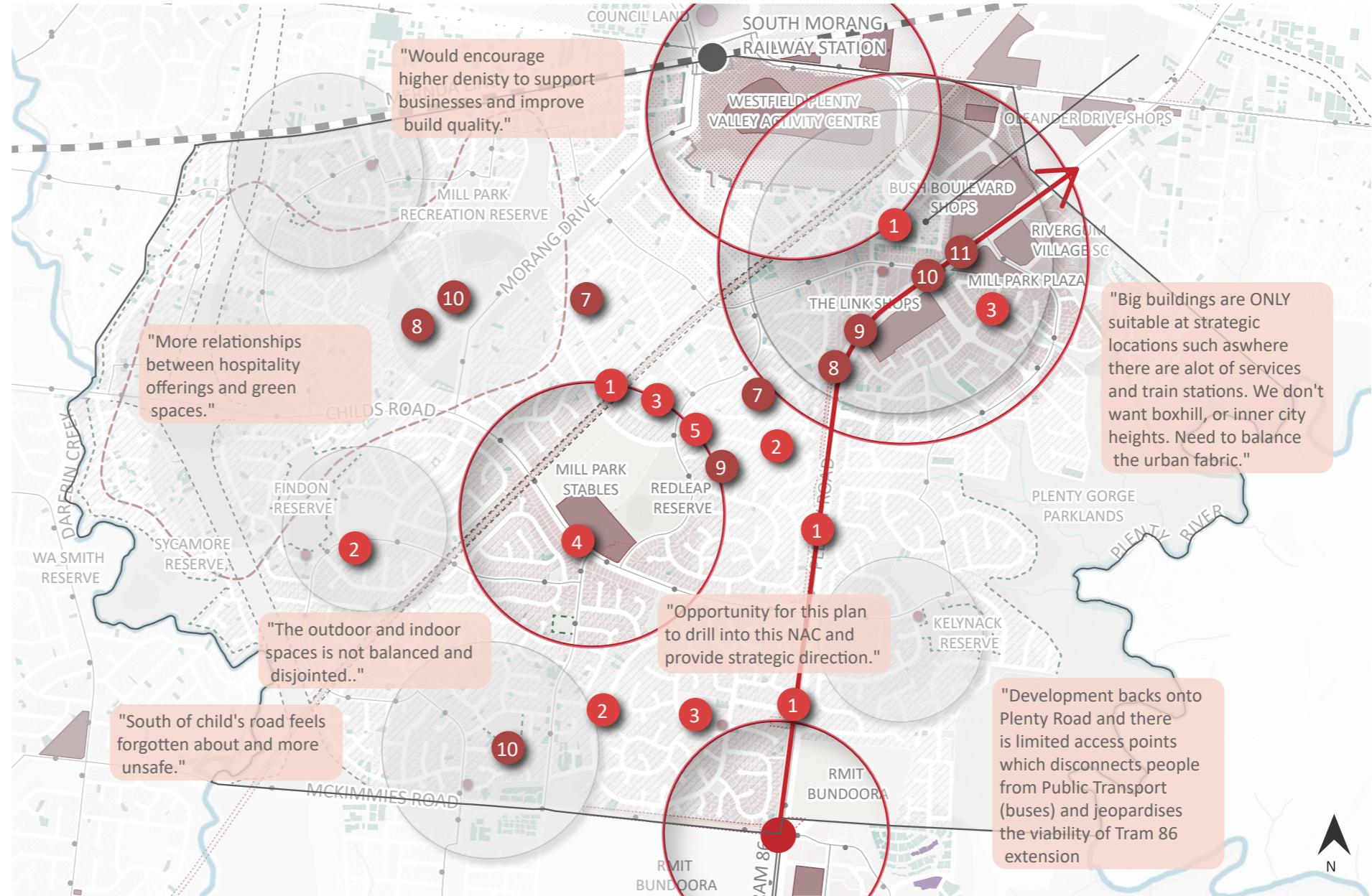
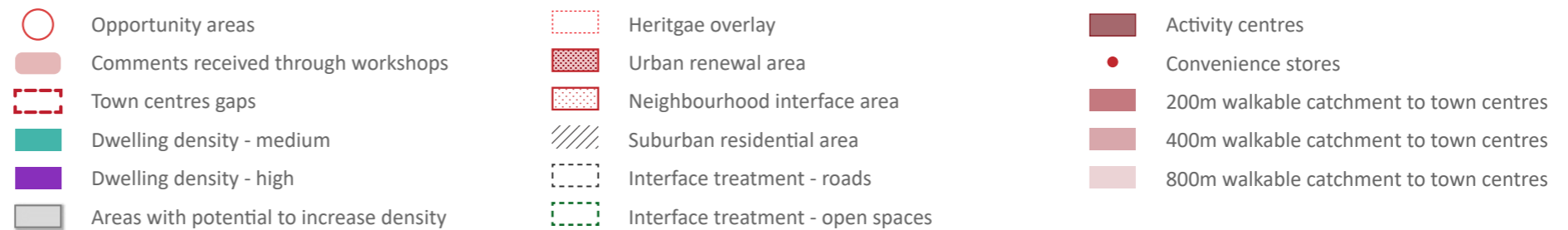


Figure 38 Land use and built form summary map. Refer appendix for more information.



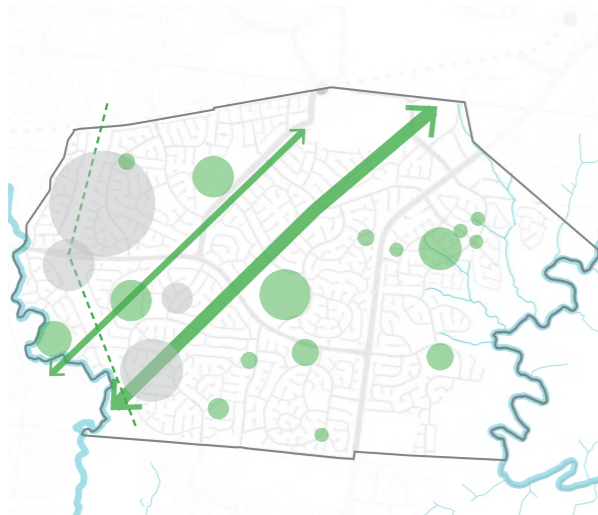
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## Key drivers

### Greener spaces

#### Focus areas

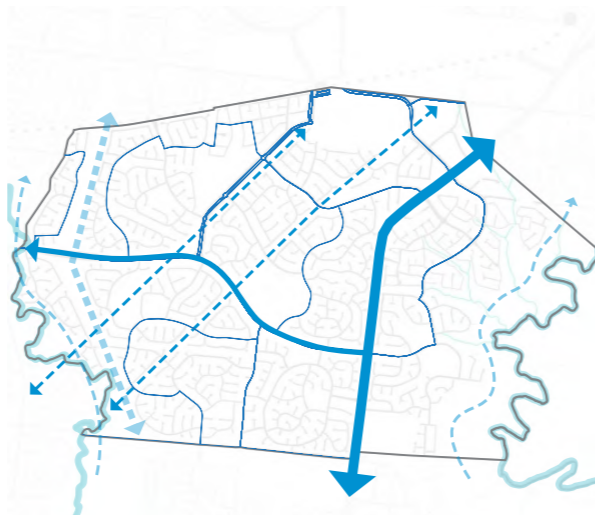
1. Maximise tree plantation and vegetation
2. Develop and improve recreational spaces for community use
3. Promote biodiversity and habitat preservation in green corridors and local reserves
4. Reducing adverse impacts on climate change and urban heat on vulnerable communities
5. Address flooding and drainage issues



### Connected places

#### Focus areas

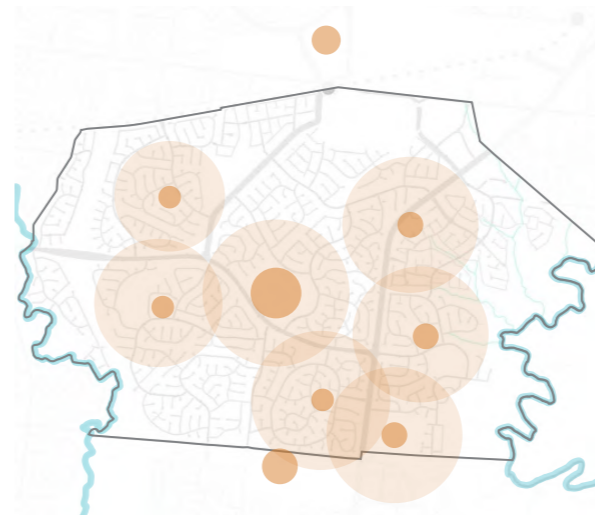
1. Providing bike paths and trails to increase participation in active modes of transport
2. Enhancing east west connections
3. Increasing walkability in cul-de-sac areas
4. Creating convenient and accessible public transport networks
5. Help people find their way around the area by improving signage and wayfinding



### Thriving community hubs

#### Focus areas

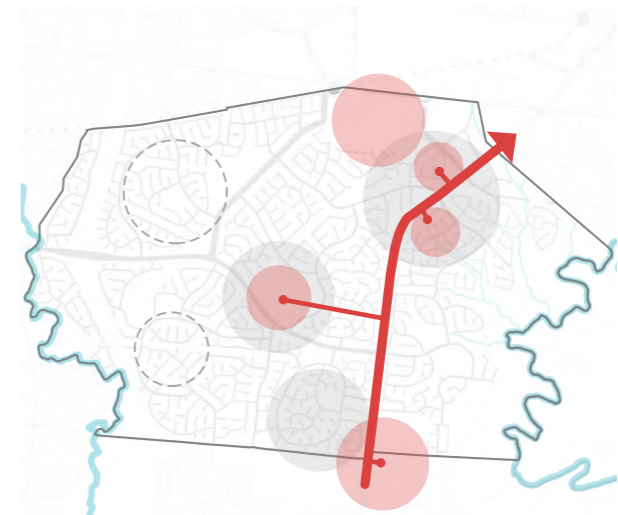
1. Create gathering spaces around community facilities
2. Develop measures for a unique community identity (Tap into heritage walks, diversity as an opportunity)
3. Tap into the potential of the youth population for community development
4. Foster community engagement through libraries and youth programs
5. Investigate improvements to existing community buildings



### Land use and built form

#### Focus areas

1. Explore opportunities, including planning tools, for improving the urban structure
2. Encourage appropriate density around town centres and major transport corridors
3. Upgrade commercial areas to enhance appeal
4. Encourage diverse businesses and land uses for a vibrant community





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# Summary

The challenges and opportunity chapter has gathered insights from community, council subject matter experts and desktop analysis. Key opportunities have started to emerge focussing on place to develop future projects. These opportunities will be developed further in the next phase of this project.

Key areas include:

- 1 **Corridors improvements** which may cover various themes and address multiple issues. Such as Plenty River, Plenty Road, Yan Yean Pipe Track, Childs Road, E6, Transmission easement, etc.
- 2 **Town Centre and their walkable catchment** review their performance and initiatives especially around Mill Park Stables.
- 3 **Centralising and co-locating Services** Enhancement to support community access and community convenience.
- 4 **Place making** initiatives to draw people and investment to Mill Park and support the community needs
- 5 **Improving walkability and navigation**
- 6 **Council Strategic Direction** for complicated sites and general advocacy



Figure 39 Mill Park Opportunities Map





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# 03

## Place projects and implementation

### Overview

The following chapter summarises the key project ideas that have been identified through the development of this Draft Framework. These project ideas are called Place Projects.

Place Projects are larger projects that have a number of smaller sub-actions within them to deliver upon the overall objective. These are projects that Council can take a lead role in developing, facilitating, delivering or advocating for. Place Projects are categorised into:

**Short Term** - projects that Council plays a key role to act on in the next 5-10 years.

**Long Term** - projects that Council can advocate for or requires partnerships with authorities or other sectors to deliver and may take longer than 5-10 years.

As noted in the beginning of this report, projects identified are not all going to happen quickly or at once. They are still dependent on future budget, resourcing and Council priorities across the City of Whittlesea.

### Next steps

Following this report, Council aims to address the challenges and issues presented in the Draft Mill Park Place Framework.

Further collaboration, authorities feedback, community feedback will be incorporated through various communication activities such as workshops, pop-ups, presentations, online engage page and more.



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# Summary of place projects

	PLACE PROJECT IDEAS	THEMES
SHORT & MEDIUM TERM	① Safer streets to walk or ride to school	1 2 3 4
	② Improvements to community hubs	1 2 3 4
	③ Revitalise key destinations	1 2 3 4
	④ Re-imagining transmission easements and green corridors	1 2 3 4
	⑤ Upgrading parks and improving residential interfaces	1 2 3 4
	⑥ Identify ways to improve walkability through future development	1 2 3 4
LONG TERM	⑦ Improve McKimmies Road	1 2 3 4
	⑧ Advocate for Child's Road improvements	1 2 3 4
	⑨ Advocate for Plenty Road upgrades	1 2 3 4
	⑩ Darebin Creek and Plenty River corridors	1 2 3 4
	⑪ Encourage town centre activation and upgrades	1 2 3 4

**THEMES**

- ① Greener spaces
- ② Connected places
- ③ Thriving community and culture
- ④ Land use and built form

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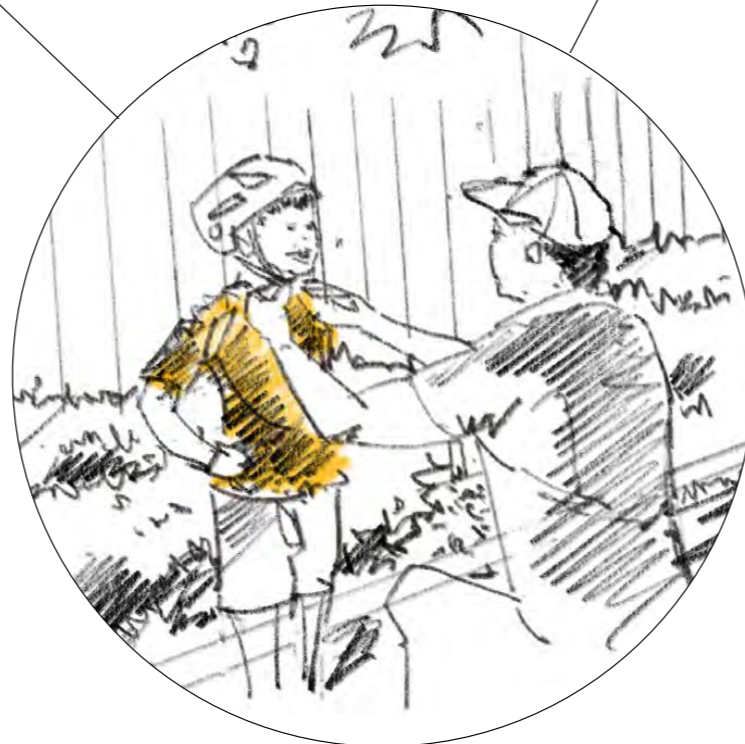


Little Manevski enjoys a relaxed breakfast with his family before school.....

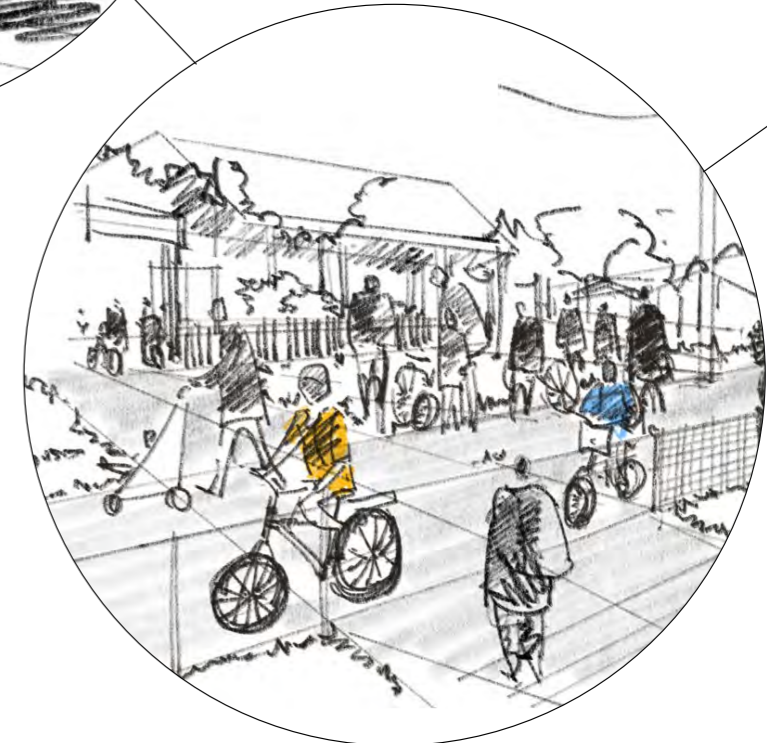
*because his family know he can safely get himself to school on the new safer streets.*



Little Manevski meets up with his friend Divya on the new bikepath... They talk about how much fun it is to ride to school.



His Dad makes sure his helmet is on tight and and kisses him good bye.



Manevski and Divya arrive at school, happy and energised after a fun ride. They greet their teachers, friends and members of the community....





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After school Manevski and Divya go around the corner to the local milkbar. They enjoy a milk shake and hang out with their friends..

*excited about the new playground and street improvements at the community hubs.*



They take her to the basketball tournament at the local park, which has been organised by Manevski's big brother.

*The tournament is part of a larger community event which also includes an arts and craft market run by Divya's aunt.*



Divya and Manevski meet Divya's grandmother at the new climbing sculpture at the Stables.

*they could make their own way safely across Childs Road thanks to the new safety improvements.*



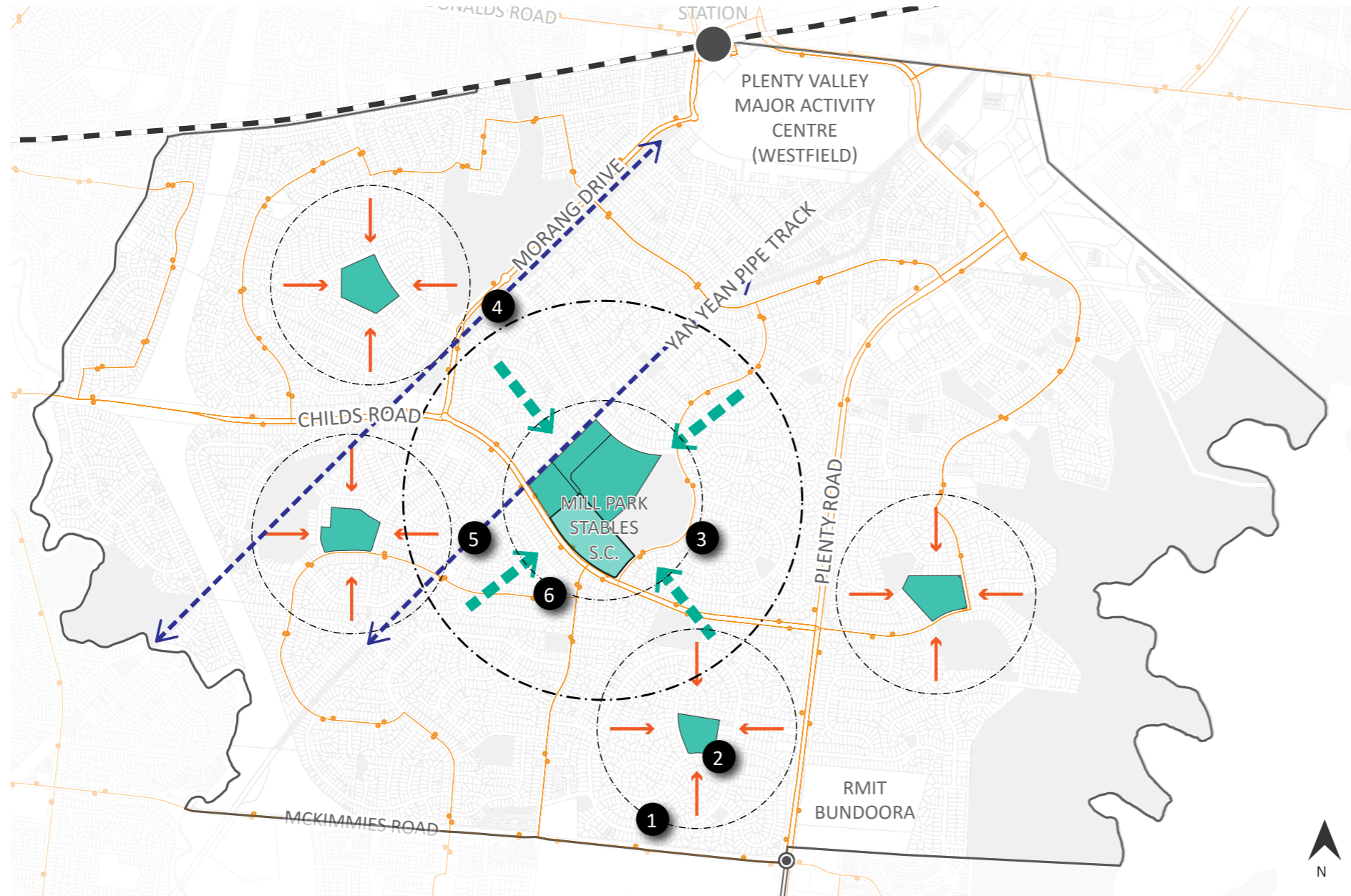
At the end of the day Manevski and Divya make their way back home along one of the redeveloped transmission easements.

*they feel happy and satisfied thanks to the programs initiated across their suburb to allow them feel safer and more connected.*



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# Short term place projects



- 1 Safer streets to walk or ride to school  
● ● ● ●
- 2 Improvements to community hubs  
● ● ● ●
- 3 Revitalise key destinations  
● ● ● ●
- 4 Re-imagining transmission easements  
● ● ● ●
- 5 Upgrading parks and improving residential interfaces  
● ● ● ●
- 6 Identify ways to improve walkability through future development  
● ● ● ●

Figure 40 Conceptual diagram of the various short-term projects proposed for Mill Park.

	Pedestrian cut-through		Key destinations / Schools
	School safe zones		Bus routes
	Future shared path connections		Bus stops



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# 1. Safer streets to walk or ride to school

School traffic significantly contributes to morning congestion, affecting the overall flow of transportation. Encouraging children to walk or ride to school not only alleviates traffic but also enhances their concentration and spatial awareness. There are well-known benefits for social, health and environmental outcomes also. The community strongly supported initiatives for safer access to schools, emphasizing the importance of creating a safe environment for their children. Some ideas for Council to consider are identified below.

## Safer active streets

- Planning active streets around schools by identifying paths taken to schools and creating a safe passage for children to walk and ride
- Identifying challenges and potential hazards that would hinder walking and cycling
- Identifying areas where additional supervision temporary road closures and other measures might be required
- Consider the concept of play streets around schools
- Improving the combination of bus transit and walking to school, making this faster and more convenient.

## Public transport advocacy - Bus

- Advocate for greater bus frequency and direct routes for key destinations in Mill Park such as Mill Park CAC and Mill Park Library
- Ensure bus stops are accessible through pedestrian crossings and are safe spaces for people to wait
- Advocate for real time indicators at bus stops and bus connection and bus stop information
- Advocate for improved bus services connecting east-west across the suburb.

## THEMES

- 1 Greener spaces
- 2 Connected places
- 3 Thriving community and culture
- 4 Land use and built form

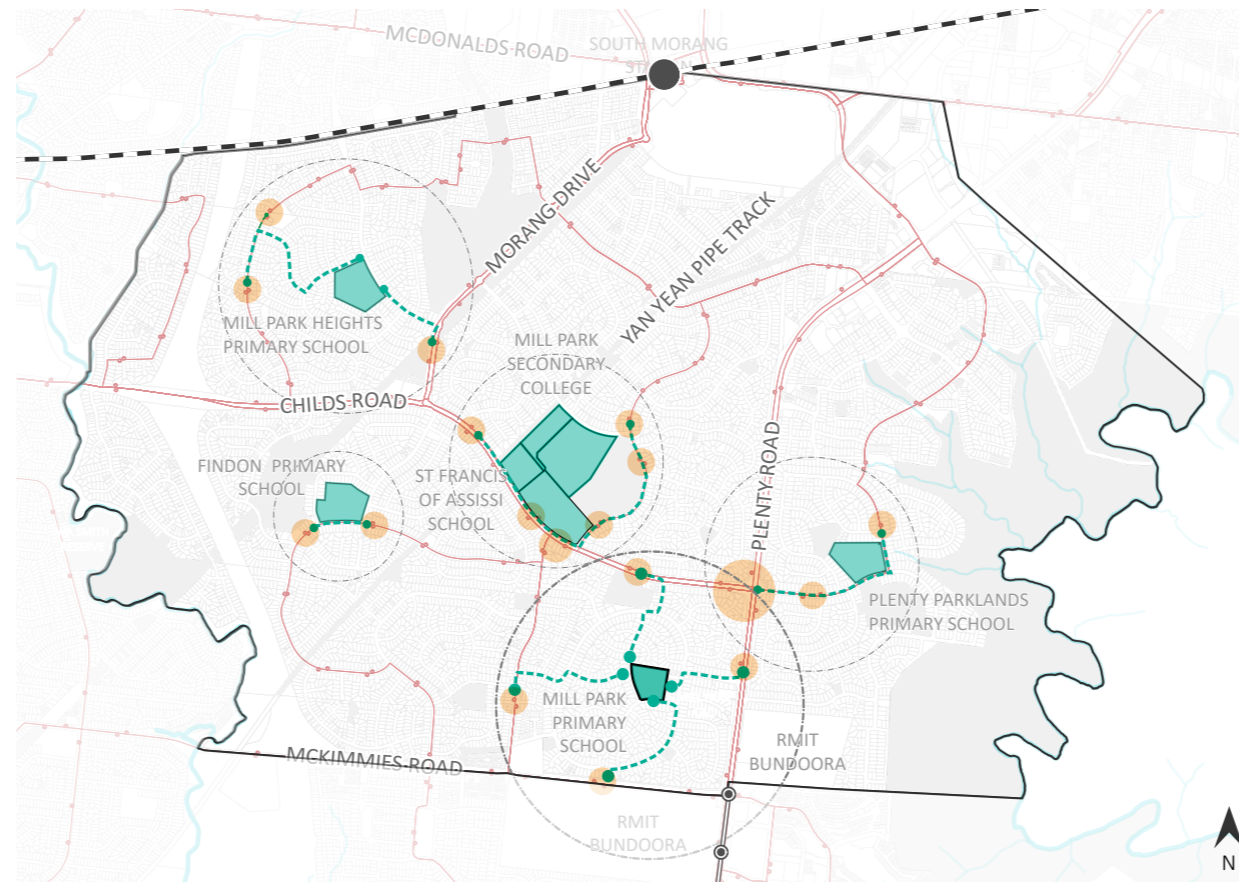


Figure 41 Figure shows indicative connections to schools, with Mill Park Primary School as the pilot.

- Safe paths to school
- Intersections and bus stops
- Mill Park Primary School - Pilot
- Schools in Mill Park
- Bus routes
- Bus stops

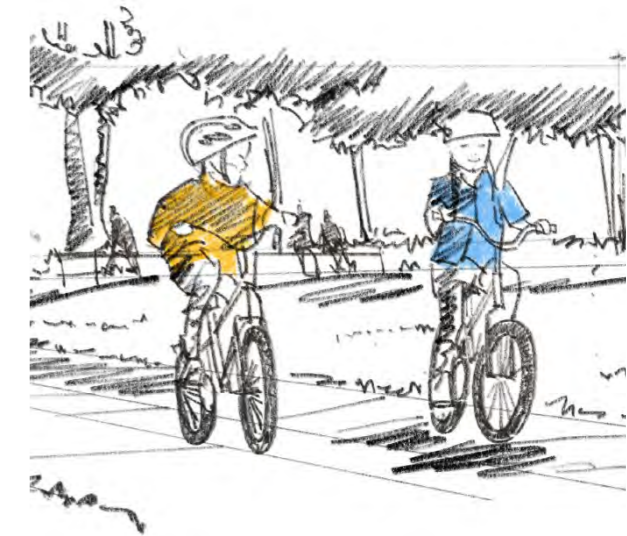


Figure 42 Artist impression of children riding to school

## Active Paths Program

Maribyrnong Council, in partnership with local primary schools and the Department of Transport and Planning (formerly known as VicRoads), have introduced the Active Paths Program.

The Active Paths Program has been designed for parents of primary school students who want to ride, walk, scoot or skate their way to school. Not only is this a fun way for children to start their school day, it also provides daily physical activity.

Similar initiatives with some variations were introduced in Seddon and Yarraville, traffic studies have shown 60 percent fewer crashes where people have been injured. This means all road users are safer, whether they walk, cycle or drive.



# DRAFT

## 2. Improvements to community hubs

Mill Park's community centres were identified as important spaces, but sometimes unknown or poorly accessible. The community can benefit from the following measures, in addition to the ongoing efforts. Below are some ideas for Council to consider developing further.

- Ensure community hubs have the facilities and services to provide a range of social infrastructure to meet the unique needs of the local community
  - Provide community support by encouraging and recognising emerging community leaders
  - Increase outreach to the community
  - Improve the interface to community hubs to draw people in with street appeal and increase community participation by exploring more open fencing and landscaping treatments
- Improve the resilience of precincts by undertaking precinct masterplans that aim to renovate aging infrastructure and buildings to support adaptability, mixed use and multifunctionality into the future
  - Upgrade Mill Park Drive precinct as a pedestrian friendly and mixed use community hub
- Enhance the sense of arrival to key precincts with landscaping, signage, and street furniture.

### Community building programs

- Community-led temporary road closures for short-term activation of streets for events such as street parties, play streets, and other community events
- Continue supporting outdoor dining on private land and pursue opportunities to maintain successful outdoor dining in key public spaces
- Investigate opportunity for Council to lease out shops at the Stables to increase available spaces for community to gather.

### THEMES

- 1 Greener spaces
- 2 Connected places
- 3 Thriving community and culture
- 4 Land use and built form

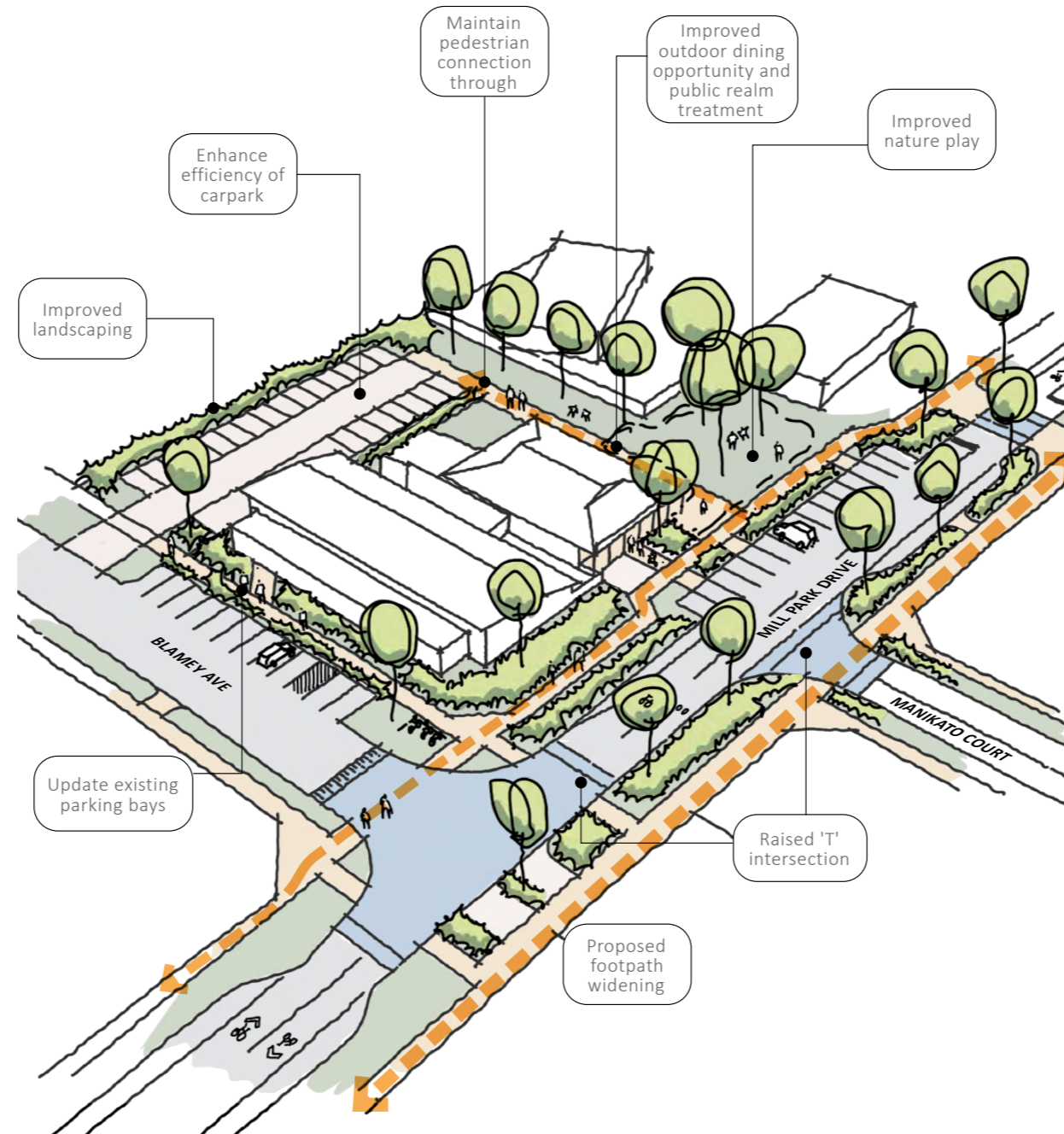


Figure 43 Miller Community Center as hub for the community to gather and socialise.

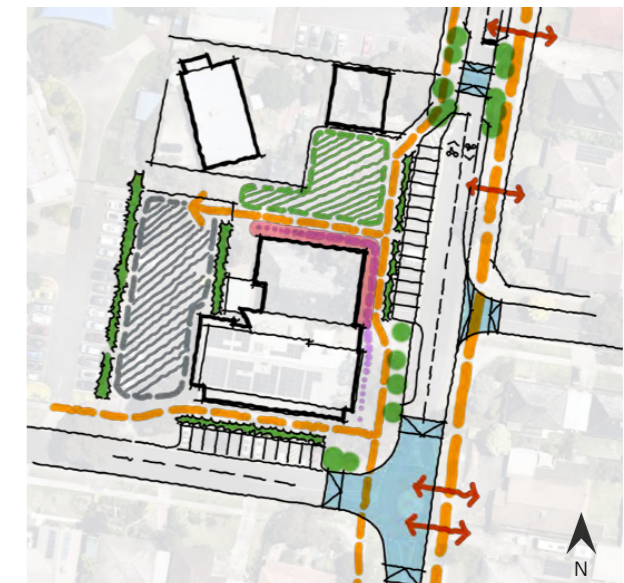


Figure 44 Conceptual idea to upgrade Mill Park Drive precinct.

### Mill Park Drive Precinct upgrade idea

Mill Park Drive hosts the Miller Community Centre, Maternal and Child Health centre, Mill Park Pre-school and two shops. This hub has the potential to be upgraded with traffic calming measures, landscaping treatments and a nature play space. This additional amenity creates a pedestrian and child-friendly community space that is welcoming and engaging.

A concept design can be formally developed for the precinct to improve on the above and consider the future of existing Council buildings also.



Figure 45 Artist Impression- conceptual upgrade Mill Park Drive precinct.



DRAFT

### 3. Revitalise key destinations

Key destinations include shops, parks, community or leisure centres and schools. Events, activities, public art and better planning came up as consistent themes to help these places. Community enjoyed events being held in and around the Stables, however, majority of these have now moved to South Morang's Civic Precinct. Events hosted by Council are already nearing capacity but there is opportunity to identify more event locations and support activities that local shops, community and other groups can host themselves to attract and engage the Mill Park community.

#### Short term activation ideas

- Identify sites across Mill Park that can be utilised for events, activations and festivals
  - Ensure sites identified have necessary facilities like access to water, 3 phase electricity, etc
- Encourage outdoor dining, trading, busking and street activations
- Create new public art and events based on local culture, community and history at key locations
- Identify ways to encourage and support walking and cycling to events and key destinations instead of driving, to alleviate traffic congestion
- Improve wayfinding to shops and services
- Provide short-term support to new, creative businesses and attract visitors through art and cultural displays.

#### Long term planning improvements

- Identify key improvements required to planning and infrastructure around key destinations
- Investigate holistic redevelopment of existing town centres as vibrant mixed-use centres
- Work with key stakeholders to overcome barriers to securing quality tenants, events and activities.

#### THEMES

- 1 Greener spaces
- 2 Connected places
- 3 Thriving community and culture
- 4 Land use and built form



Figure 46 Artist impression of temporary activation events held in Redleap reserve car park.

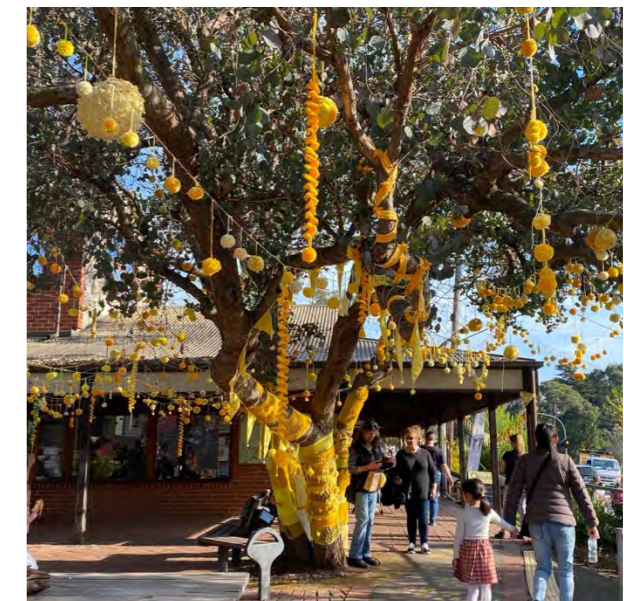


Figure 47 Image from the Hurstbridge Wattle Festival.

#### Hurstbridge Wattle Festival

Hurstbridge Wattle Festival celebrates Melbourne's green wedge in the Diamond Valley. This annual event began in 2004 and has grown year by year.

In 2022 the festival returned to the streets of Hurstbridge with record breaking numbers estimated to be over 15,000 people.

#### COMMUNITY AND TRADER ACTION OPPORTUNITY

Events and activities are something that you can organise within your own community or shops. **Did you know Council has community grants and staff that can support your event ideas?** Visit the Council website for more information.



# DRAFT

## 4. Re-imagining transmission easements and green corridors

Mill Park's corridors and easements, currently seen as having poor visual amenity, can be re-imagined as attractive, community-friendly spaces and movement corridors for cyclists and pedestrians. Transmission easements and green corridors such as Yan Yean Pipe Track, E6 corridor, Darebin Creek and Plenty River have the potential to be upgraded. Council could consider the following initiatives.

### Collaborative approach to improve, manage and maintain these linear open spaces

- Explore pilot projects and partnership opportunities with educational institutions, community groups, not-for-profits and other groups to develop initiatives to activate easements
- Involve Aboriginal communities and groups to integrate cultural practices in designing, activating and maintaining the land
- Promote appropriate uses along corridors and easements
  - New activities such as park runs, sculpture trails or other activations
  - Identify appropriate ways to support urban agriculture or other sustainable initiatives that activate and make these corridors feel safer
  - Consider leasing arrangements which can support both for-profit and non-profit initiatives.

**Place project 4 and place project 5 should be incorporated together.**

### THEMES

- 1 Greener spaces
- 2 Connected places
- 3 Thriving community and culture
- 4 Land use and built form



Figure 48 Re-imagining transmission line easement as a bio-diversity corridor.

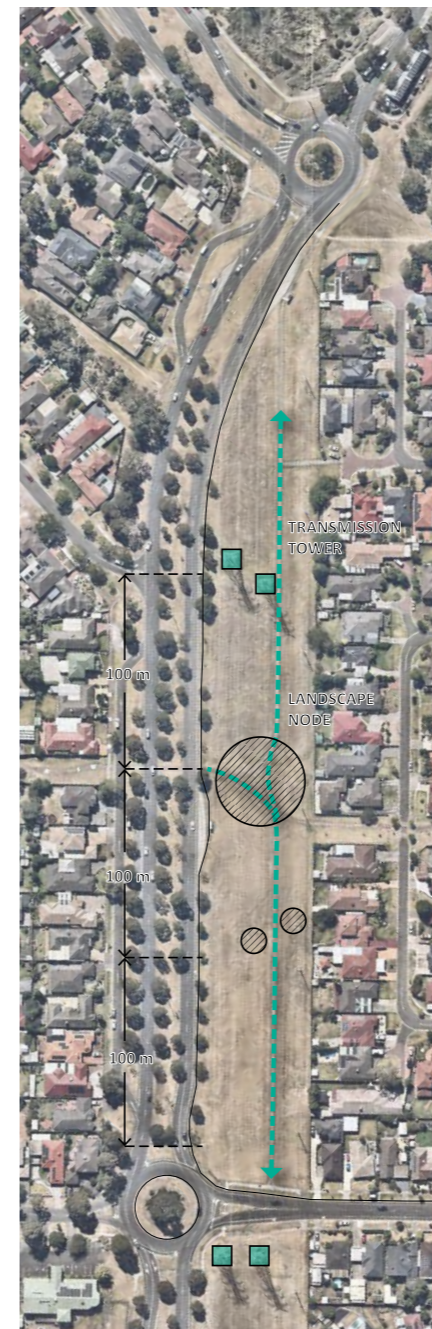


Figure 49 Diamond Creek Park Run

### Park Run

Parkrun is a free, community event where you can walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate. parkrun is 5k and takes place every Saturday morning. junior parkrun is 2k, dedicated to 4-14 year olds and their families, every Sunday morning.

### Woody Meadow Planting

Woody Meadows are diverse shrub plantings maintained by coppicing (hard pruning to 10-20 cm) to promote flowering and create dense canopies to exclude weeds.

### COMMUNITY ACTION OPPORTUNITY

This is something that you can organise within your own community.

Did you know Council has community grants and staff that can support your idea?



DRAFT

## 5. Upgrading parks and improving residential interfaces

Open spaces such as parks, reserves and corridors have lots backing onto them with high rear or side fences. This provides very limited opportunities for passive surveillance and makes these spaces feel unsafe to use. For women in particular, this was a key concern. Additionally, some smaller parks and open spaces are in need of upgrades and re-programming.

- Work with stakeholders, adjacent landowners, and authorities that back or side onto open space to improve passive surveillance and feeling of safety
- Develop guidelines or interface controls to ensure passive surveillance and access to Yan Yean Pipe Track, transmission line easements and open spaces for long-term activation
- Encourage newer developments to provide through pedestrian access to open space where suitable.
- Increase open space pockets in western and southern areas of Mill Park
- Increase the provision of seating, lighting, and planting along open spaces and corridors. Appropriate lighting improvements would highlight these spaces and improve the perception of safety
- Increase tree canopy cover and maximise planting opportunities to enhance greening
- Improve ease of movement by prioritising pedestrian crossings along Creek corridors
- Identify key crossing points along corridors to promote pedestrian and cycling connectivity within and outside the suburb
- Explore opportunities for temporary activation of the E6 corridor
- Support the Yan Yean Pipe Track shared path and Plenty River improvements.

### THEMES

- 1 Greener spaces
- 2 Connected places
- 3 Thriving community and culture
- 4 Land use and built form

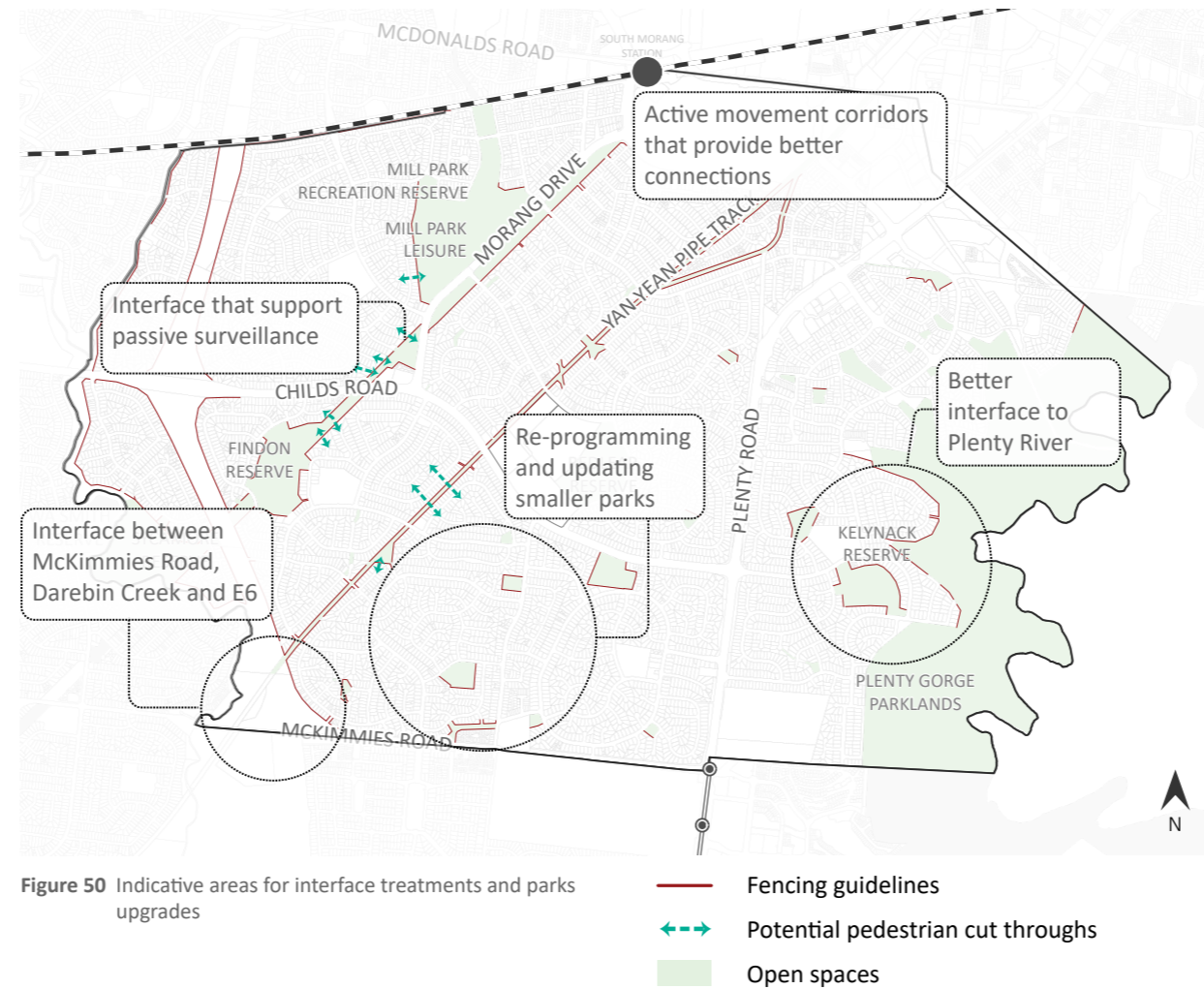
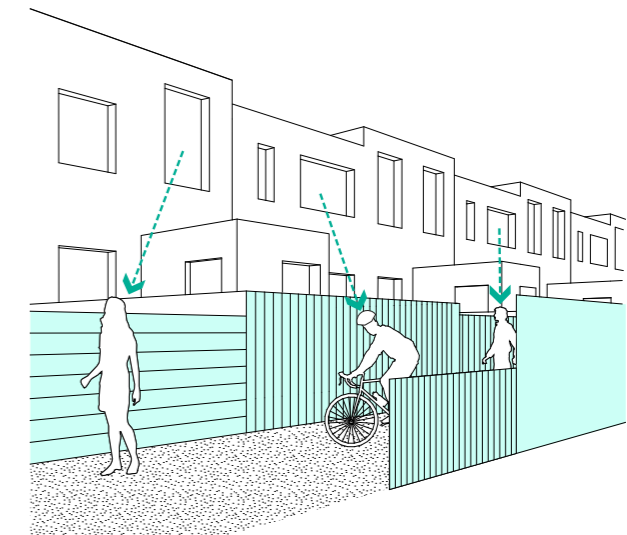


Figure 50 Indicative areas for interface treatments and parks upgrades



**Figure 51** Providing low fencing or designing buildings to overlook onto public spaces improves passive surveillance and feeling safe. Image source - Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria



**Figure 52** Image of easements passing through Mill Park with 1.8m rear or side fencing



# DRAFT

## 6. Identify ways to improve walkability through future development

Two of the biggest issues raised by community and internal staff alike was the poor walkability of Mill Park and traffic congestion. This is due to Mill Park's urban structure which is dominated by winding roads and cul-de-sacs and courts. This form can be difficult to navigate and makes walking inconvenient as it takes longer to walk to destinations than more direct routes. The positives of this structure is that it can provide respite from through-traffic and increase the perception of safety in courts and cul-de-sacs.

The idea of adding more pedestrian cut-throughs in strategic locations (i.e. to local shops, schools, parks or public transport) was identified as it can make walking more convenient than driving across the neighbourhood. Improving health and traffic issues at the same time.

To implement such improvements effectively, a comprehensive approach to future development in Mill Park is essential. Council can investigate this further with community, developers and experts to identify equitable and appropriate ways in which this can happen. The City of Maroondah Council has developed a Greening The Greyfields approach (see Appendix page 45) which may offer some ideas not just for Mill Park, but other established suburbs also.

### THEMES

- 1 Greener spaces
- 2 Connected places
- 3 Thriving community and culture
- 4 Land use and built form

Some potential ideas on this approach are listed below

### Increasing housing diversity

- Ensure development applications meet the needs of the existing community and the vision for the area. (Generally, in areas with potential for urban renewal)
- Identify dwelling typologies that deliver the appropriate density for Mill Park's residential areas and existing planning zones

### Tools for improving the urban structure

- Investigate appropriate planning controls, mechanisms and guidelines
- Investigate ways to support and encourage alternative housing development models that focus on improving community, environmental and precinct outcomes such as cohousing or cooperative approaches

### Pedestrian cut-throughs

- Improve the layout of the neighbourhood by providing more pedestrian access to key destinations (schools, shops, parks, public transport)
- Improve the interfaces of existing cut-throughs to feel safer and more open through future development

### Signage and wayfinding

- Improve mapping, signage and wayfinding to key destinations and pedestrian cut-throughs

### Strengthening the movement network

- Identify opportunities to enhance visual and physical links between green corridors, pedestrian paths, and destinations
- Improve walking, cycling and micromobility infrastructure to help alleviate vehicular traffic and congestion. This also has social, safety (more people around) and environmental benefits
- Support the delivery of shared path connections
- Improve the bus network to key destinations.



Figure 53 Comparison of walking distance to school versus distance as the crow flies.



Figure 54 Existing examples of pedestrian pathway connections in more recently developed areas of Mill Park

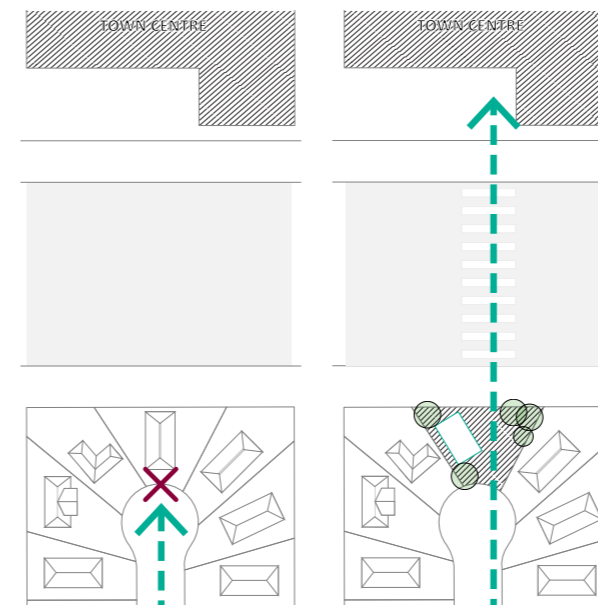


Figure 55 Example of cul-de-sac with no pedestrian access vs. with access

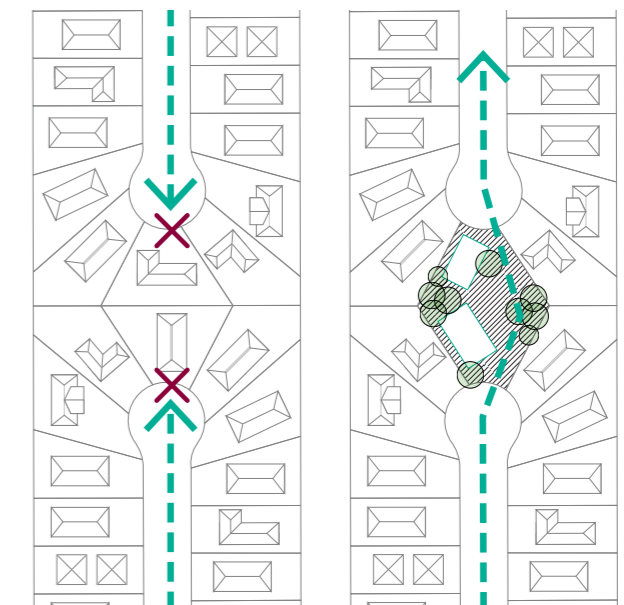


Figure 56 Example of two cul-de-sacs with no pedestrian access vs. with access



# Long term project ideas

- 1 Improve McKimmies Road**
  - Improve safety with anti-speeding measures and reworked roundabouts
  - Improve walking, cycling and lighting
  - Improve interfaces and accessibility
- 2 Advocate for Child's Road improvements:**
  - Advocate for off-road shared path or cycling
  - Advocate for redesign of Child's Road and Morang Drive roundabout
  - Advocate for peak hour traffic solution around the Stables
  - Advocate for quality design, maximising greening and walking and cycling safety
- 3 Advocate for Plenty Road upgrades**
  - Coordinate with local and state agencies for Tram 86 advocacy
  - Advocate for off-road shared paths with lighting, seating, and shade
  - Council to investigate potential growth with new Tram stops
- 4 Darebin Creek and Plenty River corridor**
  - Support delivery of missing trail sections
  - Identify additional east-west connections along and connecting to waterway trails
  - Enhance and preserve biodiversity while making corridors enjoyable for users.
- 5 Better support for town centres**
  - Encourage local employment opportunities.
  - Increase accessibility to shops within an 800m radius
  - Improve wayfinding to key destinations
  - Work with landowners and businesses to improve facades and future planning
  - Identify areas that can accommodate appropriate densities to support local economy.

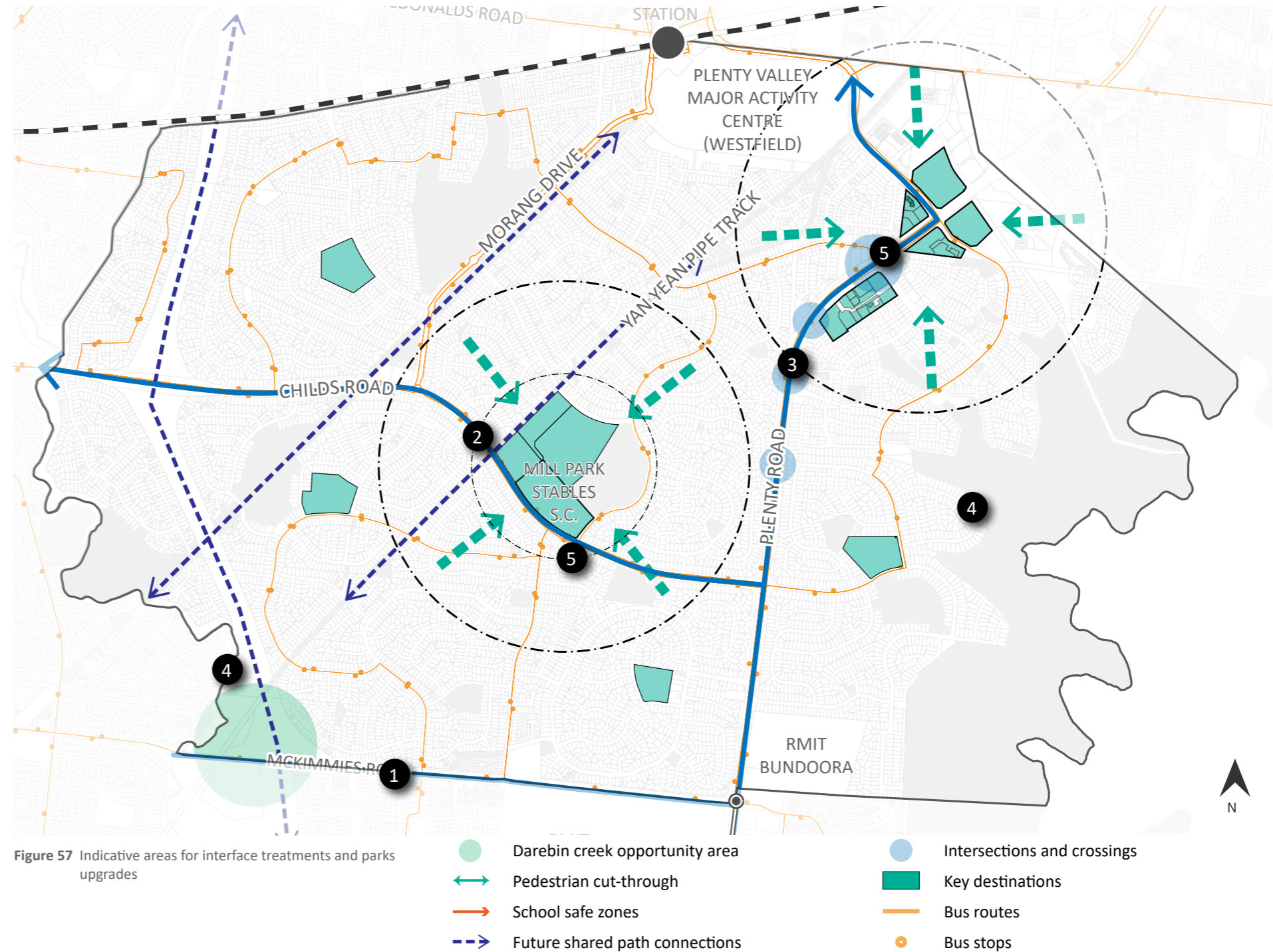


Figure 57 Indicative areas for interface treatments and parks upgrades





# 04

## Appendix

### List of appendix items

1. Opportunities themes and place projects
2. Current projects in Mill Park
3. Background data
4. Community engagement details









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APPENDIX

### 3. Background data

#### Residential capacity areas

##### Walkability and access to amenities

The walkable catchment maps for the open spaces, access to public transport stops and town centres were overlaid to create a heat map.

The map shows areas that are in proximity to these amenities and public transport stops. Darker or reddish areas indicate the good walkable access whereas lighter or yellow coloured areas indicate poor access.

##### Data from other Council documents

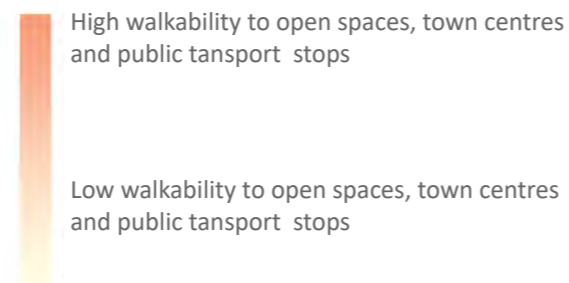
Areas around Mill Park Stables, McKimmies Road, Plenty Road around University Hill and Bush Boulevard Town Centre indicate greater opportunity for increased dwelling densities.

There is also need to increase greenlinks and pedestrian cut throughs in the inner parts of the suburb to increase walkability.



Figure 59 Base map shows combined heat map of walkability to open spaces, PTV and town centres and opportunities to increase density.

#### LEGEND



Opportunity to increase residential density



# DRAFT

## Greener Spaces



Figure 60 Canopy cover (above 3m in height)

- LEGEND**
- Mill Park Boundary
  - Tree locations above 3m
  - Areas with greater canopy cover



Figure 61 Flood extents for 20, 50, and 100 year using Council's flood data.

- LEGEND**
- Mill Park Boundary
  - Flood Prone areas
  - Areas with higher potential flooding issues



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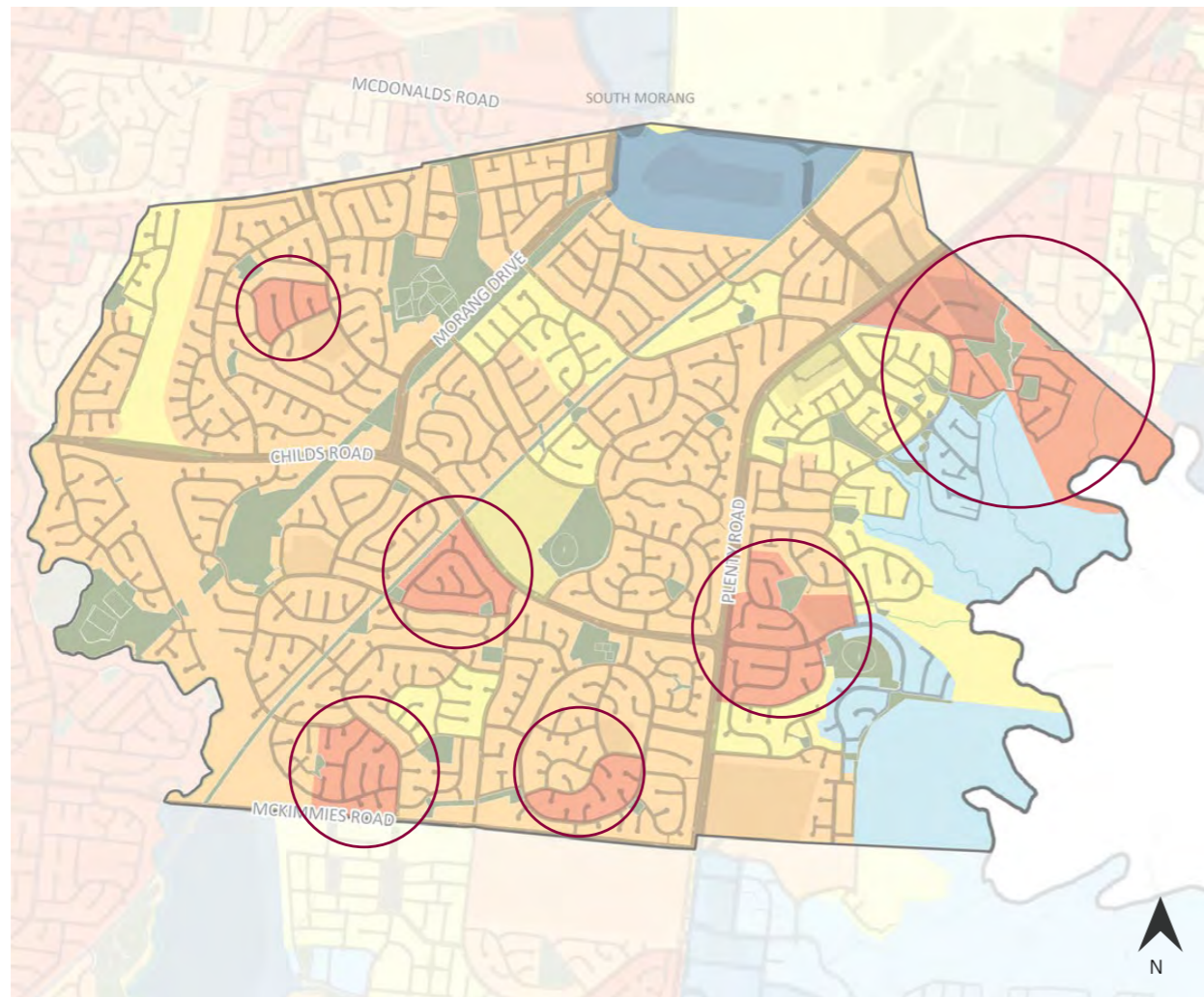


Figure 62 Heat Vulnerability Index (SA1)

- LEGEND**
- Mill Park Boundary
  - Heat vulnerability Index (0-5)
  - SA1 areas vulnerable to heat

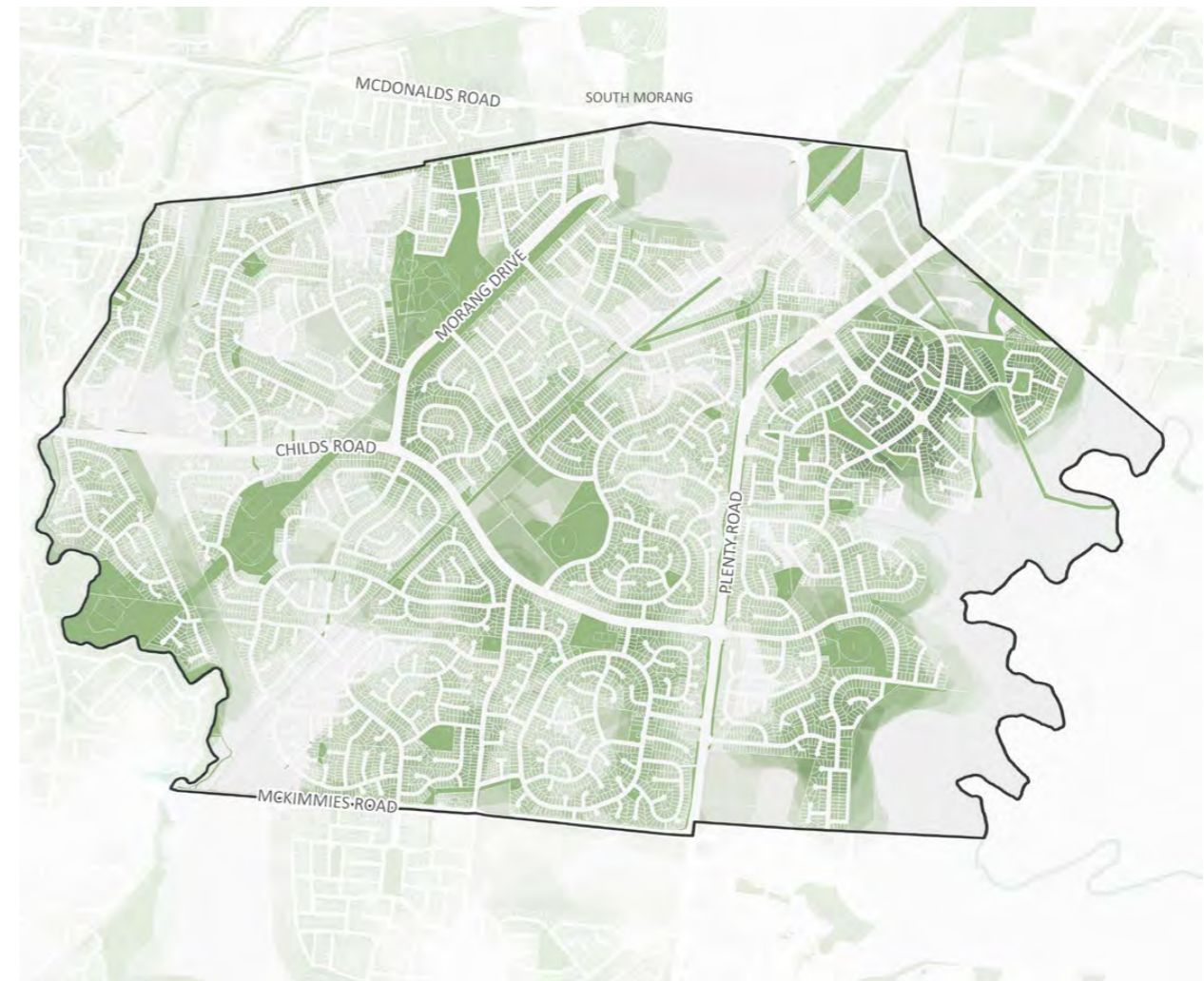


Figure 63 Walkable catchment from sporting facilities and reserves (200m, 400m, 800m) and parks (200m, 400m)

- LEGEND**
- Mill Park Boundary
  - Walkable catchments from open Space
  - Walkable catchment gaps



# DRAFT

## Connected places

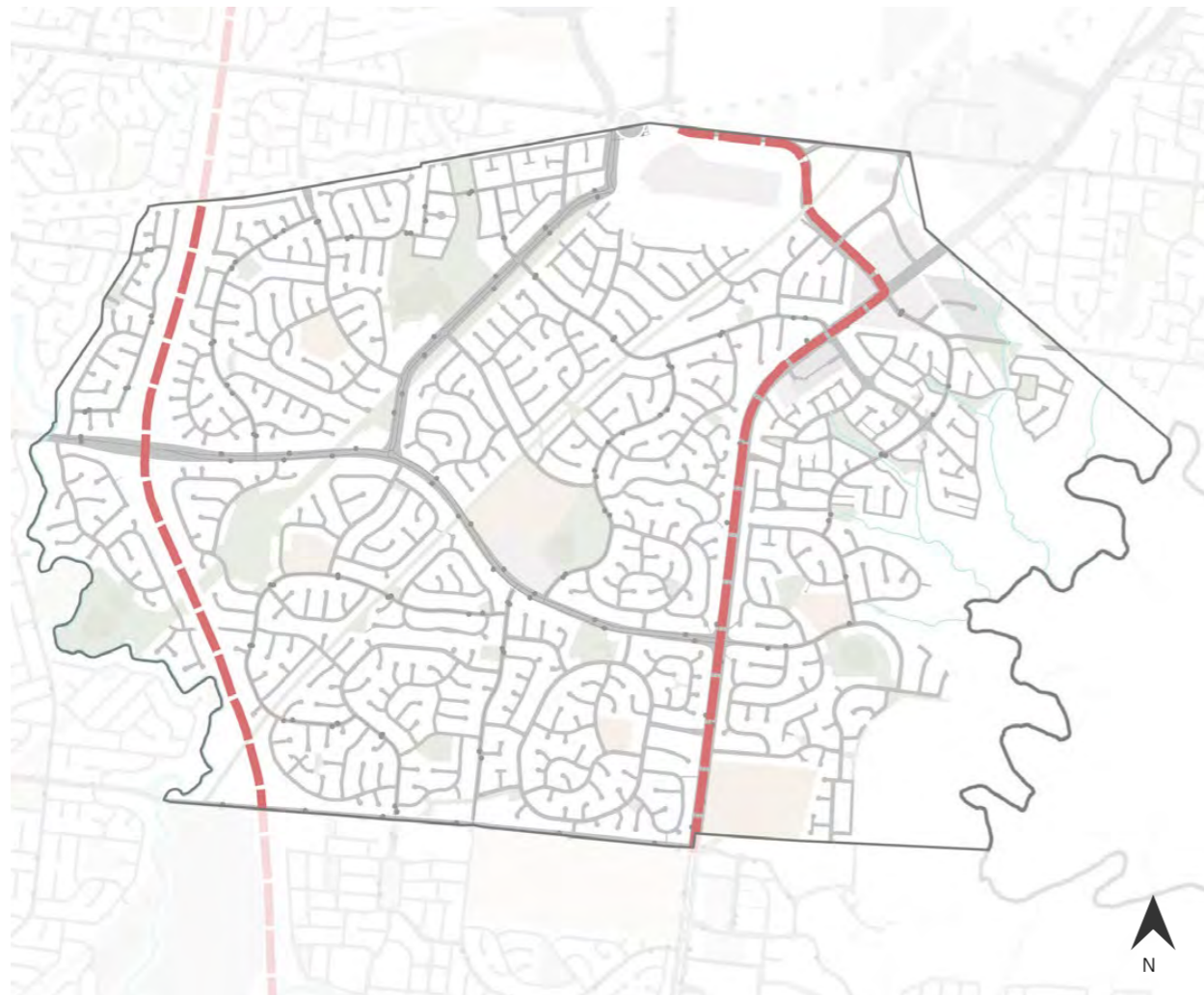


Figure 65 Major Advocacy projects

- LEGEND**
- Mill Park Boundary
  - - - Advocacy projects



Figure 64 Walkable catchment from railway stations (200m, 400m, 800m) Bus and tram stops (200m, 400m).

- LEGEND**
- Mill Park Boundary
  - Walkable catchments from schools
  - Walkable catchment gaps
  - Bus route



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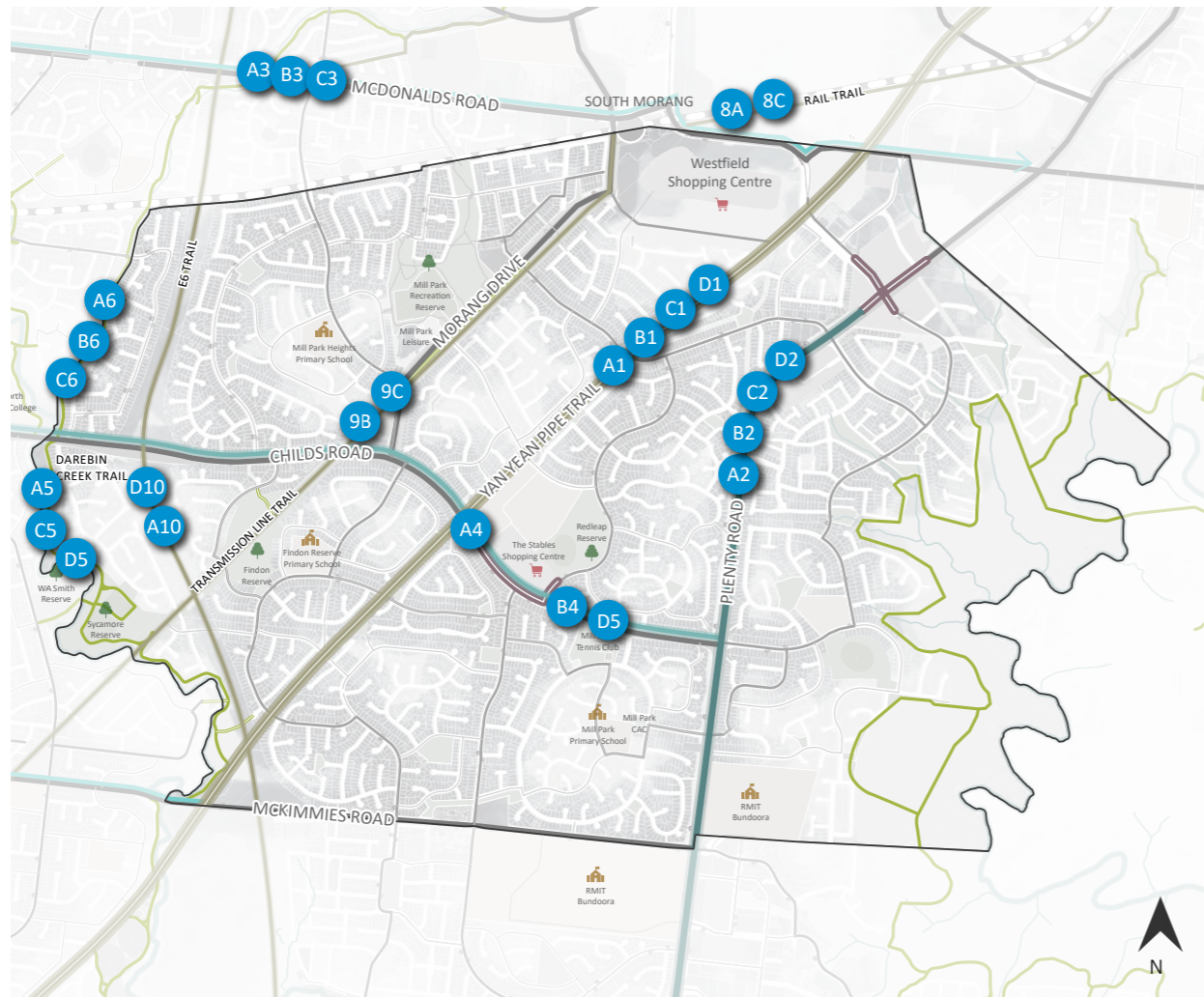


Figure 67 Transport priorities summary map

LEGEND

- |                       |                               |                                    |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 Yan Yean pipe track | 5 Hendersons road drain trail | A Place and Movement Plan          |
| 2 Plenty road         | 6 Dalton road                 | B Walking and Cycling Plan         |
| 3 McDonalds road      | 7 South Morang rail trail     | C Northern Regional Trail Strategy |
| 4 Childs road         | 8 Transmission line           | D Integrated Transport Strategy    |
| 4 Darebin creek trail | 9 E6                          |                                    |

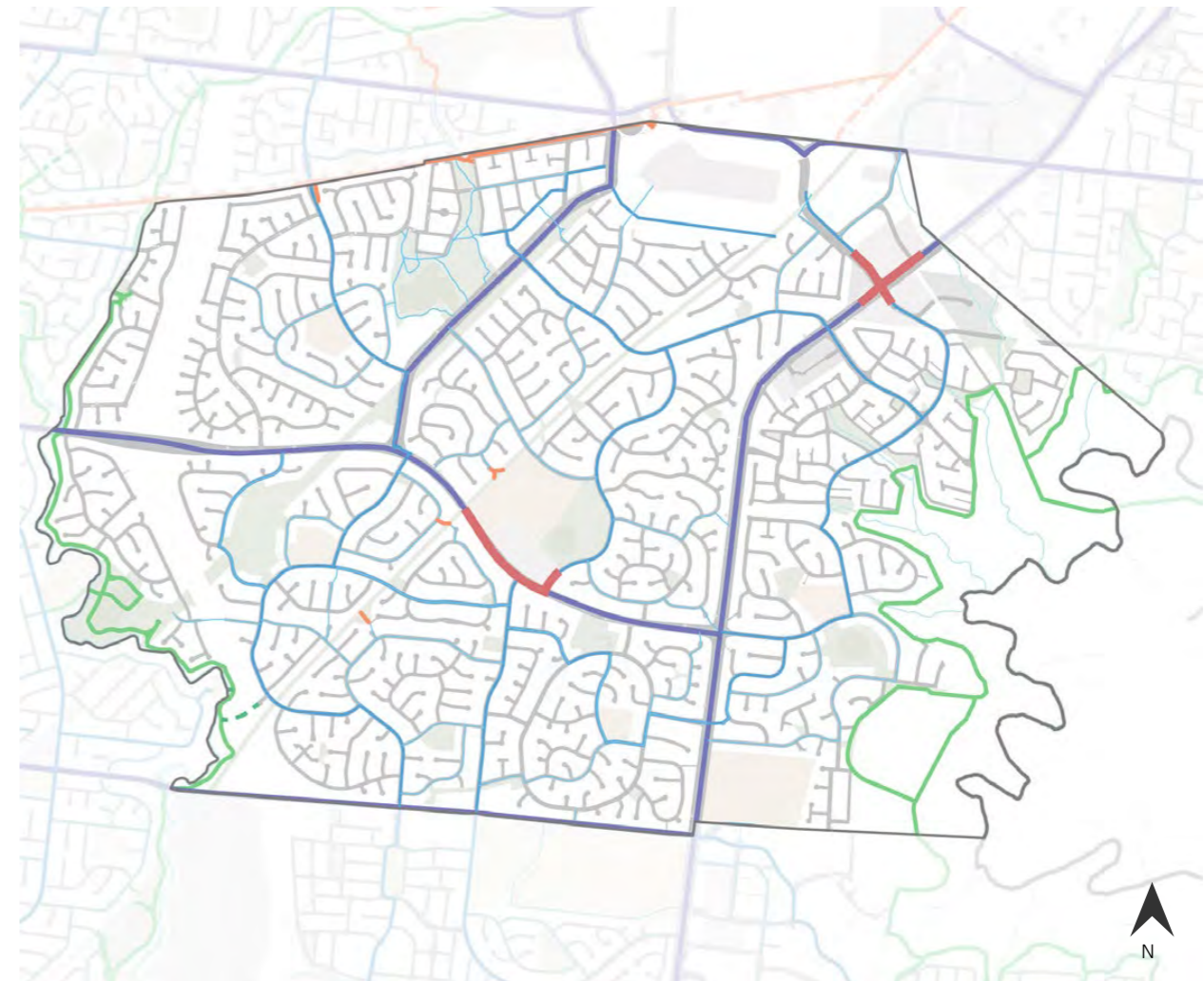


Figure 66 Place and Movement Plan summary map

LEGEND

- Main activity street
- Recreational trail
- - - Missing recreational trail
- Primary commuter trail
- - - Missing primary commuter trail
- Streets for people
- - - Local links



# DRAFT

## Thriving community hubs

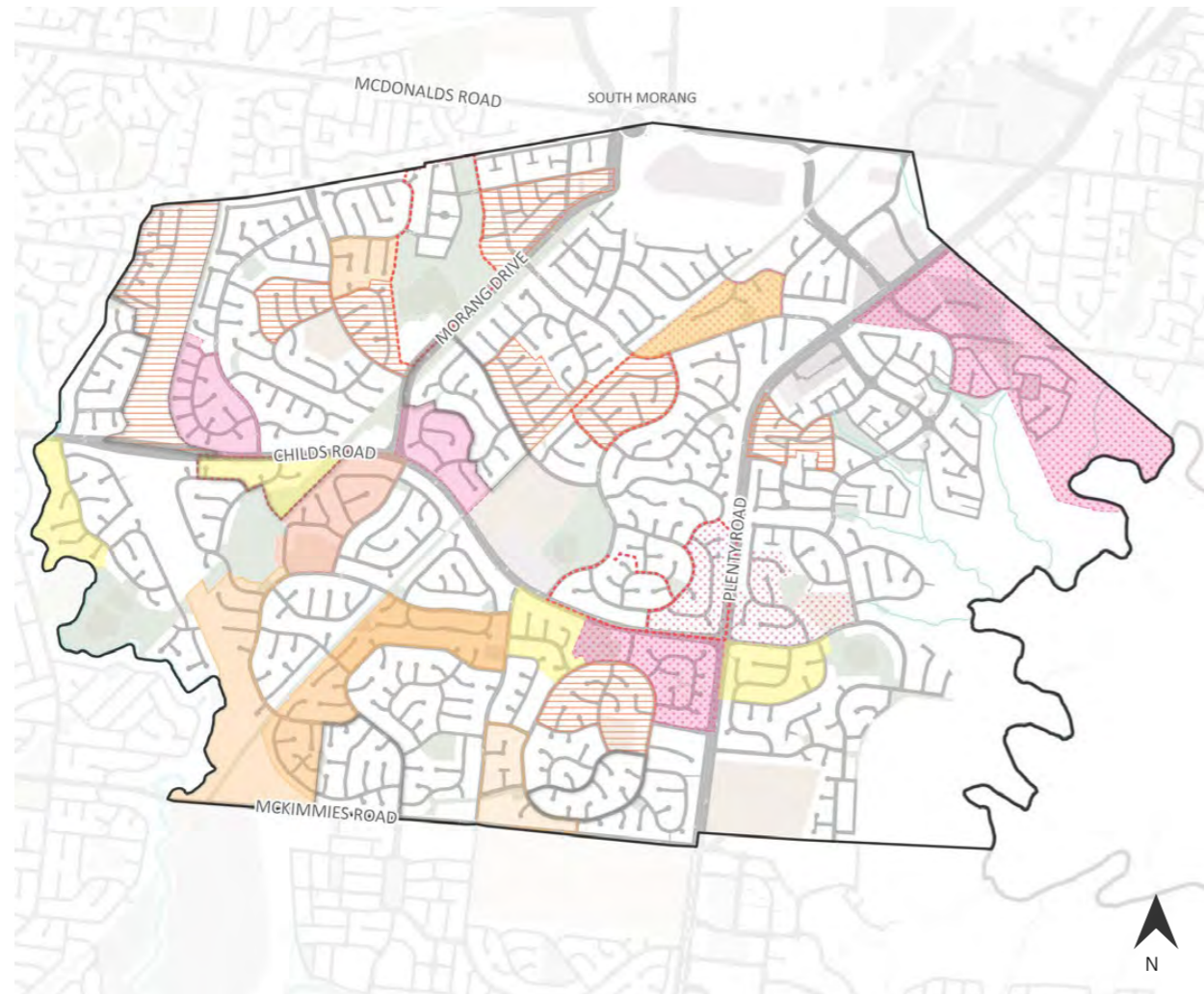


Figure 68 Lowest performing areas in Mill Park based on various factors. Data from ABS (SA1)

**LEGEND**

- Mill Park boundary
- Lower SEIFA ranking
- Higher % of people over 65 years of age
- Higher % travel by car
- Higher mortgage stress
- Higher rental stress
- ▨ Higher unemployment rate
- ▨ Higher long term health conditions



Figure 69 Walkable catchments from schools (200m, 400m and 800m)

**LEGEND**

- Mill Park Boundary
- Community Hubs
- Walkable catchments from schools
- Walkable catchment gaps



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Land use and built form

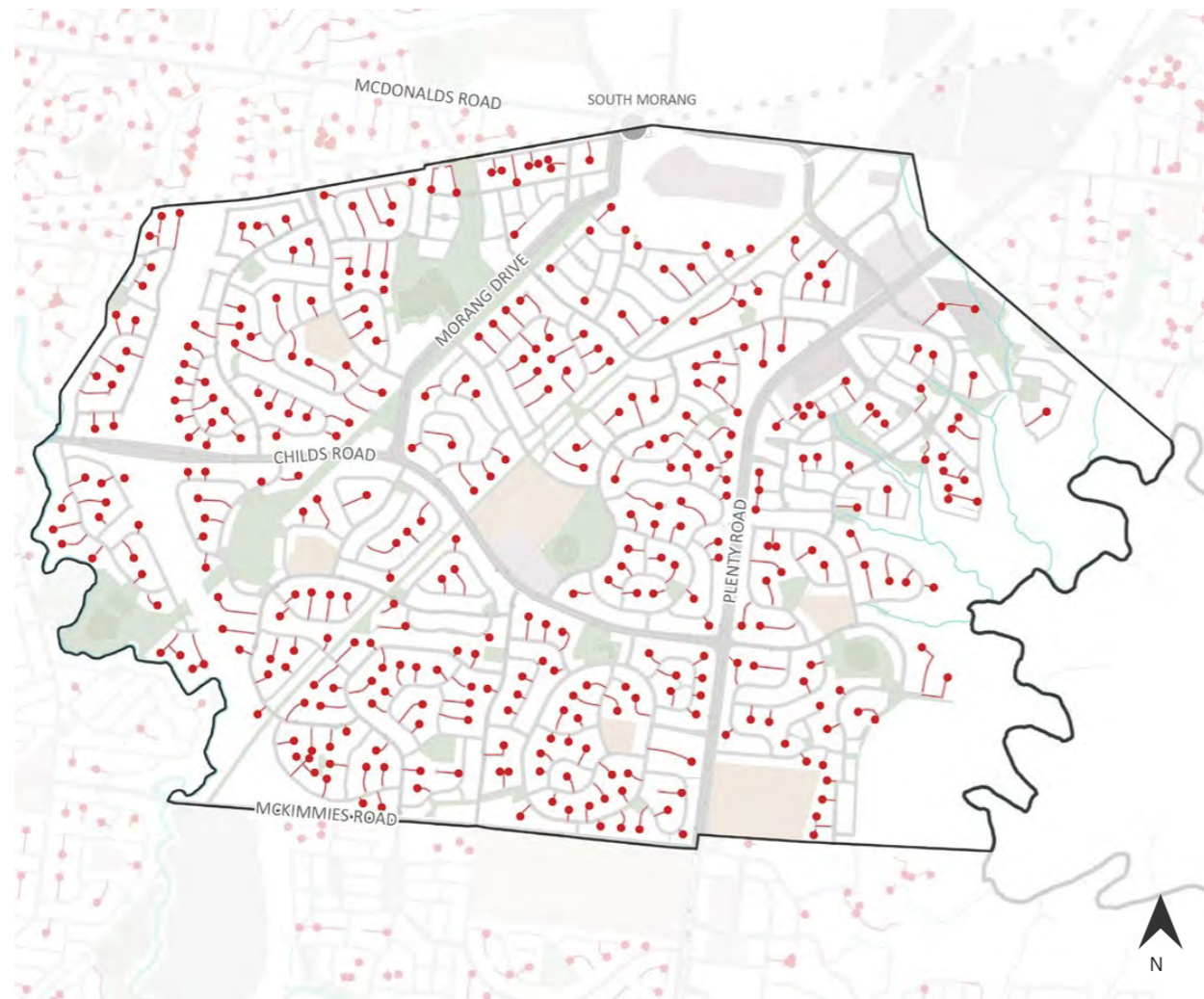


Figure 70 Location of cul-de-sacs or deadend streets in Mill Park

- Mill Park Boundary
- Deadend roads



Figure 71 Walkable catchments from town centres and shops. Base map shows walkable catchment from town centres at 200m, 400m, 800m.

- Mill Park Boundary
- Town centres
- Walkable catchments from town centres
- Walkable catchment gaps



### Mill Park character profile

Most of the precinct was developed during the 1970's and 1980's after the land was subdivided for residential development.

1970s development in south-east was consistently characterised by Mission Brown single-storey detached often accompanied by low or non-existent front fences.

1980s development in Western and Central Areas reflects a variety of architectural influences from the 1980s, showcasing diversity in design within the precinct.

In recent years, single lots are being subdivided for the development of multi-unit residences.

There are apartment dwellings and higher density around the Plenty Valley Town Centre in the northern part of Mill Park.

However, the urban pattern with curvilinear and court bowl networks proves a challenge to increase permeability. It also poses a challenge for larger developments in lot consolidation.



Figure 72 No front fences



Figure 74 Low, single storey



Figure 76 Gaps between buildings



Figure 73 Garden canopy trees



Figure 75 Subdued earth tones



Figure 77 5-9 m front setbacks



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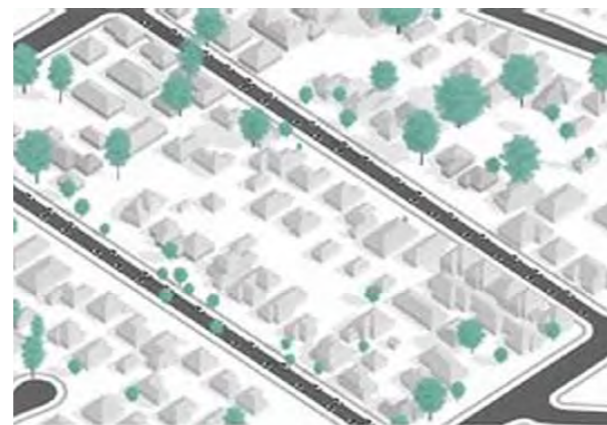
## Greening the Greyfield

City of Maroondah has collaborated with the community and Swinburne University to develop a groundbreaking precinct aimed at addressing local issues through better design.

The Greening the Greyfields pilot project involves extensive research and land analysis to identify areas for beneficial development.

By working with property owners, developers, and the community, the program explores land amalgamation, transforming individual lots into larger precincts. This approach offers financial benefits and aims to create vibrant, active, and healthy neighborhoods.

Greening the Greyfields has been gazetted into Maroondah's Planning Scheme and offers some great learnings for other Councils to consider.



### Original Greenfield Division

- Single lots
- Detached housing
- Low density
- Car dependent
- Now middle suburban
- Ageing housing
- Value now resides in land
- Reveloping



### Business-as-usual Greyfield Redevelopment

- Knock-down-rebuild
- Small lot subdivision
- Minimal increase in housing
- Suboptimal design
- Greenspace and tree loss
- Increased hard surfaces
- Increased stormwater run-off
- Increased urban heat
- Increase in private cars
- No new services, amenity



### Greyfield Precinct Regeneration

- Lot amalgamation
- Design innovation
  - zero carbon housing
  - water sensitive design
  - higher dwelling yields
  - medium density
  - mixed dwelling types, sizes
  - maintain greenspace
  - redesign streetscape
  - improved non-car mobility
- Community additionality/benefit



## 4. Community engagement details

Between December 2023 and February 2024, the Council conducted comprehensive feedback collection and desktop analysis involving both the community and Council officers. This involved multiple activities, including an online survey, social mapping, meetings with a community reference group, and workshops with the Internal Local Area Team (East). Through these engagements, stakeholders were informed and educated, enabling them to provide detailed and tailored feedback regarding their experience of Mill Park.

The initial workshops were focused on gathering feedback in the form of 'pins' that noted a members positive or negative feedback about their experience.

### Place-specific issues and opportunities

Apart from general issues and opportunities, place-specific issues were identified through the workshops.

- Improve public transport access to Plenty Gorge parklands.
- Enhance passive surveillance at Kelynack Reserve for increased safety.
- Introduce youth-focused services at Coventry Park.
- Improve Norris Bank Reserve to enhance recreational amenities and green spaces.
- Address the movement barrier caused by Plenty Road for better connectivity.
- Seize the opportunity near Miller Community Centre to enhance small green spaces and boost shopping options in collaboration with various organisations.
- Collaborate with Bundoora RMIT to form groups that champion green spaces and promote volunteering.

- Explore the potential of translating the success of Aurora Shopping Center to Mill Park for a vibrant community hub.
- Strengthen connections between Redleap and Stables for improved community flow.
- Promote the use of recyclable materials and discourage heat-absorbing materials in developments.
- Encourage higher densities around Westfields and South Morang Station to enhance urban living.
- Consider walk-throughs between cul-de-sacs when transitioning from low to medium density.
- Evaluate the role of Council in managing density and development with larger buildings, considering natural growth.
- Address the visual appeal of run-down buildings for a more attractive community.
- Improve lighting and safety measures for night-time conditions.
- Enhance frontages along Plenty Road to create a more welcoming environment.
- Utilise YMCA land by incorporating open spaces and sporting areas, potentially with front-facing lots.

The insights gathered, stemming from both internal and external sources, have been systematically captured online. They are organised based on their relevance to the specific location and categorised into appropriate themes for clarity and ease of reference.

The issues and opportunities were classified into -

- Greener Spaces
- Connected Places
- Thriving Community Hubs
- Landuse and built form





### Common Themes

#### Greener spaces

- Greening and vegetation
- Connections to waterways and open spaces
- Smaller parks as their own destinations
- Wayfinding to key destinations

#### Connected places

- Tram extension
- Traffic and pedestrian safety
- Pedestrian connections

#### Thriving community hubs

- Temporary activations at community hubs
- Events at Mill Park Stables
- Co-locating uses in community places such as Mill Park library

#### Land use and built form

- Perception of safety
- More housing and affordability
- Shop and streetscape upgrades

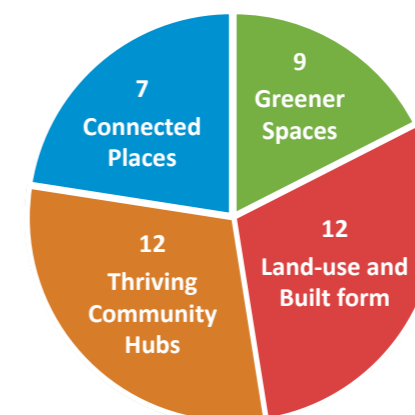
KEY ITEMS AS A GROUP IDENTIFIED IN THE PLACE FRAMEWORK	THEME ALIGNMENT
Refresh and upgrade	Landuse and built form
Safety @ stables	Landuse and built form
Smaller shop improvements	Landuse and built form
Tailor opportunities to future demographics	Thriving community hubs
RMIT students review (where to they go)	Thriving community hubs
Lots of transport options but not connected	Connected places
Old facilities needing revamp	Landuse and built form
Plenty gorge wayfinding and access to be improved	Greener spaces
Poor connections to Mcdonalds road and Westfield's	Connected places
Kangaroo management	Greener spaces
Eastern side neglected more than west-side	Thriving community hubs
Co-locate new uses and connectivity	Thriving community hubs
Understand community voice! Especially business owners	Landuse and built form
Large chain and shops have impacted other shops	Landuse and built form
No train or trams - bus only	Connected places
Cycling - lack of safe paths	Connected places
Subdivision layout is bad	Landuse and built form
Better streetscapes	Greener spaces
Shops and park upgrades needed	Landuse and built form
Community services is a strength	Greener spaces
Large community presence	Thriving community hubs
More trees and more species needed	Greener spaces
More places as reasons to go.	Thriving community hubs
Safety with vehicles. Especially around schools	Thriving community hubs
Housing reform	Landuse and built form
Walking and cycling to shops and parks and schools can be improved	Connected places
East-west connectivity is poor. More than 1.5hours!	Connected places
Childcare and schools needed	Landuse and built form
Young people not feeling welcomed	Thriving community hubs
More housing/affordability	Landuse and built form

Summary of items identified in internal engagement.

KEY ITEMS AS A GROUP IDENTIFIED IN THE PLACE FRAMEWORK	THEME ALIGNMENT
Community hub with events or temporary uses/ services	Thriving community hubs
Peak hour traffic and safety concerns	Connected places
Farmers market in Mill Park	Thriving community hubs
Make each park a destination in its own way	Greener spaces
Opportunity to make the Mill Park Library a HUB	Thriving community hubs
Stables need more greenery -such an amazing space that is underutilised	Greener spaces
Tram extension	Connected places
All roundabout paths are far away from actual crossing points	Connected places
Affordability and diversity is really important, but it needs to stay green and natural	Landuse and built form
Lack of lighting, safety	Landuse and built form

Summary of items identified in external engagement.

KEY THEME TOTALS			
Greener spaces	Land use and built form	Thriving community hubs	Connected places
9	12	12	7







**Council Offices**  
25 Ferres Boulevard  
South Morang VIC 3752

**Email:** [info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au)  
**Website:** [whittlesea.vic.gov.au](http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

**Postal address**  
City of Whittlesea Locked Bag  
Bundoora MDC VIC 3083

**Phone:** 9217 2170  
National Relay Service: 133 677  
(ask for 9217 2170)

Connect with us in your  
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Free telephone interpreter service  
 **131 450**





## 5.8 Tender 2024-3 Construction of a Signalised Intersection at Findon Rd and Williamsons Rd, South Morang

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

**Report Author:** Senior Engineering Project Manager

**In Attendance:** Manager Capital Delivery  
Unit Manager Engineering Design & Construction  
Coordinator Civil Engineering Delivery

This attachment has been designated as confidential in accordance with sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on the grounds that it contains private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that:

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

### Executive Summary

It is proposed that contract number 2024-3 for Construction of a Signalised Intersection at Findon Road and Williamsons Road, South Morang is awarded to BMD Constructions Pty Ltd for the lump price of \$2,554,918.25 (excluding GST).

The Tender Evaluation Panel advises that:

- Five tenders were received.
- The recommended tenderer is the highest ranked and has demonstrated the required capability, capacity, qualification.
- Collaborative tendering was not undertaken in relation to this procurement because it is not listed in the Northern Councils Alliance consolidated contract register and this contract relates to a unique need for the City of Whittlesea.
- this contract commits capital budget in the 2025-25 Council Budget.

This contract was publicly tendered on 20 January 2024 and tenders closed on 20 February 2024.



## Officers' Recommendation

### THAT Council:

1. Resolve to award the following contract to BMD Constructions Pty Ltd:  
Number: 2024-3  
Title: Construction of a Signalised intersection at Findon Road and Williamsons Road, South Morang  
Cost: A lump sum of \$2,554,918.25 (excluding GST)  
subject to the following conditions:
  - a) Contractor providing contract security and proof of currency for insurance cover as required in the tender documents.
  - b) Price variations to be in accordance with the provisions as set out in the tender documents.
  - c) Price variations to be in accordance with the provisions as set out in the conditions of contract.
2. Approve the funding arrangements as detailed in the confidential attachment.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign and execute the contract on behalf of Council.



## Background / Key Information

The purpose of this contract is to upgrade the existing intersection at Findon Road and Williamsons Road, South Morang to a signalised intersection. Works include road widening, drainage works, installation of traffic signals, streetlights, signage, line marking and landscape works.

Public tenders for the contract closed on 20 February 2024. The tendered prices and a summary of the evaluation are detailed in the confidential attachment.

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

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

Criteria	Weighting (standard)
Price	60 %
Capability	15 %
Capacity	15 %
Sustainability	10 %

The weightings reflect the relative importance of each element to this particular contract. They were determined as being most appropriate after considering numerous factors including (but not restricted to) the time, quality, risk and contract management requirements to achieve best value. The allocated weighting are standard as per Council's Procurement Procedures.

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

Council received five tender submissions, which were evaluated based on price and contract conformance. Out of five tender submissions only one tender submission (Tenderer A) was considered to be conforming and competitive.



Tenderer B was not conforming as they did not meet the mandatory pre-qualification levels and the other three tenderers were not sufficiently competitive as their prices were more than 20% above the pre-tender cost estimate.

The Tender Probity and Evaluation Plan specified that tenders with a price greater than 20% above the pre-tender cost estimate be set aside during the initial tender evaluation phase, to aid the shortlisting and evaluation process. These higher priced tenders are unlikely to be considered any further unless:

- the lower priced tenders are considered inadequate and are eliminated from the tender evaluation process,
- it is the opinion of Council that retendering the works would not result in lower tender prices;
- and Council approves the allocation of additional budget should a higher priced tender be recommended for award of contract.

In this case, the three tenders set aside were priced significantly more than 20% of the pre-tender cost-estimate and were not considered value for money. If no suitably priced tenders were available for shortlisting in the tender evaluation process, then Council would have re-tendered the works to seek more competitive tender prices.

The evaluation outcome was as follows:

<b>Tenderer</b>	<b>Conforming</b>	<b>Competitive</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>Tenderer A BMD Constructions Pty Ltd</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>98.1</b>	<b>1</b>
Tenderer B	No	Yes	N/A	N/A
Tenderer C	Yes	No	N/A	N/A
Tenderer D	Yes	No	N/A	N/A
Tenderer E	Yes	No	N/A	N/A

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

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

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

#### **Connected Communities**

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

The construction of a signalised intersection at Findon Road and Williamsons Road will improve local access to surrounding community facilities such as schools, train station and shopping centre, as well as reducing travel times, congestion and delay. Safety of the intersection will also be enhanced through the provision of traffic signals.

### **Strong Local Economy**

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

The completion of the project will, not only provide for efficient movement of traffic around the school and the train station, but also support the local economy by providing improved transport connectivity.

### **Sustainable Environment**

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

The installation of improved drainage along the south side of Findon Road will assist with management of stormwater for existing and future developments in the area.

BMD Constructions Pty Ltd is committed to sustainable business practices and advise that they use low carbon concrete, recycled crushed rock and reclaimed asphalt to reduce carbon emissions.

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

### **Financial Management**

Funding for this contract is available in the Capital Program for the Findon Road and Williamsons Rd intersection upgrade over a number of financial years. Refer to the confidential information for further information.

### **Community Consultation and Engagement**

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, consideration was given as to whether there were any opportunities to collaborate with other councils and public bodies or to use any existing collaborative procurement arrangements.

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



## Other Principles for Consideration

### Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

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

### Public Transparency Principles

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

## Council Policy Considerations

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

It is proposed to reduce carbon emissions by maximising the use of local sustainable and recycled products in the construction process wherever possible including recycled crushed concrete in lieu of crushed rock, reclaimed asphalt in the asphalt mixes and the re-use of excavated rock. An Environmental Management Plan will be prepared and implemented during the construction phase.

### Social, Cultural and Health

The construction of this signalisation intersection will reduce traffic congestion and improved connectivity in the local precinct.

### Economic

Economic benefits will be realised by utilising local businesses or subcontractors during the construction period. The project will also enable more efficient travel in the local precinct.

### Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications

A formal contract will be executed between Council and the successful tenderer prior to the works commencing.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

There is no requirement to communicate the contract award decision of this report to the community beyond the Council minutes. However, information regarding the proposed works will be provided via Council's communication channels and to relevant stakeholders.

### **Critical Dates**

It is anticipated that the project will commence in late 2024 with a timeline for completion of mid to late 2025.

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

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

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

### **Attachments**

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED – 2024-3 Confidential Tender Evaluation Summary [5.8.1 - 3 pages]



## 5.9 Councillor Expense and Support Policy

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

**Report Author:** EA to Council

**In Attendance:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

### Executive Summary

On 26 June 2024, the *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024 (LGA Act)* came into operation. The purpose of this new Act was to make amendments to the Principal Act; namely the *Local Government Act 2020 (Act)*.

The main purposes of the LGA Act are to:

- provide for ongoing mandatory Councillor training;
- improve the Councillor Conduct framework;
- provide for the suspension and disqualification of individual Councillors in certain circumstances;
- provide further powers to the Chief Municipal Inspector;
- other miscellaneous amendments to the *Local Government Act 1989* and Act; and
- minor administrative changes.

This report is to seek Council's endorsement of the Councillor Expense and Support Policy which takes into consideration at a high level, some of the amendments made to the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT Council Endorse the Councillor Expense and Support Policy at Attachment 1.**

## Background / Key Information

The Councillor Expense and Support Policy was adopted by Council on 21 November 2023 and then further considered by Council on 21 May 2024 in conjunction with the Draft Governance Rules.

In brief, amendments to the current version of the Councillor Expense and Support Policy, to incorporate the new LGA Act, are as follows:

- Section 14.1 Professional Development Training
  - Requirement for all Councillors to undertake mandatory training annually.
  - Withholding individual allowances for failure to complete mandatory training until training completed.
- Section 14.2 Mayor Training
  - Additional content to incorporate mandatory training for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor within one month after their election, even if they have previously undertaken the training.
  - Withholding the Mayor and or Deputy Mayor allowance for failure to complete the mandatory training within the required one-month period, until training completed.
- Section 21 Indemnity for Councillors – Legal Costs
  - Additional section to indicate what Council will and will not indemnify.
- Section 23 Standing down a Councillor by VCAT
  - Additional section to incorporate actions if a Councillor is charged with an offence.
- Minor administrative change

## Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

### High Performing Organisation

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

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

### Financial Management

The cost is included in the current budget.

### Community Consultation and Engagement

The Act does not require community consultation when amending the Policy.



## Other Principles for Consideration

### Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

- (a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.
- (i) The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

### Public Transparency Principles

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

## Council Policy Considerations

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

No implications.

### Social, Cultural and Health

No implications.

### Economic

No implications.

### Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications

No implications.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

The Policy will be placed on Council's website and CoWHUB (Intranet).

### Critical Dates

There are no critical dates associated with the adoption of this Policy.

### Declaration of Conflict of Interest

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

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

### Attachments

1. Councillor Expense and Support Policy [5.9.1 - 17 pages]





## COUNCILLOR EXPENSE AND SUPPORT POLICY

### 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 In accordance with section 41 of the Act, Council must adopt and maintain a policy in relation to the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses for Councillors and members of delegated committees.
- 1.2 Councillors and members of delegated committees are entitled, under section 40 of the Act to reimbursement of expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of their duties.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1 Councillors are elected to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and the local community, as defined under the *Local Government Act 2020*, by ensuring that expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of their role are reimbursed. The Policy also provides guidance on:
- Entitlements and support
  - Processes for reimbursement
  - Reporting, monitoring, evaluation and review requirements
  - Other measures supporting Councillors to fulfil their duties

### 3. Scope

- 3.1 This Policy applies to:
- Councillors
  - Members of Delegated Committees

### 4. Alignment to Whittlesea 2040

- 4.1 The Councillor Expense, Reimbursement and Support Policy primarily guides Council's work toward the following Goal as outlined in *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all: High Performing Organisation*

### 5. Overarching Governance Principles

- 5.1 The development of this Policy considered the *Local Government Act 2020's* Overarching Governance Principles and the following were applied:

Lawful	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financially viable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Date of Review

July 2028

Directorate Responsible

Office of Council & CEO



Best community outcome	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sustainable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Innovation & improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Collaboration with government bodies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Consistent with government plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transparent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## 6. Definitions

**Act:** means *the Local Government Act 2020* (Vic)

**Carer:** means a carer as defined under section 3 of the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*

**Chief Executive Officer (CEO):** means the person appointed by Council to be its Chief Executive Officer, or any person acting in that position

**Council:** means the City of Whittlesea being all the Councillors collectively

**Councillor:** means an elected representative of the community

**Delegated Committee:** means a delegated committee established by Council under section 63 of the Act

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment:** means any device including mobile phones, iPads, laptops and any peripheral or related devices or accessories

**Mayor:** means the Councillor elected to the Office of the Mayor

**Municipality:** means the City of Whittlesea municipality

**OCCEO:** means Office of Council and CEO

**Out-of-Pocket Expenses:** means expenses that has been met by the Councillor or delegated committee member, using their own funds, which may later be reimbursed.

**Travel Expenses:** means cost for travelling by car, taxi, public transport, or air in relation to Council business or business related to the delegated committee.

## 7. Policy Principles

7.1 The general principles underpinning this Policy are as follows:

- councillors must meet the standards of conduct set out in the Councillor Code of Conduct prescribed under section 139 of the Act;
- encouraging diversity in participation, equity, inclusion and access; and
- accountability and transparency.

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**7.2** This Policy ensures reimbursement of expenses is in accordance with the Act and meets the Act's principles of public transparency; achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community; and ensuring the ongoing financial viability of the Council.

**7.3** Councillors and members of delegated committees will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses that are:

- bona fide expenses;
- have been reasonably incurred in the performance of their role; and
- are reasonably necessary to perform their role.

**7.4** The Council administration is committed to ensuring that all claims are processed effectively and efficiently as possible.

## **8. Legislative Framework**

**8.1** This Policy has been set out in accordance with sections 39-43 of the Act.

**8.2** The following Acts, policies and documents have relevance to this policy:

- *Carer's Recognition Act 2012*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Children Youth and Families Act 2005*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Gender Equity Act 2020*
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Public Transparency Policy
- Audit and Risk Committee Charter
- Council's Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Risk Management Framework
- Governance Rules

## **9. Allowance for Mayors and Councillors**

**9.1** Section 39 of the Act provides the framework for payment of annual allowances to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors.

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- 9.2** The allowances framework provides a three-level structure for allowances based on Council population and total revenue and is determined in accordance with the Victorian Remuneration Tribunal under the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019*.

In addition to the allowance, an amount equivalent to the superannuation guarantee contribution is payable into their superannuation fund.

- 9.3** Allowances are taxable income and paid fortnightly in advance. Personal taxation implications are the responsibility of individual Councillors.

- 9.4** Details of current allowances fixed for the Mayor and Councillors of the City of Whittlesea are available for public inspection on Council's website and at the Council Office, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.

## **10. Resources and Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors**

The following resources, facilities and support will be provided to Councillors to assist in performing their duties as a Councillor.

### **10.1 Mobile Communications**

- 10.1.1** All Councillors will be provided with, as deemed appropriate by the CEO, information technology, including an internet data plan. Councillors will also be issued with a mobile number and a City of Whittlesea email address. The following equipment will be provided:

- Smart Phone
- Laptop or iPad
- A multifunction colour printer, scanning, copying and all associated consumables including toners and paper which will be made available in the Councillor Room at Council

- 10.1.2** The make, model and style of the ICT devices provided will be determined by the CEO and Chief Information Officer based on current telecommunications plans and offers available to Council and in consultation with the Councillor. IT support will only be provided in relation to the devices issued to Councillors by Council.

- 10.1.3** Mobile devices and communication systems owned or managed by the City of Whittlesea are to be used in an effective, safe, ethical, and lawful manner in accordance with Council policy. Use may be monitored, and misuse may be referred to IBAC or Local Government Inspectorate for investigation.

- 10.1.4** Councillors must not, while using Council's mobile devices and communication systems, engage in any activity which violates or infringes the rights of others, or which a reasonable person would consider to be abusive, profane, offensive or defamatory.

- 10.1.5** Councillors must return all Council issued equipment to the City of Whittlesea on the next business day at the conclusion of a Councillor's term, unless otherwise agreed by the Executive Manager Office of Council and CEO.

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10.1.6 If any Council issued equipment needs to be replaced, for whatever reason, it shall be returned to the responsible Council Officer at the same time as the replacement equipment is issued.

**10.2 Data**

10.2.1 Council will meet the fixed charges of the Smart Phone and internet services. Council will also meet the call or data costs for those services incurred for duties as a Councillor.

10.2.2 Usage of all ICT devices will be restricted to the Councillor to whom they have been assigned and the assigned Councillor shall be responsible for all usage incurred on the devices.

10.2.3 Councillors will take care to safeguard any personal or Council information stored on devices so as it cannot be accessed by other persons. All devices must be kept in a secure location when not in use.

10.2.4 Councillors may use Council provided devices for incidental private use. Incidental private use is defined as use that incurs costs of no more than 10% of the total monthly call and data costs.

10.2.5 Council will not provide or contribute to the costs of existing internet services or plans of a Councillor beyond what is set out in this Policy, unless mutually agreed with the CEO.

10.2.6 Any excessive costs as assessed by the CEO, incurred by a Councillor whilst travelling overseas, must be reimbursed to Council by the relevant Councillor within 14 days.

10.2.7 Council is not responsible for loss of personal/private data stored on Council devices.

10.2.8 Councillors must not open files or click on link in attachments, emails or social media, if the source is unknown, suspicious or untrustworthy.

**10.3 Support (Help Desk and Training)**

10.3.1 Support for Councillors to set up their Council issued ICT equipment and day to day trouble shooting assistance is provided by Council's Information and Communications Service Desk Officers.

10.3.2 For the initial three (3) month period upon being elected, requests for ICT assistance shall be made directly to the OCCEO and thereafter directly to Council's Helpdesk on 9217 2170 or via email to [helpdesk@whittlesea.vic.gov.au](mailto:helpdesk@whittlesea.vic.gov.au).

10.3.3 In addition to training provided through induction, further training in the use of ICT resources issued to Councillors may be arranged on an as required basis at the Councillor request.

10.3.4 All Councillors must undertake the required Cyber training and other required IT training.

**11.1 Travel**

11.1.2 Mayor and Councillors may book Council fleet vehicles for use when performing official Council duties. The provision of the vehicle is subject to the following terms and conditions:

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- (a) Use of the vehicle is in accordance with Council's [Light Vehicle Policy](#)
- (b) The vehicle must only be utilised for official Council business
- (c) Any damage, accident or fault is to be reported to the Executive Manager Office of Council and CEO as soon as practicable
- (d) The use of carpooling of the Council fleet vehicles by Councillors must be considered to reduce cost to Ratepayers.

## 11.2 Private Vehicle Use

11.2.1 Councillors are entitled to be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses incurred in the use of their private vehicle, including electric vehicles, for Council purposes.

11.2.2 Reasonable travel expenses include travel to and from:

- meetings of community groups, organisations and statutory authorities to which the Councillor has been appointed as the Council delegate;
- site inspections or meetings; and
- any meeting or other activity which Council formally resolves the Councillor should attend in an official capacity to represent the Council.

11.2.3 In the event that a Councillor is involved in an accident in their private vehicle, whilst on official Council business, Council will refund any excess paid up to the amount of \$500.00 upon presentation of current Car Insurance Policy Documents.

11.2.4 All travel claims will be from the Councillor's notified place of residence. All expense claims must be submitted on the Councillor Reimbursement of Expense Claim Form for Private Vehicle Usage (**Appendix C**). The Councillor will be reimbursed in accordance with the applicable and current vehicle allowance as specified in the City of Whittlesea Enterprise Agreement in operation at the time claims are submitted. For remote area travel, the remote travel allowance as determined by the Independent Remuneration Tribunal (**Tribunal**) will apply for eligible Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors, up to a maximum of \$5,937.50 per annum, or as amended from time to time by the Tribunal

11.2.5 Councillors that have an environmentally friendly vehicle which does not fit a standard cylinder vehicle classification are eligible for the 4 cylinder or less vehicle reimbursement classification amount.

11.2.6 Vehicle travel that exceeds an individual round trip of 600km requires CEO prior approval.

## 11.3 Taxi / Uber

11.3.1 Where it is not possible or convenient to use public transport or a private motor vehicle, a taxi or Uber service can be used by Councillors for travel required for their official duties. Councillors will be supplied, upon request, with a Cab charge Card or eTICKET.

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**11.3.2** If a Councillor incurs costs for the use of a Cab charge Card or eTICKET in any month, the OCCEO will send the Councillor a copy of those charges along with a Councillor's Declaration of Cab charge Usage Form (**Appendix A**).

11.3.2.1 The Councillor's Declaration or Cab charge usage Form must be completed and returned to the OCCEO via email: (Email address yet TBC) within 14 days of the account being sent.

11.3.3 Expenses incurred will be recorded against the Councillor on the Councillor Expense Register.

#### **11.4 Interstate Travel**

11.4.1 Interstate travel for official Council business is subject to the following terms and conditions:

- (a) Councillors must obtain approval from the Council by way of a resolution at a Council meeting that is open to the public, prior to travel;
- (b) The OCCEO will arrange travel including:
  - Registration;
  - Transportation; and
  - Accommodation.

11.4.2 The CEO will maintain a register of interstate travel in accordance with the legislation.

#### **11.5 International Travel**

11.5.1 International travel for official Council business is subject to the following terms and conditions:

- (a) Councillors must obtain approval from the Council by way of a resolution at a Council meeting that is open to the public, prior to official work related travel;
- (b) The travel must be in the best interests of the community;
- (c) The OCCEO will arrange travel including:
  - Registration;
  - Transport
  - Accommodation and meals
  - Insurance
- (d) To protect Council system networks and data from any potential cyber-attacks, Council owned and issued devices (phones, iPads, Laptops etc.) must not be taken overseas for official work-related travel or personal travel.
- (e) If Councillors are taking their own devices overseas, access to Council systems i.e. emails must be blocked to ensure the security of Council's networks.

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(f) To ensure the appropriate protection of Council information and data, and in accordance with advice from ASIO, alternate mobile phones, electronic devices and phone numbers may be allocated by the CEO. Access to some systems may be restricted at the discretion of the CEO.

(g) Any excessive costs as assessed by the CEO, incurred by a Councillor whilst travelling overseas, must be reimbursed to Council by the relevant Councillor within 14 days.

11.5.2 The CEO will maintain a register of international travel in accordance with the legislation.

### 11.6 Infringements

11.6.1 The cost of any penalties incurred by the Councillor for road, traffic or parking infringement, or other similar penalties or fines, will not be reimbursed by Council.

### 12.1 Private Use of Council Issued Equipment

12.1.1 Private use of a Council issued device, including data, above 10% must be declared by the Councillor and must be reimbursed to Council.

12.1.2 The Governance Team will provide a Declaration Usage of Resources Form (**Appendix B**) via email to Councillors on quarterly basis, which will specify the monthly cost of the Council provided mobile phone and internet data plan. Itemised accounts will also be provided to each Councillor of their mobile phone and data accounts.

12.1.3 Each Councillor must make an estimate of their private use and declare on the Declaration of Usage Resources Form that:

(a) no more than 10% of the call charges of the Council provided mobile phone (up to a maximum monthly cost of \$20) is attributable to incidental private use;

(b) no more that 10% of the internet connection plan is attributable to private use.

12.1.4 Each Councillor must sign, and date the Councillor's Declaration Usage of Resources Form and return it to the Governance Team via email (Email address yet TBC) within 14 days of the details being sent.

### 13.1 Child or Dependent Care

13.1.1 In accordance with sections 41(2)(c)-(d) of the Act, Council will reimburse the cost to a Councillor or delegated committee member where, when on official Council business:

- the provision of childcare is reasonably required
- the provision of care for a dependent is reasonably required

13.1.2 Care expenses, not funded by any other parties, that may be claimed include but are not limited to:

- childcare centre fees
- home care

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- hourly fees
- agency booking fees
- reasonable travel expenses for transporting the carer to the dependent or the dependent to the carer

13.1.3 Except by prior written agreement of the CEO or Executive Manager Office of the Council and CEO, payments for carer and childcare services will not be made:

- to a person who resides with the Councillor
- has any financial or pecuniary interest with the Councillor
- has a relationship with the Councillor or their partner (i.e. immediate family member)
- has recognised care responsibility (i.e. parent or other regular caregiver)

13.1.4 Evidence of out-of-pocket costs incurred by the Councillor must be provided with any claim.

13.1.4.1 Any claims for child or dependent care by a Councillor will be considered and have regard to the definitions and provisions of the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*.

#### **14.1 Professional Development Training**

14.1.1 As specified in the Act, it is mandatory for all Councillors to complete professional development training annually to ensure they understand their role and responsibilities.

14.1.2 A failure to complete the mandatory professional development training will result in allowances being withheld until training is completed.

14.1.3 If a Councillor is on leave, they will have one month to complete any professional development training missed without having their allowance withheld.

14.1.4 It is important Council identifies the training needs of Councillors and ensures that they have access to ongoing training and professional development throughout their elected term.

14.1.5 Any additional training and professional development by Councillors must be directly related to their performance as a Councillor. Such training and development could involve seminars, conferences, and more formal study courses.

14.1.6 Council will provide a maximum of \$10,000 per financial year per Councillor, \$5,000 in the final year of a Councillor term, for training and professional development (refer Note 1). All approved associated costs will be recorded against the individual on the Councillor Expense Register.

14.1.7 Where a Councillor's additional training and professional development involves related costs such as accommodation, travel, or other general costs, these should be identified by the Councillor when seeking prior written approval from the CEO.

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**Note 1** – The CEO may upon written application consider approving training and professional development opportunities, or conference attendance that exceeds the annual \$10,000 per Councillor threshold subject to available budget. If approved, the individual Councillor’s annual training and development budget allocation will be apportioned over the remaining Council term.

14.1.8 No additional training or training expenses outside any legislated professional development training will be approved, in the final six (6) months of a Councillor term.

**14.2 Mayoral Training**

14.2.1 The Mayor and Deputy Mayor must complete Mayoral training within one month after their election. The training will be required irrespective of whether the person has previously held the position of Mayor or Deputy Mayor.

14.2.2 Failure to complete the training as required under Act will result in allowances being withheld until the training is completed.

**14.3 Councillor Group Training and Development**

14.3.1 The CEO or their nominated delegate, in consultation with Councillors, will identify group training and development opportunities. This group training is in addition to any mandatory training as determined by the CEO and in accordance with the Local Government Act. Where group training is organised, the allocated total cost will be apportioned against all Councillors whether in attendance or not.

**14.4 Training and Development Pre-Approval Process**

14.4.1 Councillors will seek CEO pre-approval for the funding of training and development or conference attendance prior to the training taking place.

14.4.2 Training, development or conference attendance will be arranged by the OCCEO.

14.4.3 Councillors will outline the benefit and reasons when seeking approval.

**14.5 Authorisation**

14.5.1 The CEO, unless otherwise resolved by Council, is authorised to approve the funding of Councillors’ attendance at training and development or confirming attendance and payment for events on criteria that ensures:

- attendance is in the community interest and reflects the identified needs of the Councillor
- equity, fair and reasonable access to all Councillors to training and development, noting that events will generally be attended by the Mayor in the first instance.

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**14.6 Attendance at Events When Performing Duties as a Councillor**

- 14.6.1 Councillors may seek approval from the CEO to attend official events when performing duties as a Councillor and have these costs paid for by Council or reimbursed, as outlined in Section 15.
- 14.6.2 Events must be directly related to the municipality and must not be events organised by political parties.
- 14.6.3 This section is to be read in conjunction with the Council's Gift Policy.

**15. Reimbursements**

**15.1 Mobile Phone Reimbursement**

- 15.1.1 Where a Councillor chooses to use their own mobile phone, reimbursement of official Council business calls can be claimed.
- 15.1.2 A Councillor seeking reimbursement must submit their personal mobile phone account to the OCCEO highlighting the call and data charges that are attributable to performing their official duties as a Councillor.

**15.2 Expenses Reimbursement**

- 15.2.1 All claims must be made on the approved expense reimbursement form or the online platform which Council makes available.
- 15.2.2 Original receipts must be attached for all claims. Credit Card Eftpos receipts will not be accepted, an accompanying Tax Invoice must be included.
- 15.2.3 In any case where a Councillor is unable to provide a receipt of costs incurred, a Statutory Declaration may be accepted by the CEO. Appropriate and sufficient reasoning for being unable to produce a receipt must be provided by the Councillor. The CEO has the discretion to accept or reject a Statutory Declaration.
- 15.2.4 Claims must be lodged with the OCCEO within 7 days of the end of each month.
- 15.2.5 Reimbursements will be provided monthly by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

**15.3 General Expenditure Reimbursement**

- 15.3.1 General expenditure incurred may be claimable and must relate directly to the performance of duties as a Councillor.
  - 15.3.1.1 General expenditure may include such expenses as the reasonable and minor purchase of refreshments (i.e. a coffee), car parking and public transport tickets.
- 15.3.2 A claim for reimbursement of general expenditure requires evidence in the form of a Tax Invoice including name and address of the supplier and details of the goods or services supplied.

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15.3.3 Reimbursements will be paid by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) within 21 days of receipt and approval of a properly completed Councillor Reimbursement of Expenses Claim Form (**Appendix D**).

**16. Submitting Claims**

16.1 All claims for reimbursement must be fully substantiated and details lodged on the Councillor Reimbursement of Expenses Claim Form (**Appendix D**).

16.1.1 The period for the lodgement of any claim must not exceed three (3) months without written approval of the CEO.

16.1.2 No claims will be permitted that exceed three (3) months.

16.1.3 Any outstanding claims at the end of a financial year must be submitted within two (2) weeks after the start of a new financial year.

**17. Approval of Claims**

17.1 Claims for reimbursement of expenses by Councillors must be approved by the CEO or their delegate. Mayoral expenses shall be approved jointly by the CEO and Executive Manager Office of Council and CEO.

**18. General**

18.1 The following general provisions apply to out-of-pocket expenses that will be reimbursed to, or paid on behalf of, a Councillor:

- Travel must be undertaken as efficiently and by the shortest route possible.
- Where domestic travel is by air, including to New Zealand, Economy bookings will be the standard.
- For international travel, excluding New Zealand, Business Class bookings will be the standard.
- Travel claims will only be made on the basis of the actual form of transport used.
- Expenses incurred that are not directly related to the official Council duties of a Councillor, cannot be included in the calculation of a claim for reimbursement.
- Council will not incur any costs associated with the travel or accommodation or any other incidentals of others, including partner, children, etc.
- Travel arrangements for attendance at interstate or international events will be scheduled for the Councillor to arrive one (1) day prior to the event and one (1) day after the event unless otherwise agreed to by the CEO.
- The selection of airlines, hotels, transfer providers and any other arrangements will be determined by the CEO with all bookings being made by the OCCEO.
- Councillors will not be reimbursed for any arrangements (ie. booking of flights, accommodation, etc) that have been made directly by the Councillor.

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## 19. Other Support and Assistance

### 19.1 Mayoral and Deputy Mayor Support

19.1.1 Administrative support will be made available during business hours by the EA to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to assist the performance of their official duties.

19.1.2 Office accommodation and associated equipment will be provided to assist the Mayor at the City of Whittlesea, Council Offices, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.

### 19.2 Building Access

19.2.1 Each Councillor will receive a security access card allowing 24 hour access to the Councillors Room, meeting rooms and CEO office area only at City of Whittlesea, Council Offices, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.

### 19.3 Car Parking

19.3.1 Car parking will be available for the Mayor in the underground car park at the City of Whittlesea, Council Offices, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.

19.3.2 Car parking will be available for Councillors at the City of Whittlesea, Council Offices, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.

19.3.3 Councillors will be required to register their vehicle at the commencement of their term, and advise of any changes to vehicle use, to avoid the issuing of any Parking Infringements in the vicinity of the City of Whittlesea, Council Offices, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.

### 19.4 Meeting Rooms and the Councillors Room

19.4.1 The Councillors Room is reserved for exclusive use by Councillors. The room is equipped with computer access and a printer and is suitable for office work, reading and research and small meetings.

19.4.2 Light refreshments, including water, tea/coffee and soft drinks will be made available in the Councillors Room.

19.4.3 Councillors private and secure pigeon holes are located within the Councillors Room.

19.4.4 With advanced notice, other meeting rooms at the City of Whittlesea, Council Office, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang, may be secured for meetings through the OCCEO. Meeting equipment, tea/coffee and water can be made available for meetings upon request.

19.4.5 A Councillor must not make a booking on behalf of a community member.

### 19.5 Administrative Support and Stationery / Mail / Miscellaneous

19.5.1 Reasonable administrative support will be made available during normal business hours by the OCCEO primarily in the form of assistance with diary management, responding to correspondence, enquiries and requests for service as part of their official duties as a Councillor.

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19.5.2 On request, the OCCEO will manage reasonable requests for stationery held or obtained for the Council requirements.

1952.1 E-card templates for significant dates will be made available for use by individual Councillors. It is the Councillor responsibility for sending these E-cards.

19.5.3 Each Councillor will be provided with two (2) City of Whittlesea name badges for use while on Council business.

19.5.4 Council meeting papers and the majority of information from the organisation will only be made available electronically. Appropriate system training and support will be provided to all Councillors.

1954.1 No paper/printed copies of Council meeting papers or Minutes will be provided unless Section 19.7.1 applies.

19.5.5 Where Council or delegated Committee meetings extend through normal meal times, Council will provide suitable meals served on the premises.

#### **19.6. Professional Memberships and Subscriptions**

19.6.1 The CEO may approve the costs of joining an ongoing membership of relevant professional associations where they are satisfied that the membership will enhance the Councillor's development.

19.6.2 Any Membership or Subscription is due for payment within the last six (6) months of the Councillor term, will not be paid by Council.

#### **19.7 Access and Inclusion**

19.7.1 Council is committed to ensuring equitable access, social inclusion and respect for human rights and may provide appropriate support to ensure Councillors can complete their duties proficiently.

19.7.2 Council will meet reasonable expenses to assist a Councillor with a disability in performing their role as a Councillor. The CEO will be responsible for facilitating any process or plan to best support a Councillor.

#### **19.8 Councillors' Welfare**

19.8.1 The Mayor and CEO can provide support to Councillors, specific guidance or coaching that may be required to enhance their performance as a Councillor.

198.1.1 A Councillor is entitled to counselling on a confidential basis through Council's approved Employee Assistance Program.

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**19.9 Civic and Community Events**

19.9.1 From time to time, Council representatives are invited to attend community functions and events. It is usual for the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor to represent the Council at these functions and any payment required to attend the function is paid by the Council.

19.9.1.1 If another Councillor attends the function, either representing the Mayor or in an official capacity as Council representative to that particular group, any attendance charge will be paid by the Council.

19.9.2 The cost of Council representatives attending civic functions and events hosted by other Councils will be paid by the Council.

19.9.3 Council will not be responsible for coordinating Councillor attendance or providing support for any political events.

**20. Insurance**

20.1 Councillors are covered by the following Council Insurance Policies, whilst performing official duties:

- (a) Public liability
- (b) Professional indemnity
- (c) Councillors and Officers Liability
- (d) Workcover
- (e) Personal Accident

20.2 Council will pay the insurance policy excess in respect of any claim made against a Councillor arising whilst performing duties, where the claim is accepted by Council's Insurers.

20.3 Insurance does not cover any criminal, wilful or negligent acts of the Councillor or related parties, which remain the responsibility of individual Councillors.

**21. Indemnity for Councillors – Legal Costs**

21.1 Subject to subsection(2) of the Act, a Council must not indemnify a Councillor for legal costs incurred by the Councillor as a result of:

- (a) an application made under section 143 or 154; or
- (b) a process or proceeding relating to:
  - (i) An application made under section 143 or 154; or
  - (ii) A decision or determination made under section 147 or 167.

21.2 A Council may indemnify a Councillor for costs incurred by the Councillor to obtain representation considered necessary under section 141(2)(c) or 163(2)(b).

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## 22. Accountability and Audit

### 22.1 Claiming of Expenses

22.1.1 Councillors are accountable for completing the Councillor Reimbursement of Expense Claim Form (**Appendix D**) in accordance with this policy and submitting the Form to the Governance Team.

### 22.2 Audit and Reporting

22.2.1 Quarterly reporting, in accordance with the Local Government Act, on Councillor mandatory expense categories and reimbursements will be reported to Council in the following format i.e. details of expenses, including reimbursement of expenses for each Councillor categorised separately as:

- (a) Travel Expenses (including car mileage, flights, Cabcharge or equivalent and accommodation expenses)
- (b) Dependant and Childcare Expenses
- (c) Information and Communications Technology Expenses (specifying mobile phone expenses and data cost)
- (d) Conference and Training Expenses
- (e) Functions / Events Expenses (including all costs associated with attendance)
- (f) Councillor Allowances

22.2.2 These reports will be:

- submitted to the City of Whittlesea Audit and Risk Committee on a six (6) monthly basis;
- included in Council's Annual Report; and
- made available on the City of Whittlesea website on a quarterly basis.

22.2.3 To ensure public transparency 'Miscellaneous' expenses which are expenses that are not captured by the categories listed in 21.2.1 will also be reported.

22.2.4 Audits of Councillor expenses and reimbursements may be carried out from time to time as part of Council's annual audit program.

## 23. Standing down a Councillor by VCAT

23.1 If a Councillor is charged with an offence such as:

- an offence against the *Local Government Act 2024*, for which the maximum penalty is at least 120 penalty units or a period of imprisonment of at least 12 months;

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- an offence against a law of Victoria, or a law of another State, a Territory or the Commonwealth, that is punishable by a period of imprisonment of at least 2 years for a first conviction

the Councillor

- must give written notice of that fact to the Chief Executive Officer immediately on becoming aware of that fact; and
  - must not perform the functions and duties or exercise the powers of a Councillor; and
  - must not attend any meetings of the Council, any delegated committee meetings or any Council premises.
- 23.2 If a Councillor is stood down under any of the above, their allowance will be withheld until the charge is withdrawn or the proceedings relating to the charge (including any appeal) are finally determined.
- 23.3 A Councillor will be entitled to their allowance, including any allowance previously withheld in accordance with 23.2, unless the Councillor is convicted of the offence.

Forms

[Councillor Expense Reimbursement and Support Policy - Draft Forms.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Appendix A – Councillor’s Declaration of CabCharge Usage

Appendix B – Councillor’s Declaration of Usage of Resources

Appendix C – Councillor Reimbursement of Expense Claim Form for Private Vehicle Usage

Appendix D – Councillor Reimbursement of Expense Claim Form

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**6 Notices of Motion**

No Notices of Motion

**7 Urgent Business**

No Urgent Business

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

**9 Confidential Business**

**9.1 Close Meeting to the Public**

There are no confidential agenda items for consideration in accordance with section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which allows Council to close the meeting to the public.

**10 Closure**