



***City of*  
Whittlesea**

# **A G E N D A**

## **OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD ON**

**TUESDAY 2 JULY 2019**

**AT 6.30PM**

### **SUMMONS**

You are advised that a Meeting of Council has been called by the Chief Executive Officer on Tuesday, 2 July 2019 in Council Chamber, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang at 6.30pm for the transaction of the following business.

When attending a Council Meeting a condition of entry is to present your photo identification and sign in upon arrival.

**S OVERLAND  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**



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## COUNCILLORS

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LAWRIE COX	MAYOR, SOUTH WEST WARD
STEVAN KOZMEVSKI	SOUTH WEST WARD
CAZ MONTELEONE	SOUTH WEST WARD
KRIS PAVLIDIS	SOUTH WEST WARD
TOM JOSEPH	DEPUTY MAYOR, NORTH WARD
RICKY KIRKHAM	NORTH WARD
EMILIA LISA STERJOVA	NORTH WARD
SAM ALESSI	SOUTH EAST WARD
ALAHNA DESIATO	SOUTH EAST WARD
NORM KELLY	SOUTH EAST WARD
MARY LALIOS	SOUTH EAST WARD





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## SENIOR OFFICERS

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SIMON OVERLAND

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RUSSELL HOPKINS

DIRECTOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

NICK MANN

DIRECTOR CITY TRANSPORT & PRESENTATION

HELEN SUI

DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES

LIANA THOMPSON

DIRECTOR PARTNERSHIPS, PLANNING &  
ENGAGEMENT

MICHAEL TONTA

MANAGER GOVERNANCE



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**Note:**

At Council's discretion, the meeting may be closed in accordance with Section 89 of the Local Government Act 1989. The provision which is likely to be relied upon to enable closure is set out in each item. These reports are not available for public distribution.

**Question Time:**

During the meeting, Council will answer questions from residents and ratepayers. Questions should be submitted in writing no later than 3pm on the day of the ordinary Council Meeting unless this unreasonably prevents or hinders you from participating. A Question Time form can be downloaded from Council's website and copies of the form are available at the meeting. Refer: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings/>

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

**Large Attachments:**

Where large attachments form part of the Report, due to the size of the attachments – a copy has not been provided in the Agenda document

Copies of these attachments are available for inspection by the public at the following locations:

- a) Council offices at 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang; and
- b) Council's internet site – <http://cam.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/>



**1. OPENING**

**1.1 MEETING OPENING AND PRAYER**

The Chief Executive Officer will open the meeting with the reading of the prayers:

*Almighty God, we humbly beseech thee, to vouchsafe thy blessing upon this council. Direct and prosper its deliberations to the advancement of thy glory and the true welfare of the people of the Whittlesea City Council.*

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

*Amen*

**1.2 ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS STATEMENT**

The Mayor will read the following Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement.

*On behalf of the Whittlesea City Council I recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the traditional owners of this place.*

*I as a non-aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander would ask that you may consider a conversation with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples to educate and understand their depth of feeling around the treatment of our first nations peoples and events that have shaped their lives.*

**1.3 PRESENT**

**2. APOLOGIES**

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Ordinary Meeting of Council held 4 June 2019

Special Meeting of Council held 6 June 2019

**5. QUESTIONS, PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS**

**5.1 QUESTIONS TO COUNCILLORS**





**5.2 PETITIONS****5.2.1 50M SWIMMING POOL MERNDA AQUATIC INDOOR SPORTS CENTRE**

Petition received from 1552 residents and 69 non-residents requesting Council review the need for a 50m competition sized pool to service the people of Whittlesea and their families rather than the proposed 25m learning pool size at the Mernda Aquatic Indoor Sports Centre.

<b>MOTION</b>
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**THAT Council resolve to receive the petition from 1552 residents and 69 non-residents requesting Council review the need for a 50m competition sized pool to service the people of Whittlesea and their families rather than the proposed 25m learning pool size at the Mernda Aquatic Indoor Sports Centre and a report be prepared for a subsequent meeting.**



**5.3 JOINT LETTERS**

**NIL REPORTS**



## 6. OFFICERS' REPORTS

### 6.1 PARTNERSHIPS, PLANNING & ENGAGEMENT

#### 6.1.1 10 GRATWICK STREET LALOR - CONSTRUCTION OF TWO DWELLINGS

Attachments:	1	Locality Maps <a href="#">↓</a>
	2	Advertised Plans <a href="#">↓</a>
	3	Garden Area Analysis <a href="#">↓</a>
Responsible Officer:	Director Partnerships, Planning & Engagement	
Author:	Planning Officer	
APPLICANT:	AMT Consultants	
COUNCIL POLICY:	21.09 Housing	
	22.11 - Development Contribution Plan Policy	
ZONING:	Neighbourhood Residential Zone	
OVERLAY:	Development Contributions Plan Overlay	
REFERRAL:	Nil	
OBJECTIONS:	Fifteen Objections	

#### RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

That Council resolve to refuse Planning Application No. 716370 for the construction of two dwellings at 10 Gratwick Street Lalor on the basis that the proposal is not site responsive and represents an overdevelopment of the site.

#### KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES

- An application has been lodged to construct two single dwellings on the subject land, replacing the existing dwelling on the land.
- The application was advertised, which resulted in fifteen (15) objections being received. The concerns raised related to impacts on neighbourhood character, heritage, density, overshadowing, wall on boundary and property devaluation.
- The design response fails to respect the existing and preferred neighbourhood character of Gratwick Street and does not demonstrate a satisfactory level of compliance with the relevant provisions of Whittlesea Planning Scheme, particularly in relation to the Garden Area requirements (Clause 32.09), ResCode (Clause 55), and Council's Housing Diversity Strategy.

## REPORT

### SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The site is a residential property located on the northern side of Gratwick Street in Lalor, approximately 200 metres east of Station Street (see **Attachment 1**).

The site is irregular in shape and has frontage of approximately 19.14m, a maximum depth of 49.5m and total site area of 824.75sqm. The land is generally flat and contains no significant vegetation. The site currently contains a single storey brick dwelling, with a pitched tiled roof. Vehicle access to the dwelling is obtained from a crossover and accessway along the eastern boundary which faces Gratwick Street. A free-standing outbuilding is located adjacent to the eastern side boundary behind the existing dwelling.

The surrounding area is largely characterised by a variety of detached dwellings. The adjoining properties immediately to the north, east, and south of the site are all generally single storey dwellings with pitched and tiled roofs. Medium density developments are not a predominant characteristic of the surrounding area; however, there are some examples of medium density along Station Street.

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

- Bus Route No. 545 and 555 on High Street (200 metres west)
- Bus Route No.566 on Station Street (200 metres west)
- Caroline Chisholm College (200 metres west)
- Station Street Shopping Strip (500 metres south)
- Vasey Avenue Park (1 Kilometres south west)

### RESTRICTIONS AND EASEMENTS

The site is described as Lot No. 36 on Plan of Subdivision No. 020068

The Certificate of Title submitted as part of the application indicates that the site is not subject to any Restrictive Covenants or Section 173 Agreements.

There is no easement located within the subject site.

### PROPOSAL

The application seeks approval for the construction of two dwellings with one dwelling having a frontage to Gratwick Street (see **Attachment 2**). The existing dwelling and associated structures will be demolished. Two vehicle crossovers are proposed for access.

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

	Height /Scale	Number of Bedrooms	Setbacks	Private Open Space	Car Parking	Maximum Height
Dwelling No. 1	Single Storey	3	East side – 3.1m Front(south) – 6.5m West side – 1.2m	41m <sup>2</sup>	Single garage (3.5m x 6.0m) and tandem open car space (2.6m x 4.9m)	5.6m
Dwelling No. 2	Single Storey	3	North side (rear) – 0.0m East side – 2.1m South side – 1.2m	54m <sup>2</sup>	Single garage (3.5m x 6.0m) and tandem open car space (2.6m x 4.9m)	5m

## PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Advertising of the application was carried out by way of written notice to adjoining and adjacent owners and a sign placed on site. 15 objections were received. The grounds of objection can be summarised as follows:

1. Neighbourhood character;
2. The density being a change to existing character of the area;
3. Overshadowing;
4. Heritage;
5. Wall on boundary; and
6. Property devaluation.

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

## NEIGHBOURHOOD RESIDENTIAL ZONE

The area is zoned as Neighbourhood Residential Zone 1. The zone's purpose is to maintain the existing single and double storey residential development and that all future development respects the identified neighbourhood character, heritage, environmental or landscape characteristics. The proposal provides an unsatisfactory level of compliance with the objectives of the zone, and more specifically, it has not adequately demonstrated compliance with Clause 32.09-4.

Clause 32.09-4 applies the minimum garden area requirement. As the site is greater than 650m<sup>2</sup>, at least 35% of the site must be retained as garden area. Despite several requests, the applicant has not provided information to demonstrate that this requirement has been met. Moreover, an assessment of the plans shows that only approximately 23% of the site has been provided as garden area (see **Attachment 3**). Therefore, the proposal fails to achieve compliance with the mandatory Garden Area Requirement and cannot be supported on this ground alone.

It is important to note that the applicant has not responded to Council's correspondence advising them of the outstanding issues with the application – notably the minimum Garden Area requirement pursuant to Clause 32.09-4 of the NRZ1.

Planning approval is required for the construction of more than one dwelling on a lot within this zone. The application for the construction of more than one dwelling on a lot must meet the requirements of Clause 55 of the Scheme (ie. ResCode).

## HOUSING DIVERSITY STRATEGY

The Housing Diversity Strategy (HDS) was introduced into the Whittlesea Planning Scheme (WPS) by Planning Scheme Amendment C181, gazetted on 22 October 2015. The HDS provides a strategic framework for future residential development in the established areas of the municipality for the next 20 years. It aims to guide the future location and diversity of housing stock and identifies areas of housing growth and change, including areas where future housing growth will not be supported.

The HDS is now a reference document in the WPS and an assessment against it is provided under Standard B2 of the Clause 55 assessment.

The site is within a Neighbourhood Interface Area.

# ASSESSMENT AGAINST CLAUSE 55 OF THE WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

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

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

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

	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
B1	Neighbourhood Character	x	x	<p>The proposal is not considered to be consistent with the prevailing character of the surrounding area, nor does it contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character.</p> <p>As the subject site is located within an established residential area and the existing built form in this locality is of a fairly low key nature (1 dwelling per lot).</p> <p>The following established design elements and features of dwellings in the immediate area have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lots range in size from approximately 600sqm to 800sqm.</li> <li>○ Lots have frontages of 15 metres to 22 metres.</li> <li>○ Singular crossovers accessing each allotment.</li> <li>○ Generous rear setbacks and garden area.</li> </ul> <p>The proposed development does not have regard to this character for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There is limited opportunity for any meaningful landscaping to present to the neighbourhood due to the building mass and accessway arrangement.</li> <li>○ Front setbacks are dominated by hard surfaces required for the crossovers and tandem car parking spaces.</li> <li>○ Inadequate garden area and fails to comply with clause 32.09-4 which specifies that at least 35% of the site must be retained as garden area.</li> </ul> <p>In light of the above, the proposal is considered to be a departure from the existing and emerging character of the area.</p>



	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
B2	Residential Policy	x	x	<p>The site is located within a Neighbourhood Residential Zone and is within a Neighbourhood Interface Area Change Area of Council's Housing Diversity Strategy.</p> <p>Whilst the proposed development is consistent with the preferred density, the proposed dwellings do not comply with the preferred development outcomes expressed within Clause 21.09, as it fails to provide a suitable transition built-form from the existing low density neighbourhood.</p>
B3	Dwelling Diversity	✓	✓	Only applicable to developments of ten (10) or more dwellings
B4	Infrastructure	✓	✓	
B5	Integration with the street	x	x	<p>The proposed accessway/parking arrangement does not facilitate a development that will integrate well with the street. The front setbacks are dominated by hard surfaces required for the crossovers and tandem car parking spaces, and fails to respect the existing neighbourhood character.</p>
B6	Street setback	✓	✓	
B7	Building height	✓	✓	5.6m overall
B8	Site coverage	✓	✓	50%
B9	Permeability	✓	✓	27%
B10	Energy efficiency	✓	✓	
B11	Open space	✓	✓	Only applicable if public or communal open space is to be provided on site or adjacent to the development
B12	Safety	✓	✓	
B13	Landscaping	x	x	<p>It is considered the landscaping opportunities across the site are tokenistic. The front setbacks are dominated by hard surfaces required for the crossovers and tandem car parking spaces.</p> <p>Therefore, it is considered that the proposed landscaping does not adequately compliment the medium density outcome nor does it significantly contribute to the neighbourhood character.</p>

	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
B14	Access	x	✓	Whilst the width of the proposed accessways are less than 40% of the street frontage, the proposed accessways are considered inappropriate and fail to respect the existing neighbourhood character and result in limited landscape opportunities for the site and poor integration with the street.
B15	Parking location	✓	✓	
B17	Side and rear setbacks	✓	✓	
B18	Walls on boundaries	✓	✓	
B19	Daylight to existing windows	✓	✓	
B20	North-facing windows	✓	✓	
B21	Overshadowing open space	✓	✓	
B22	Overlooking	✓	✓	Single storey
B23	Internal views	✓	✓	
B24	Noise impacts	✓	✓	The noise generated by the proposed development is considered acceptable for a residential zoned area.
B25	Accessibility	✓	✓	
B26	Dwelling entry	x	x	The proposed dwelling 2 entrance will not be visible from Gatwick Street and is obscured by the built form of dwelling 1; therefore, it fails to provide the proposed dwelling a sense of address and a sense of identity.
B27	Daylight to new windows	✓	✓	
B28	Private open space	✓	✓	
B29	Solar access to open space	✓	✓	
B30	Storage	✓	✓	
B31	Design detail	x	x	The amount of hard surface area associated with accessways, poor material variation and limited articulation indicate the proposals non-compliance with Standard B31 and symptomatic of an overdevelopment of the site.
B32	Front fences	✓	✓	

	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
B33	Common property	✓	✓	
B34	Site services	✓	✓	

### CAR PARKING

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

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

Garages should be at least 6.0m long and 3.5m wide for a single space and 5.5m wide for a double space (measured inside the garage or carport). An open car space should be at least 4.9m long and 2.6m wide. The proposal complies with these requirements.

The required number of car parking spaces for residents has been provided in accordance with the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

### DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN OVERLAY (SCHEDULE 3)

The site is affected by the Development Contributions Plan Overlay. Pursuant to Clause 45.06 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, the Development Contributions Plan Overlay enables the levying of contributions for the provision of works, services and facilities prior to development commencing.

Schedule 3 to the overlay requires contributions for drainage infrastructure for medium density residential development at a current rate of \$2.19 per square metre of the total site area. This requirement must be included as a condition on any planning permit that is issued.

### COMMENTS ON GROUNDS OF OBJECTION

#### 1. The proposal is contrary to the existing and preferred neighbourhood character

As discussed earlier in this report, the proposal fails to accord with both the existing and preferred neighbourhood character. Specifically, the proposal presents a lack of opportunity for any meaningful landscaping, lack of garden area and poor integration with the street.

#### 2. The density being a change to existing character of the area

The proposed development is consistent with the preferred density of the area, however, as discussed earlier, the proposal fails to comply with several key standards of Clause 55 (ResCode) of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, which indicates the proposal is an overdevelopment of the site and not responsive to the existing/preferred character.

#### 3. Overshadowing

The shadow diagrams (see *Attachment 2*) demonstrate compliance with ResCode and the shadow diagrams demonstrate that the shadows cast are unlikely to affect any existing secluded private open spaces in question.

#### 4. Heritage

The subject site is a part of the original Peter Lalor Estate - which was judged in 2013 to have a local historical value, however, the subject site does not possess architectural, aesthetic, or significant historical value, and is not covered by a Heritage Overlay. Therefore, consideration of heritage matters is not relevant to this application.

It is noted that No. 16 Gratwick Street, which is 3 properties to the east of the subject site, is of heritage significance and is covered by Heritage Overlay HO184

#### 5. Walls on boundary

The proposed walls on boundary complies with standard B18 (wall on boundary) – Clause 55 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, and are unlikely to affect the amenities of adjoining properties.

#### 6. Property devaluation.

VCAT has determined on many occasions that property values are not a relevant planning consideration.

### DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

### CONCLUSION

The application has been assessed against the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, and in particular the objectives and standards of Clause 52.06 and Clause 55 and the State and Local Planning Policy Frameworks, including the Housing Diversity Strategy. The proposal demonstrates an unsatisfactory level of compliance. It is considered that the proposal is inappropriately designed, and will have a detrimental impact on the character of the neighbourhood and on existing surrounding residential properties. Accordingly, refusal of the application is recommended.

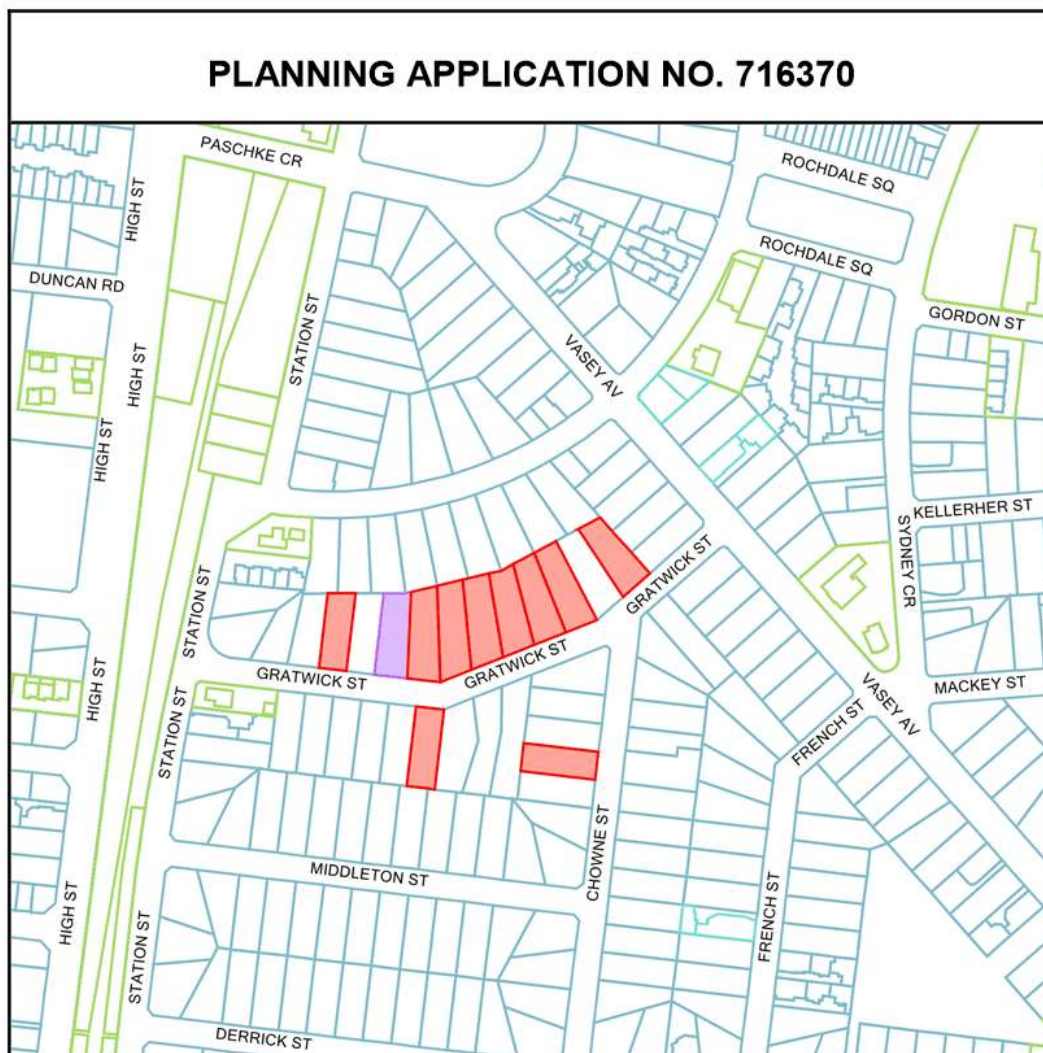
### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT Council resolve to Refuse Planning Application No. 716370 and issue a Refusal to Grant a Planning Permit for the construction of two dwellings on the following grounds:**

1. **The proposed development does not achieve satisfactory compliance with Clause 55 (Rescode) of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, in particular:-**
  - a) **Clause 55.02-1 – Neighbourhood Character;**
  - b) **Clause 55.02-5 – Integration with the Street;**
  - c) **Clause 55.03-8 – Landscaping;**
  - d) **Clause 55.03-9 – Access;**
  - e) **Clause 55.05-2 – Dwelling Entry;**
  - f) **Clause 55.06-1 – Design Detail.**

2. The proposal fails to provide the minimum percentage of garden area required by Clause 32.09-4 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.
3. The proposed will result in an overdevelopment of the site and have an adverse impact on neighbourhood character.





-  **Subject Land**
-  **Objector** (1 objector located outside of locality)



**City of  
Whittlesea**

## **BUILDING AND PLANNING REPORT**



## PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 716370



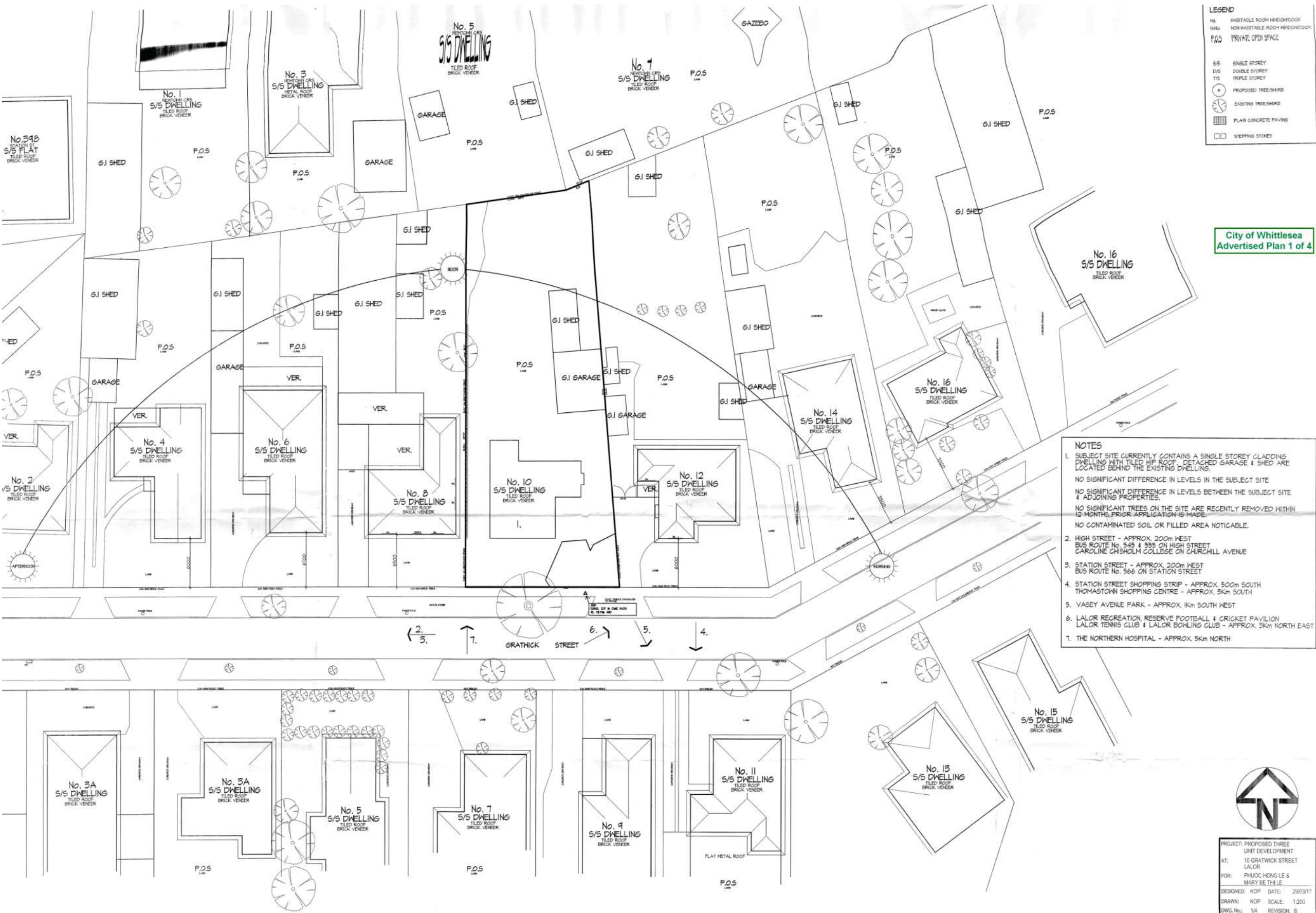
**Subject Land**  
 **Objector** (1 objector located outside of locality)



**City of  
Whittlesea**

## BUILDING AND PLANNING REPORT





SITE ANALYSIS PLAN



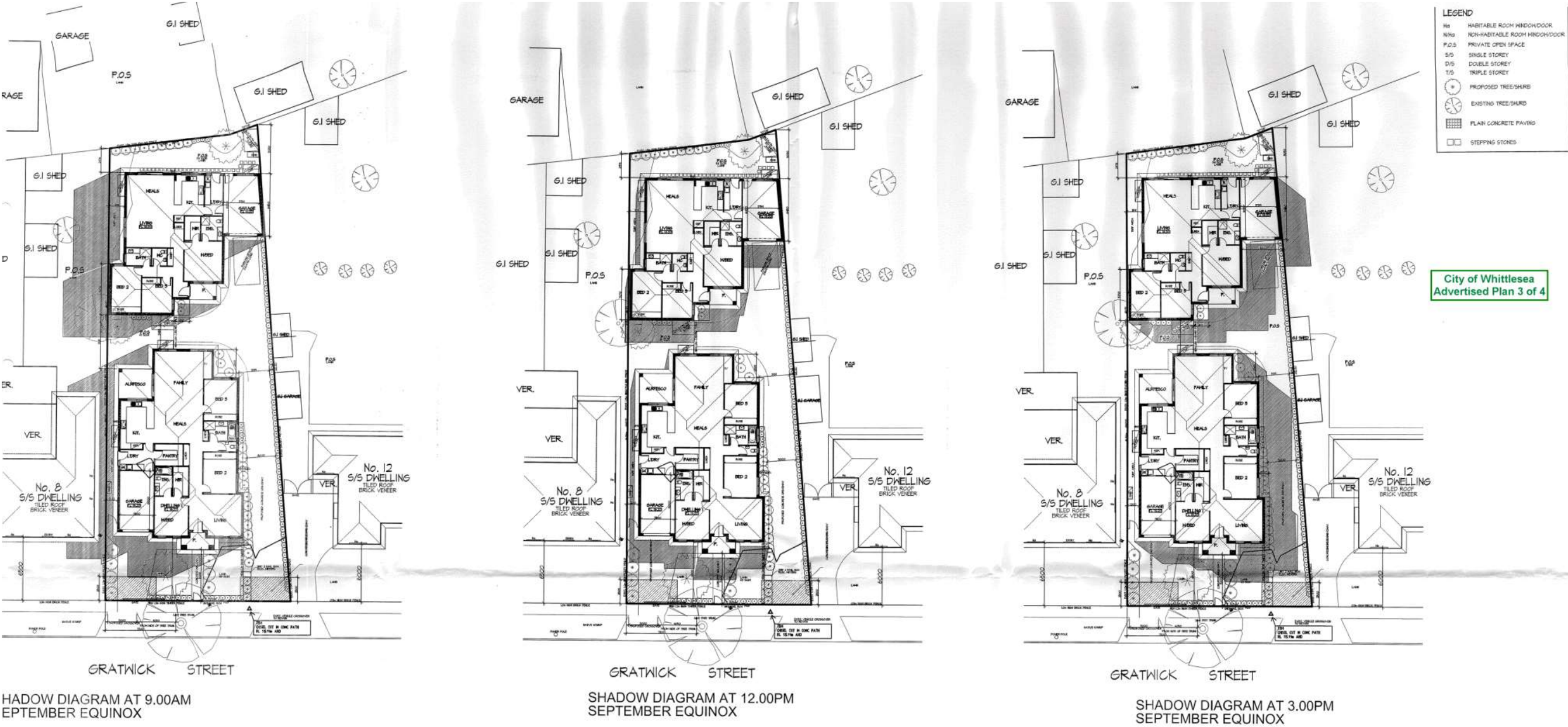
PROJECT: PROPOSED THREE UNIT DEVELOPMENT  
AT: 10 GRATWICK STREET LALOR  
FOR: PHUOC HONG LE & MARY BETH LIE  
DESIGNED: KOP DATE: 29/03/17  
DRAWN: KOP SCALE: 1:200  
DWG. No: 1/4 REVISION: B

**AMT**  
CONSULTANTS P/L  
Mob: 0410 569 694 Fax: 9356 4332  
PO Box 1022, St Albans, Victoria 3021  
E: km@amtconsultants.com.au

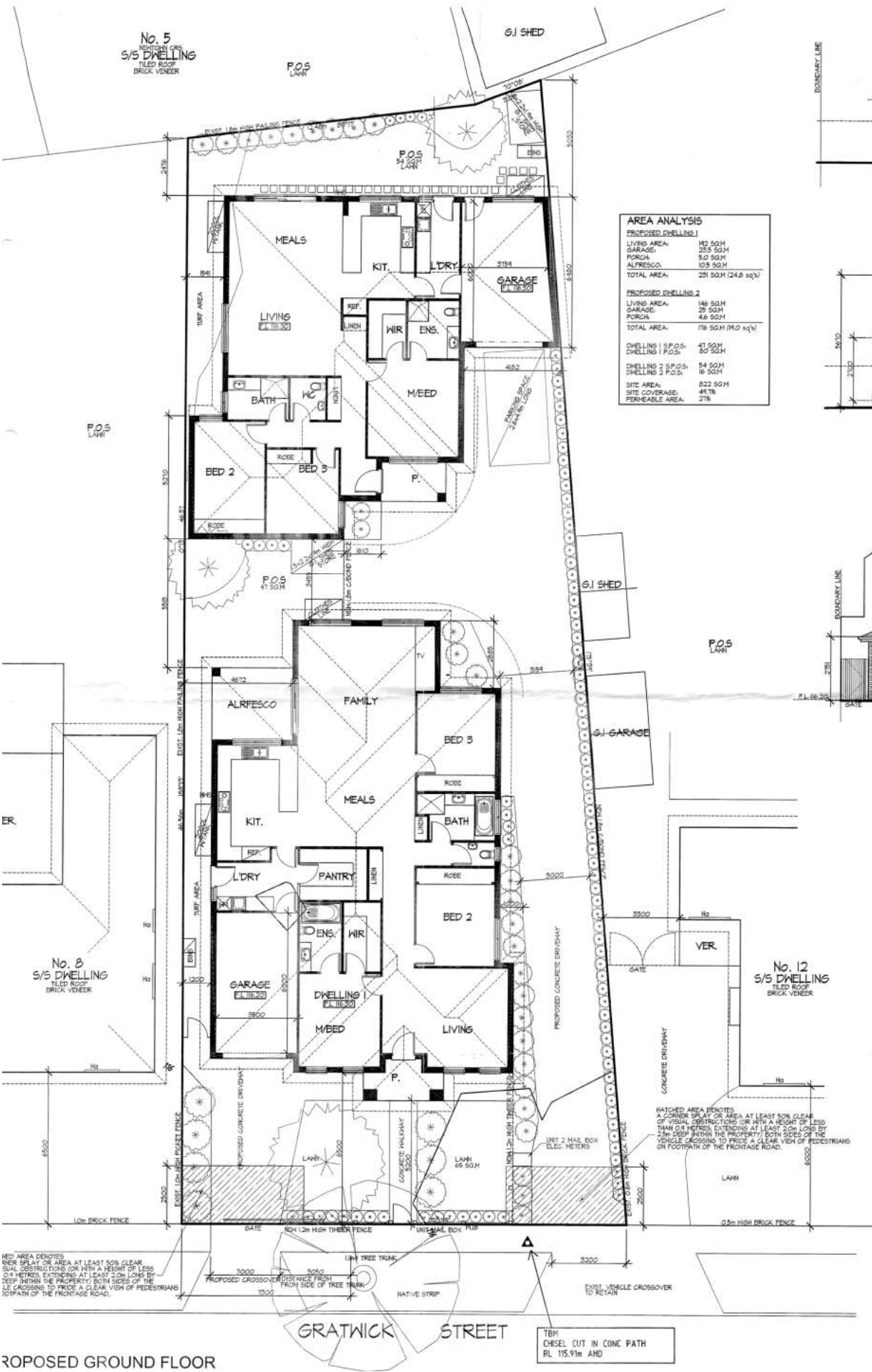




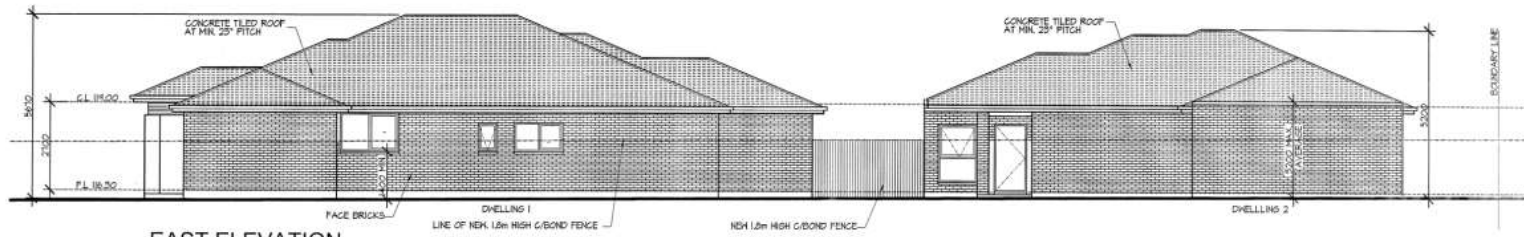




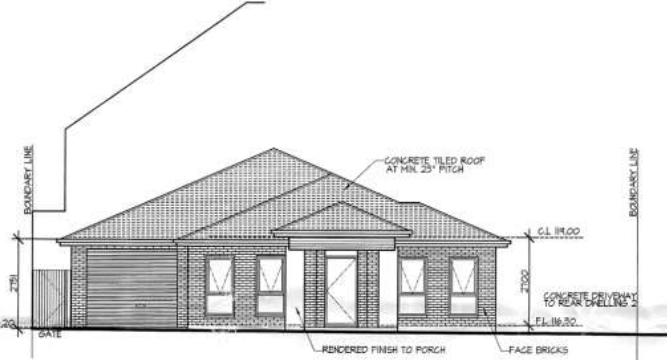




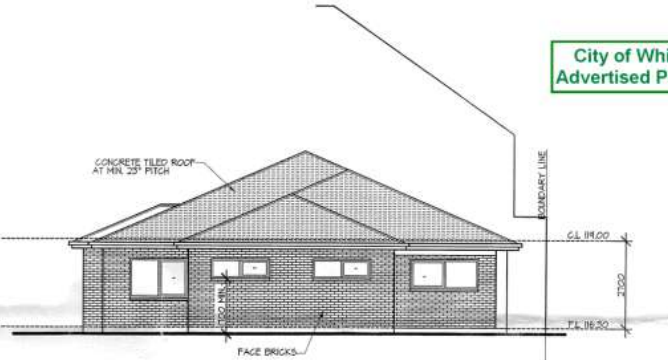
WEST ELEVATION



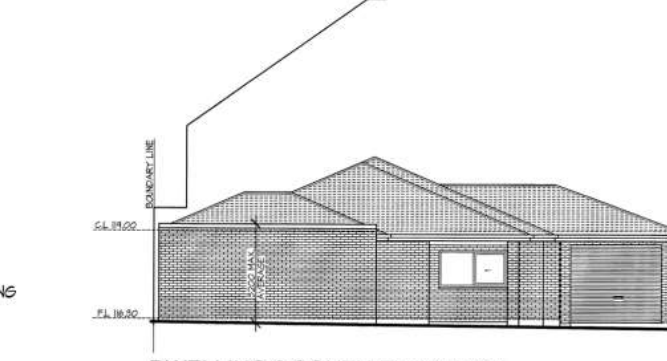
EAST ELEVATION



DWELLING 1 SOUTH ELEVATION



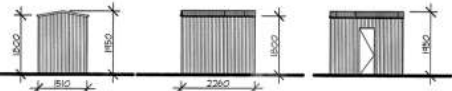
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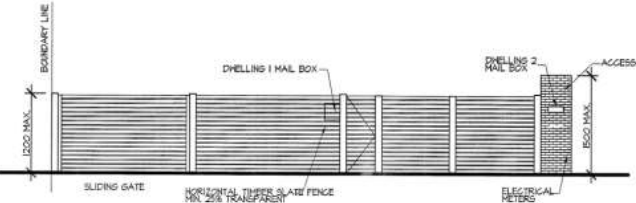
DWELLING 2 SOUTH ELEVATION



DWELLING 2 NORTH ELEVATION



TYPICAL SHED / STORAGE ELEVATIONS



FRONT FENCE ELEVATION

City of Whittlesea  
Advertised Plan 4 of 4

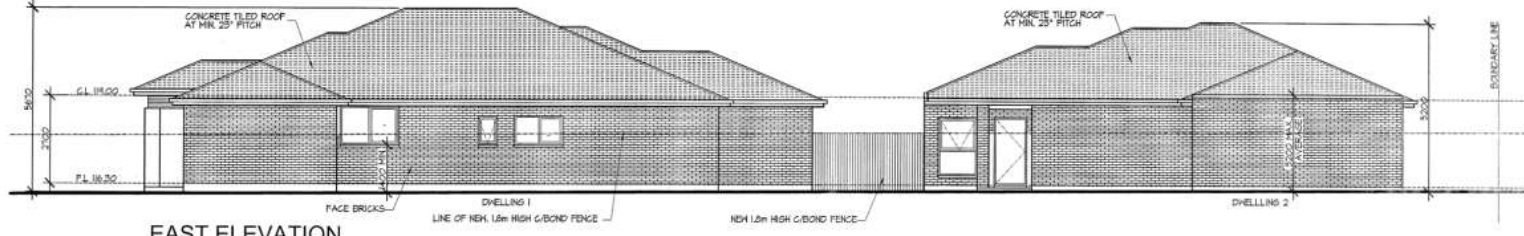
PROJECT: PROPOSED THREE UNIT DEVELOPMENT  
AT: 10 GRATWICK STREET  
FOR: PHUOC HONG LE & MARY BE THLE  
DESIGNED: KOP DATE: 29/03/17  
DRAWN: KOP SCALE: 1:100  
DWS.No.: 4/4 REVISION: B

**AMT**  
CONSULTANTS P/L  
Mob: 0410 569 694 Fax: 9350 4532  
PO Box 1022, St Albans Victoria 3021

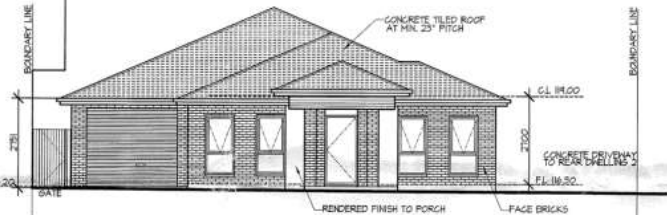




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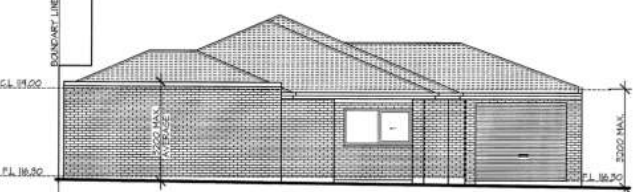
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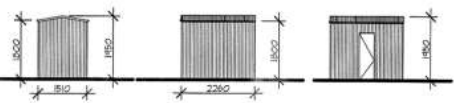
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DWELLING 2 SOUTH ELEVATION

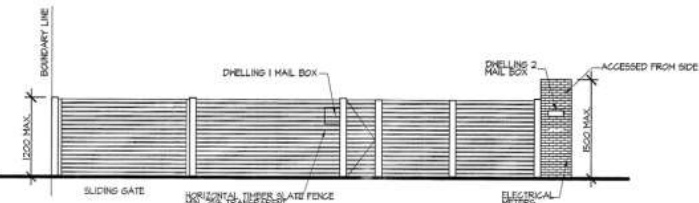


DWELLING 2 NORTH ELEVATION



TYPICAL SHED / STORAGE ELEVATIONS

- LEGEND**
- Hs HABITABLE ROOM WINDOW
  - N/Ns NON-HABITABLE ROOM WINDOW
  - S.P.O.S. SEGREGATED PRIVATE OPEN SPACE
  - P.O.S. PRIVATE OPEN SPACE
  - S/S SINGLE STOREY
  - D/D DOUBLE STOREY
  - T/T TRIPLE STOREY
  - PROPOSED TREE/SHED
  - EXISTING TREE/SHED
  - PLAIN CONCRETE PAVING
  - STEPPING STONES



FRONT FENCE ELEVATION

**PROJECT: PROPOSED THREE UNIT DEVELOPMENT**  
**AT: 10 GRATWICK STREET LALOR**  
**FOR: PHUOC HONG LE & MARY BE THIE**  
**DESIGNED: KOP DATE: 29/03/17**  
**DRAWN: KOP SCALE: 1:100**  
**DWG. No: 4/4 REVISION: B**

**AMT CONSULTANTS P/L**  
Mob: 0410 569 694 Fax: 9356 4532  
PO Box 1022, St Albans Victoria 3021



## 6.1.2 445 COOMBS ROAD KINGLAKE WEST - BUSHFIRE REPLACEMENT DWELLING

**Attachments:**

- 1 Locality Maps [↓](#)
- 2 Bushfire Replacement Dwelling Plan [↓](#)

**Responsible Officer:** Director Partnerships, Planning & Engagement

**Author:** Planning Officer

**APPLICANT:** Ian Cromarty

**ZONING:** Rural Conservation Zone

**OVERLAY:** Bushfire Management Overlay

**REFERRAL:** The application was not required to be referred to any authority under the provisions of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme

**ADVERTISING:** The application was not publicly advertised as it was considered that the proposal would not cause any detriment to any adjoining or abutting properties

### RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

That Council refuse to provide consent to the endorsement of the Bushfire Replacement Dwelling under the provision of Clause 52.14 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme due to an insufficient level of detail shown on the site plan.

### KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES

- A Bushfire Replacement Dwelling application was formally lodged with Council for endorsement under the provisions of Clause 52.14 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme. The request was lodged prior to these provisions expiring on 30 September 2017.
- Clause 52.14 exempts the rebuilding of dwellings and other types of buildings that were damaged or destroyed in the 2009 Victorian bushfires from any requirement of the scheme, including any requirement to obtain a planning permit to use or develop land.
- Clause 52.14 requires specific requirement to be satisfied and shown on a site plan. The supplied site plan failed to provide adequate information and therefore did not meet the specific requirements of the Clause.
- Planning Officers have attempted to contact the applicant on several occasions via formal letters, telephone calls and a site visit, however have been unsuccessful on all occasions. No formal response has been received from the applicant to date.

**REPORT****SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA**

The subject site is on the southern side of Coombs Road (*Attachment 1*) and is approximately 3.5 kilometres south of the intersection with Whittlesea Yea Road.

In a regional context, the site is situated within the north-east of the municipality, dominated by mountainous terrain of the Sherwin Range, which falls from the Great Dividing Range west of Kinglake West, separating the catchments of the Plenty River to the west and the Diamond Creek catchment to the east.

The subject land is rectangular, covers an area of 11.34 hectares and has a street frontage of approximately 185 metres to Coombs Road. Vehicular access to the site is afforded via an existing gravel accessway located along its street frontage to Coombs Road. The land slopes steeply towards the south-east corner. The land is densely vegetated with predominantly indigenous trees and shrubs. Surrounding land is generally characterised by sizable rural lots with single dwellings and extensive vegetation.

There is an existing outbuilding on the subject which is surrounded by dense vegetation and various scrap metals, materials and disused car parts. There are also several commercial vehicles, machinery and equipment on the subject site and the land appears to be used as an informal store.

**BACKGROUND**

Planning Permit No. 1976 was issued on 25 February 1977 for the use and development of the land for the purpose of a dwelling.

Planning Permit No. 115381 was issued on 8 January 1987 for the construction of an outbuilding.

Both these structures were impacted by the 2009 Black Saturday Bushfires. The applicant has previously taken advantage of the 2009 Bushfire – Replacement Building exemption to reconstruct the outbuilding which received consent under Planning Reference No. 711991 on 13 November 2009.

**PLANNING APPLICATION HISTORY**

Concerns were raised with the accuracy and level of detail on the submitted plans which made it challenging to enable a comprehensive assessment of the proposal. Planning Officers have been unsuccessful in contacting the applicant to adequately respond to these outstanding concerns. Several telephone calls and letters have been sent; however, no formal response has been received by the applicant to date.

In the absence of any formal response Planning Officers undertook a site visit to discuss the outstanding concerns with the applicant and hand delivered the various written correspondences. The applicant was not present on the subject site and therefore Council Officers were unable to have a formal conversation to collaboratively work through the outstanding items.

**PROPOSAL**

The applicant submitted a hand drawn Bushfire Replacement Dwelling plan to satisfy Clause 52.14-2 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme (*Attachment 2*).



The proposed replacement dwelling is located approximately 52 metres south of Coombs Road and approximately 25 metres from the eastern boundary. The location of the replacement dwelling is commensurate to where the existing outbuilding is positioned.

### **ASSESSMENT AGAINST CLAUSE 52.14 – 2009 BUSHFIRE REPLACEMENT BUILDINGS OF THE WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME**

Clause 52.14 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme exempts the rebuilding of dwellings and other types of buildings that were damaged or destroyed in the 2009 Victorian bushfires from any requirement of the scheme, including any requirement to obtain a planning permit to use or develop land. Therefore, an assessment of the proposal against Planning Policy Framework, Local Planning Policy Framework and the relevant Zoning and Overlay controls would not be required in this instance.

The purpose of Clause 52.14 is to support the rebuilding of dwellings, dependent person's units and buildings used for agriculture damaged or destroyed by the 2009 Victorian bushfires.

To take advantage of this exemption a site plan was required to be submitted to Council by no later than 30 September 2017. After this date, the normal planning scheme provisions will apply. This application was received on 22 September 2017 and therefore could be considered under of this exemption, however after multiple attempts to make contact and bring the plans up to an improved level of quality have failed, it is not possible to form a position on the plans provided.

Clause 52.14 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme sets specific requirements that a site plan must show. In this case, the site plan submitted does not adequately satisfy all of those items. The site plan submitted has been hand drawn and is not to scale. Furthermore, the plan does not show dimensions of the property boundary, proposed dwelling and does not indicate whether the accessway to the dwelling is provided via an all-weather road with dimensions adequate to accommodate emergency vehicles.

The site plan also has a series of discrepancies. The existing outbuilding has not been identified on the plan and it appears the dwelling is proposed within the building envelope of the outbuilding. It is also likely the location of the proposed dwelling would require the removal of some dense native vegetation; however, this has not been sufficiently addressed on the hand drawn plan.

Considering the above, Planning Officers are of the opinion the hand drawn site plan cannot take advantage of Clause 52.14 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme. If the site plan does not satisfy the requirements of the Clause 52.14 they cannot be endorsed under this provision. It is also worth noting that Clause 52.14 does not provide any scope or mechanism for conditional consent. Therefore, the site plan cannot be endorsed nor can any conditional consent be provided.

In the event that the applicant is ready to proceed in the future, they will need to apply for and obtain a planning permit. At the time of any future application Council and the applicant can engage with the Country Fire Authority to ensure that if the land is used for residential purposes the dwelling can be located within an area on the subject site to assist the minimisation of risk to life and property from bushfire.

### **DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

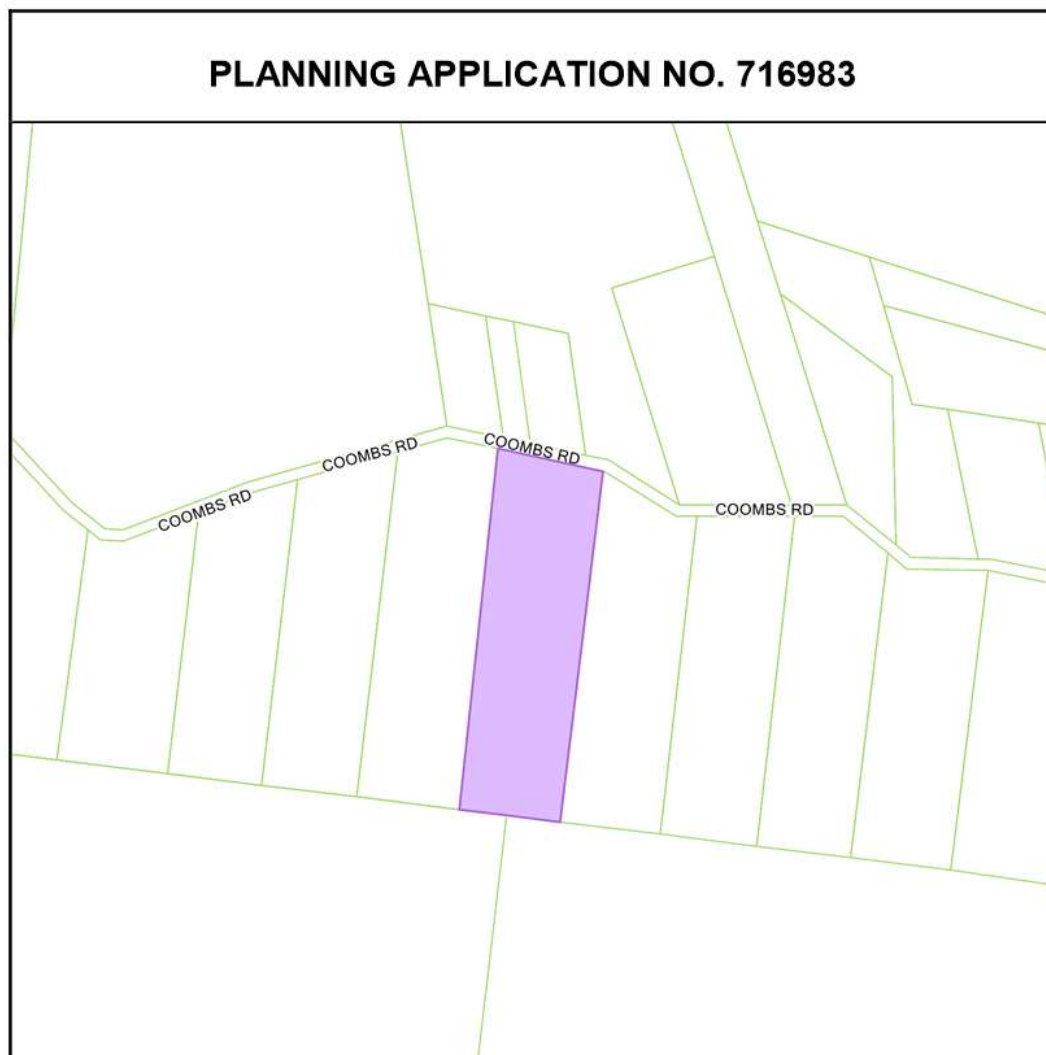
**CONCLUSION**

The proposed site plan has been submitted to take advantage of the 2009 Bushfire Replacement Buildings provisions which were first implemented into the Whittlesea Planning Scheme over 10 years ago. A review of the submitted plan has determined that the site plan fails to provide an adequate response to Clause 52.14 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme due to insufficient information. The proposed bushfire replacement dwelling site plan has not adequately addressed the specific site plan requirements outlined under Clause 52.14-2 and therefore the plan cannot be approved and consent cannot be provided.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT Council refuse to provide their consent to the endorsement of the Bushfire Replacement Dwelling under the provision of Clause 52.14 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme on the following grounds:**

- a) There are discrepancies shown on the site plan compared to what is existing and established on the subject site.**
- b) Additional native vegetation has been established on the site since the 2009 Victorian Bushfires which has not been identified on the site plan.**
- c) The site plan has not been drawn to scale and dimensions of the proposed replacement dwelling, property boundary and accessway have not been provided.**
- d) Insufficient information has been shown on the site plan to enable a comprehensive assessment of the proposal.**



 **Subject Land**



*City of*  
**Whittlesea**

**BUILDING AND PLANNING REPORT**

**PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 716983**



 **Subject Land**

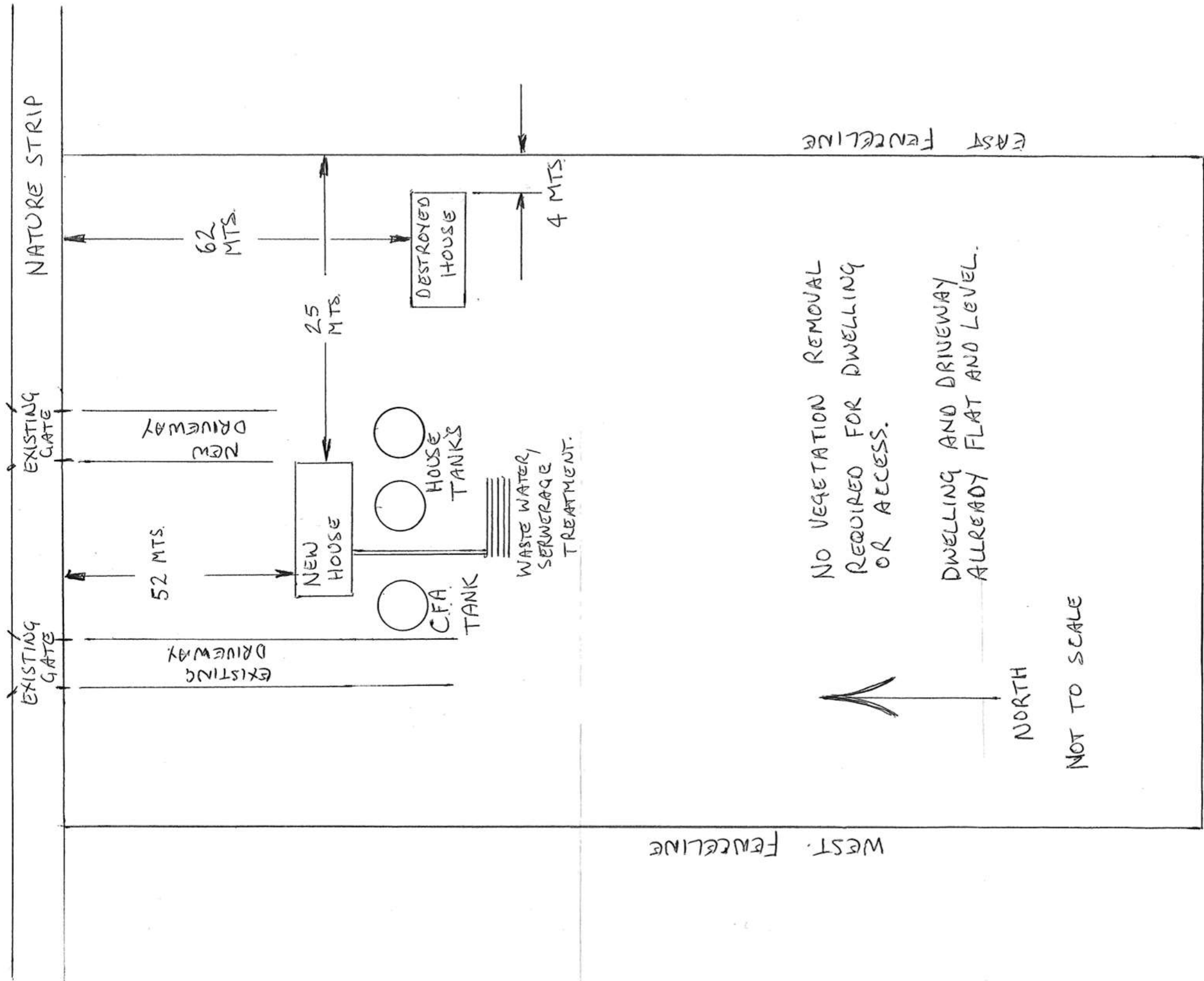


**City of  
Whittlesea**

**BUILDING AND PLANNING REPORT**

City Of Whittlesea  
Development Assessment Department  
22 SEP 2017

445 COOMBS ROAD



SITEPLAN FOR 445 COOMBS RD. KINGLAKE WEST  
OWNER  
IAN CROMARTY



**6.1.3 SUBMISSION TO THE PROTECTING MELBOURNE'S STRATEGIC AGRICULTURAL LAND REVIEW**

**Attachments:** 1 **Protecting Melbourne's Strategic Agricultural Land - Interim Submission** [↓](#)

**Responsible Officer:** Director Partnerships, Planning & Engagement

**Author:** Senior Strategic Policy Planner

**RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY**

That Council resolve to endorse the submission at *Attachment 1* as Council's formal submission to the *Protecting Melbourne's Strategic Agricultural Land Review* and forward the submission to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

**KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES**

- The State Government has commenced the *Protecting Melbourne's Strategic Agricultural Land Review* to identify strategic agricultural land in green wedge and peri-urban areas, including City of Whittlesea's Green Wedge.
- The objective of the project is to identify strategic agricultural land and then strengthen planning controls to protect it. Land not identified as strategic at the State level will remain as green wedge land and continue to support agricultural land uses.
- The State Government has consulted with community and local government stakeholders regarding the proposed criteria for assessing strategic agricultural land and existing challenges for agricultural land management.
- Submissions for local government closed on 21 May 2019. This timeline did not provide the opportunity for the submission to be considered at a Council meeting prior to lodgement.
- The submission was informed by existing Council policy including the *Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2021*, *Whittlesea 2040* (the Council Plan) and Council's Agribusiness Programme, all of which recognise peri-urban agriculture as an important contributor to economic prosperity, local employment, local food security, climate resilience and community wellbeing.
- The submission supports the development of stronger planning controls to identify and protect strategic agricultural land, in line with existing Council policy. The submission seeks clarification regarding concerns that the scope of the Review and criteria for assessment may have unintended consequences for decisions at the local level. In particular, the status of locally significant agricultural land in the green wedge that supports agricultural land uses and local job opportunities.

**REPORT****INTRODUCTION**

The State Government has commenced a project to identify strategic agricultural land in green wedge and peri-urban areas within 100 km of central Melbourne, including City of Whittlesea's Green Wedge.

The *Protecting Melbourne's Strategic Agricultural Land Review* (the Review) responds to Action 17 in Plan Melbourne, which seeks to strengthen protection for strategic agricultural land around Melbourne for the future, and to improve land use and development decision making in these areas.

The intent of the Review is to assess agricultural land capability across the study area, consult with the community, Councils and other interested stakeholders on the proposed criteria to identify strategic agricultural land, and then to introduce stronger planning controls to protect strategic agricultural land. An engagement pack was prepared by the State Government in support of the community consultation.

The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity to review and endorse the submission in response to this consultation (*refer Attachment 1*), and to seek Council's endorsement of its content. It should be noted that the intention to prepare a submission to the Review was communicated to the Mayor and Councillors in a memo dated 8 April 2019.

Consultation for the Review formally commenced on 12 March 2019 and submissions from the community were required by Tuesday 23 April 2019. For government and government authorities (including Councils), submissions closed on Tuesday 21 May 2019.

This timeline, unfortunately, did not provide the opportunity for the submission to be considered at a Council meeting prior to lodgement. The submission was prepared and lodged on the due date, with the qualification that the submission was only interim and would be reported to Council on 2 July 2019 and that the State Government would subsequently be advised of the outcome.

**BACKGROUND**

Background information for the Review has emphasised the significant competitive advantages for agricultural land around Melbourne, including proximity to markets, access to labour and infrastructure, fertile soils, proximity to sources of recycled water and the concentration of supporting rural industries. The protection of strategic agricultural land is expected to produce greater certainty for agricultural businesses in key precincts, and to support long term investment.

Specific matters where the State Government has sought feedback as part of the Review are:

- Level of community support for the proposed criteria for assessing strategic agricultural land;
- What are the greatest challenges for agricultural land management in the green wedge and peri-urban areas of Melbourne; and
- Level of understanding in the community of how the protection of agricultural land impacts food production.

The study area for the Review does not include land within Melbourne's urban area or within existing townships in the green wedge (including Whittlesea Township). Only land within a zone that already includes agriculture as a key purpose can be identified as strategic agricultural land.



The proposed criteria for assessing strategic agricultural land are:

- Land capability;
- Water access;
- Resilience and adaptability; and
- Existing land use and integration with industry.

Exclusions are:

- Areas of limited size and extent;
- Poor access; and
- Conservation land or land set aside for other purposes.

Importantly, the State Government acknowledges that agricultural land not identified as being significant at a State level may still be locally significant even if it does not meet the criteria. These areas will remain as green wedge land and support agricultural land uses, so they will not be turned over to residential development. Existing planning controls that apply will remain in place and not be weakened. This is a significant issue in terms of ensuring the status of land not identified as 'State significant' is still maintained and protected.

There are important synergies between this State Government project and Council's Agribusiness Programme, which forms part of the implementation of the *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2021* (GWMP). The Agribusiness Programme is supported by an Agribusiness Officer whose key tasks are to promote networking and to provide sound business and management advice to agricultural enterprises. The Agribusiness Officer role has been a key driver of local land capability assessment work to identify the future productive potential of agricultural land in the municipality. The next stages of this work will include an investigation of innovative farming practices that can build soil capability over time, and farm irrigation opportunities from the use of recycled water.

## KEY POINTS FROM THE SUBMISSION

The submission was informed by existing Council policy and adopted strategies, particularly the GWMP and the Council Plan (*Whittlesea 2040*).

### Scope of the Review - land outside areas identified as "strategic"

The statement from State Government that agricultural land not identified as being significant at a State level may still be considered locally significant even if it does not meet the Review criteria is welcomed. Nevertheless, it is noted that any initiatives or tools developed to identify and protect strategic agricultural land should not be done in isolation from other related work that affects green wedge and peri-urban land. An example of this is the separate State Government review of green wedge planning provisions which commenced in May 2018. Council provided feedback to this initiative, which coincides with an action in the GWMP to support stronger planning controls that encourage agricultural opportunities and discourage rural land fragmentation and inappropriate land uses.

Stronger recognition of agriculture and agri-tourism opportunities in the Green Wedge were also advocated for in the *Northern Metropolitan Land Use Framework Plan*.

It should be noted that there is currently an opportunity to align and bring together these various pieces of work to achieve a more coordinated approach. The strengthening of planning controls to reinforce the productive purpose of the broader green wedge land is urgently needed, to reduce land speculation pressures and proposals for inappropriate, low amenity uses. However, to avoid any unintended consequences for areas not identified as strategic agricultural land but still important at the local level, the scope of the Review should be expanded to include stronger planning controls to reinforce and support the non-urban, agricultural purpose of all green wedge land.

### **Assessment Criteria for the identification of Strategic Agricultural Land**

A key intent of the Review, including through its community consultation, is to promote the importance of preserving the existing and future potential of food production in peri-urban and green wedge areas.

The submission noted that the City of Whittlesea has already undertaken a project to investigate future opportunities for local agriculture, including modelling a range of commodities in future climate scenarios. The next stages of this project are already underway through academic and industry partnerships, including an investigation of innovative farming practices that can build soil capability over time. Funding opportunities are also being sought for a pilot project that would establish a farm in Epping North with the use of recycled water.

This existing and ongoing strategic work puts Council in a relatively engaged and informed position with respect to the future productive potential of its agricultural land. City of Whittlesea has taken an innovative approach and is one of very few Councils to have undertaken this land capability assessment work, therefore Council has the capacity to ground-truth the regional analysis prepared to support the State Government Review. As such, the submission raises concerns about the accuracy of mapping prepared for the Review, based on Council's 2018 Land Capability Assessment Report. This report has been incorporated in the submission to demonstrate that the local-scale land suitability mapping provides a markedly different outcome compared to the results of the regional approach being used in the Review. The submission recommends that further analysis of land suitability is carried out at the local scale prior to finalising the mapping of identified strategic agricultural land. Otherwise, there is a risk that the amount of strategic agricultural land identified by the Review will not accurately reflect productive potential.

This is particularly so when considering productive potential as a result of the use of recycled water for irrigation. The criterion used in the Review with respect to water access is generally supported, but the mapping does not appear to identify City of Whittlesea as having high potential for access to alternative water sources. The mapping does not identify recycled water sources that are yet to be constructed or expanded. In contrast to this, Council's Land Capability Assessment Report documents the potential for recycled water to transform local agriculture by widening the range of commodities that can be grown and opening new horticultural markets.

### **NOTIFICATION**

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) requested that Councils support the project by publicising workshop sessions being held in regional locations around Melbourne, and by extending DELWP's invitation to the community to participate in the process. Council provided this support by directly engaging with the City of Whittlesea Agribusiness Reference group, the Agribusiness contact list, within the Economic Development business eNewsletter and the Whittlesea Township and Surrounds network information, as well as posting notices on team members' Linked In profiles.

### **CRITICAL DATES**

Submissions for the agency consultation closed on 21 May 2019. This timeline prevented the submission being considered at a Council meeting prior to lodgement. An interim submission was submitted to DELWP noting that it would be reported to Council on 2 July 2019 to seek endorsement.

The notification of the outcome soon after 2 July 2019 would align with the next steps in the Review, following the collation of stakeholder submissions:

- July 2019 – Findings summary shared with the community;
- Late 2019 – develop the planning response/further consultation on the findings and improving green wedge planning; and

- 2020 – Implement the planning controls.

## **POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION**

### ***Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2021***

The following actions of the *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2021* are directly referenced in the submission to the Review:

- Action L11, which seeks to monitor and support State Government initiatives in the review of planning provisions to support agribusiness and the right to farm in our rural, green wedge areas; and
- Actions L09, L27 and L28 which seek to investigate and evaluate innovative land use options which support sustainable land management, and to provide support to farmers to produce local food (and to increase food security) in accordance with optimal management practices.

### ***Climate Ready Whittlesea***

The submission relies on the findings of climate change modelling for agricultural commodities already undertaken by City of Whittlesea. This strategic work is specifically referenced as best practice in *Climate Ready Whittlesea*, Council's Climate Change Adaptation Plan, as follows:

*Modern techniques for modelling climate change provide an additional advantage in long term planning... An excellent example of utilising modelling to plan for the future is the Land Capability Project. Whittlesea Council is working in partnership with Deakin University and the local farming community. The aim of the project is to investigate the potential of agriculture in the rural north of the municipality and its role in supporting the economic and environmental sustainability, and social wellbeing of our community both now and into the future.*

The Land Capability Project...

*also gives Council the information to formulate policy and strategy to strengthen the agricultural sector, as well as advocate to other levels of government to do the same.*

### ***Whittlesea Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2012-2022***

Whittlesea's *Environmental Sustainability Strategy* (ESS) aims to:

- Protect our natural environment;
- Adapt to Climate Change;
- Save water and energy;
- Secure our food supplies; and
- Change behaviour.

Strategic investigations for City of Whittlesea's rural areas have been used to inform the submission to the Review, and are aligned with the above framework. Specifically, the ESS has identified the challenges for sustainable land management from:

- Productive rural land being taken out of production due to urbanisation and land use change;
- Predicted changes in rainfall and temperatures that will increase challenges for farmers in keeping land productive whilst dealing with increased erosion and damage to crops; and

- Challenges in meeting the needs for increasing food production to feed a growing population, whilst managing land sustainably.

### ***Agriculture Victoria Strategy***

The *Agriculture Victoria Strategy* (the Strategy) recognises that the agriculture sector provides one of the best opportunities for economic growth in Victoria's regions. Further, the Strategy states:

*However, economic growth is not an end in itself. An inclusive growth agenda that reduces inequality, strengthens resilience and respects diversity is key to Victoria's social and economic prosperity.*

The Strategy also highlights the following key challenges:

- Globally competitive – Position Victoria as a global leader in providing clean and safe food and fibre;
- Innovative – Drive creativity and the adoption of new ideas to improve productivity and efficiency of agriculture supply chains;
- Resilient – Build capabilities and capacity to manage risks and challenges such as climate change; and
- Diverse – Harness the diversity of Victorian agriculture and its communities.

The submission references Council's ongoing strategic work to support its agriculture sector, which aligns with the identified need to address these challenges. The submission states:

*The recognition of peri-urban agriculture as an important contributor to economic prosperity and local employment, local food security, climate resilience and community wellbeing is what is driving efforts by City of Whittlesea to protect agricultural land in the municipality.*

### **LINK TO STRATEGIC RISKS**

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

The Council decision sought relates to a submission to a State Government project. A Council decision that endorses the submission does not have a direct influence on the outcome of the project and, therefore, does not represent a strategic risk for Council.

### **LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN**

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Sustainable environment</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>Climate ready</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>We reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help our community to adapt to the effects of climate change</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>

The submission supports the following economic and environmental goals from the Council Plan 2017-2021 (*Whittlesea 2040*):

#### **Goal 4 (Sustainable Environment):**

- *Together we are working to reduce our impact on the environment and adapt to the changing climate by:*
  - *Managing land sustainably;*
  - *Reducing energy use and carbon emissions; and*
  - *Building community resilience.*

**Goal 3.3: Successful, innovative local businesses:**

- *Driving our rural economy – work with the sector to adapt to climate change; and*
- *Whittlesea Food and Farm Collective – partner to support people experiencing food insecurity.*

The submission has referenced the following initiatives that seek to implement the above goals:

- City of Whittlesea is developing the *Best Practice Case Study of Regenerative Agriculture Implementation*, to inform of the opportunities that can influence growth of our agricultural sector. The regenerative agriculture approach builds soil health, sequesters carbon, and reduces energy and input use. It should be noted that technical work that forms the evidence base for the Review (the Centre for Regional and Rural Futures (CERRF) Land Suitability Assessment approach) is aligned with the direction that City of Whittlesea has identified for future agricultural practice through the above project, and through ongoing work to identify commodities that are resilient to climate change; and
- The Whittlesea Food and Farm Collective is identified on the Review's Water Access Map as the "Whittlesea Community Farm." This is a partnership project being developed between Whittlesea Community Connections, Melbourne Polytechnic, Yarra Valley Water and City of Whittlesea to establish a farm on a site in Epping North with the use of recycled water. The project has the following objectives that align with the intent of the Review to protect food production and long-term investment in peri-urban/green wedge areas:
  - Provide integrated and responsive support to people in food insecurity;
  - Build a strong economy through farming innovation and enterprise; and
  - Create more supported volunteering, skill development, training and employment opportunities.

**DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

**CONCLUSION**

This report seeks endorsement of the submission (*refer Attachment 1*) in response to the State Government consultation for *Protecting Melbourne's Strategic Agricultural Land Review*. An interim submission was submitted pending formal Council consideration, as timelines prevented the submission being considered at a Council meeting prior to the lodgement date.

The submission was informed by the implementation actions of Whittlesea's *Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2021*, which is adopted Council policy that supports a review of planning provisions to encourage agribusiness and the right to farm in our rural green wedge. Strategic work from Council's Agribusiness Programme, that was used to support feedback to the Review, is the result of the implementation of the *Green Wedge Management Plan and Whittlesea 2040* (the Council Plan).

There will be further opportunity to engage with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning throughout the Review, including greater consideration of City of Whittlesea's local land capability data, and bringing this work together with other important green wedge planning initiatives.

It is recommended that Council endorse the submission to the *Protecting Melbourne's Strategic Agricultural Land Review* as per *Attachment 1*, and authorise forwarding the submission to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
-----------------------

**THAT Council resolve to endorse the submission at *Attachment 1* as Council's formal submission to the *Protecting Melbourne's Strategic Agricultural Land Review* and forward the submission to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.**

## **SUBMISSION TO PROTECTING MELBOURNE'S STRATEGIC AGRICULTURAL LAND REVIEW**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to *Protecting Melbourne's Strategic Agricultural Land Review* (the Review). This submission has been prepared by officers at City of Whittlesea, and will be reported to Council on 2 July 2019 to seek endorsement. To this end, the submission should be considered as interim, pending the final Council decision.

### **Key Points from the Submission**

While the strengthening of planning controls to identify and protect strategic agricultural land is strongly supported, there is concern that the scope of the Review and criteria for assessment may have unintended consequences for decision making at the local level. These concerns can be summarised as follows:

1. The strengthening of planning controls to reinforce the productive purpose of the broader green wedge land is urgently needed, to reduce land speculation pressures and proposals for inappropriate, low amenity uses. As such, excluding this important issue from the Review in favour of developing planning controls, in isolation, for identified "strategic agricultural land" is not supported. Rather than improving decision making in green wedge areas (which is a stated objective of the Review), this approach may have the effect of weakening the existing green wedge controls, resulting in further permanent loss of productive agricultural land.
2. City of Whittlesea has already begun investigating the future productive potential of its green wedge land in the scenario of a changing climate, through its Land Capability Mapping and its ongoing project partnerships with Deakin University and Foodprint Melbourne. The focus of this strategic work is to promote an agribusiness sector that is flexible, innovative and sustainable. A supportive planning response would:
  - encourage innovative farming practices;
  - respond to the challenges of emerging markets;
  - increase the sustainable, environmentally responsible productivity of the landscape; and
  - reinforce the purpose of the rural zones to produce food and fibre.

In contrast to this, the Review focusses too heavily on soil-based agriculture and existing infrastructure, particularly in relation to access to water. This is self-limiting, and risks reducing the amount of land that will be protected for future production of food and fibre. The scope of the Review should be broadened to factor in diversity and innovation in agriculture, as the sector responds to shifting consumer trends and a changing climate.

3. Between 2016 and 2018, City of Whittlesea undertook a Land Capability Mapping Project, using the land suitability approach that has been adopted by *Centre for Regional and Rural Futures* at Deakin University in its background paper to support the Review. Through this work, we can identify that the productive capacity of land mapped for the local project is significantly higher, compared to the regional maps prepared for the Review. As such, we strongly recommend that an analysis of land suitability is carried out at a local scale for all Councils within the scope of the Review, to ensure accurate mapping of 'strategic agricultural land.'

### Protection of Strategic Agricultural Land

It is understood that the outcome of the Review is to “strengthen protection for strategic agricultural land around Melbourne for the future, and to improve land use and development decision making in these areas”. This broad intent is supported by existing policy at City of Whittlesea, including Whittlesea’s *Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2031*.

The recognition of peri-urban agriculture as an important contributor to economic prosperity and local employment, local food security, climate resilience and community wellbeing is what is driving efforts by City of Whittlesea to protect agricultural land in the municipality. In particular, Council’s *Green Wedge Management Plan* includes an action to monitor and support State Government initiatives in the review of planning provisions to support agribusiness and the right to farm in our rural, green wedge areas (Action L11).

The Review will potentially support the following goals from the Council Plan 2017-2021 (*Whittlesea 2040*):

Goal 3.3: Successful, innovative local businesses:

- *Driving our rural economy – work with the sector to adapt to climate change.*
- *Whittlesea Food and Farm Collective – partner to support people experiencing food insecurity.*

Goal 4: Sustainable Environment

- *Together we are working to reduce our impact on the environment and adapt to the changing climate by:*
  - *Managing land sustainably*
  - *Reducing energy use and carbon emissions*
  - *Building community resilience.*

City of Whittlesea is developing the *Best Practice Case Study of Regenerative Agriculture Implementation*, which will be disseminated to key stakeholders by 30 June 2020 to inform of the opportunities that can influence growth of our agricultural sector. The regenerative agriculture approach builds soil health, sequesters carbon, and reduces energy and input use. It should be noted that technical work that forms the evidence base for the Review (the Centre for Regional and Rural Futures (CERRF)



Land Suitability Assessment approach) is aligned with the direction that City of Whittlesea has identified for future agricultural practice through the above project, and through ongoing work to identify commodities that are resilient to climate change.

The Whittlesea Food and Farm Collective is identified on the Review's Water Access Map as the "Whittlesea Community Farm." This is a partnership project between Whittlesea Community Connections, Melbourne Polytechnic, Yarra Valley Water and City of Whittlesea to establish a farm on a site in Epping North with the use of recycled water. The project has the following objectives that align with the intent of the Review to protect food production and long-term investment in peri-urban areas:

- Provide integrated and responsive support to people in food insecurity;
- Build a strong economy through farming innovation and enterprise; and
- Create more supported volunteering, skill development, training and employment opportunities.

#### **Land outside areas identified as "strategic"**

It is understood that Green Wedge areas can have a range of values. City of Whittlesea's *Green Wedge Management Plan* acknowledges the agricultural, environmental, cultural, recreational and landscape values of the Green Wedge areas and seeks to preserve and enhance these values. Given the diversity of values in the Green Wedge, officers welcome the statement from State Government that agricultural land not identified as being significant at a state level may still be considered locally significant even if it does not meet the Review criteria. Particularly, that these areas will remain as green wedge land, will continue to support agricultural land uses, and will not be turned over to residential development.

Notwithstanding this statement, any initiatives or tools developed to identify strategic agricultural land should not be done in isolation of other related work that affects green wedge and peri-urban land. To avoid any unintended consequences for areas not identified as strategic agricultural land, it is important that the planning controls in these areas also be strengthened to reinforce the non-urban, agricultural purpose of the existing zones.

This work should also draw together the broader set of initiatives and projects being progressed by the Department, which includes the recent changes to planning controls for animal industries, and the review of green wedge planning provisions that was announced by the State Government in May 2018. Officers from City of Whittlesea were pleased to provide feedback to these related initiatives in the hope that they would result in stronger planning controls to discourage rural land fragmentation and inappropriate land uses. It is noted that Council officers have also advocated strongly for a stronger recognition of agriculture and agri-tourism opportunities in the Green Wedge in the Northern Metropolitan Land Use Framework Plan. There is an opportunity here to align and bring together these various pieces of work to achieve a more coordinated approach.

Through the actions of its *Green Wedge Management Plan*, City of Whittlesea has sought to prevent the fragmentation of green wedge land through subdivision, and to discourage the establishment of urban land uses on green wedge land, such as soil dumping and materials storage. The challenges in achieving this within the existing

planning controls were part of City of Whittlesea's feedback to the DELWP's consultation on green wedge planning provisions.

The introduction of specific planning controls to protect "strategic" agricultural land, without consideration of the effectiveness of existing green wedge planning controls, may have unintended consequences for rural lot subdivision and land use applications on properties outside the areas identified as "strategic." As such, rather than improving decision making in green wedge areas, this approach may have the effect of weakening the existing controls until the Green Wedge Planning Provision review has been completed and implemented.

### **Land Suitability Assessment Data**

As has been mentioned above, the use of the CERRF Land Suitability Assessment approach to support the Review aligns with work that was undertaken by CERRF for City of Whittlesea between 2016 and 2018. This mapping is available on Council's website as part of its farming and agricultural business support, and was developed with strong support and assistance from the local agricultural sector and farming community.

However, we note that this local-scale land suitability mapping provides a markedly different outcome compared to the results of the regional approach used to support the Review. As such, we would strongly encourage that analysis of land suitability is carried out at the local scale prior to finalising the mapping of identified "strategic agricultural land."

City of Whittlesea's land suitability mapping is provided on the Council website [here](#), and a copy of the final Land Capability Assessment report is attached to this submission to inform the Review.

It is hoped that the Review will positively support the next step in the City of Whittlesea Land Capability Assessment project, which is to undertake further ground-truthing of the data that was obtained, and to investigate planning tools to protect the agricultural potential of the Green Wedge.

### **Rural zones within the scope of the Review**

The Review appears to exclude the Green Wedge A zone from its scope. This omission is not supported by City of Whittlesea's *Green Wedge Management Plan*, which is implemented across all green wedge land. It should be noted that the introduction of green wedge planning provisions in 2004 was a material change in planning policy direction for Victoria. The zone changes introduced with those provisions, including the Green Wedge A Zone, have not yet been ground-truthed in this municipality.

City of Whittlesea's Land Capability Assessment Report identifies the potential of land for production of a range of commodities, including on Green Wedge A zoned land (refer to the section above). The exclusion of Green Wedge A zoned land from the scope of the Review potentially undermines this strategic direction.

It should be noted, also, that there are local examples of productive agricultural uses being undertaken on lots that are eight hectares or less.

### Assessment Criteria

In terms of specific feedback sought via the consultation process, the *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2031* provides guidance for Council's response to the criteria for assessment, and for what the planning response should achieve in Green Wedge areas:

1. The use of the criterion related to land suitability is supported by Whittlesea's Land Capability Assessment Project, which was undertaken in response to Actions L09, L27 and L28 of the *Green Wedge Management Plan*. These implementation actions seek to investigate and evaluate innovative land use options which support sustainable land management, and to provide support to farmers to produce local food (and to increase food security) in accordance with optimal management practices.
2. Given the approach outlined above, the criterion relating to land capability (as defined for the Technical Report prepared for the Review) is not supported due to its emphasis on soil, landscape, groundwater and existing land degradation in the context of conventional agricultural land uses such as intensive horticulture and dairying.

This is not a policy approach that City of Whittlesea supports in recognising and fostering the potential of its agricultural land. By way of example, City of Whittlesea is undertaking a postgraduate partnership project through Deakin University that is investigating the application of regenerative agricultural practice to our green wedge areas. Regenerative agriculture is a farming and grazing practice that restores soil biodiversity by rebuilding soil organic matter. This has benefits for carbon sequestration and efficiency of water use, reducing the significance of existing land degradation in assessing soil attributes.

It should be noted, also, that international best practice seeks to broaden the definition of land viability to consider consumer trends towards locally and sustainably produced food, and agritourism. Such considerations favour peri-urban land, including smaller lots and lots previously underutilised for agriculture<sup>1</sup>. This approach has specific relevance to City of Whittlesea, as is outlined in the Land Capability Assessment Report (attached). The report notes that whilst the municipality's total agricultural area, agricultural production and the number of agribusinesses have decreased since 2011, economic output from agriculture increased by \$4.1 million between 2011 and 2016. This indicates that agribusinesses that locate in this area are successful and there is opportunity for further growth, particularly with policy and funding support. It should be noted that this economic efficiency has occurred alongside the maintenance of landscapes and soils. The report also notes that despite the loss of agricultural land in City of Whittlesea, when compared to neighbouring areas it has the lowest percentage of agricultural land lost to other land uses since 2011<sup>2</sup>.

3. The criterion relating to water access is generally supported, but the mapping does not appear to identify City of Whittlesea as having high potential for access to alternative water sources. The mapping does not identify recycled water sources that are yet to be constructed or expanded, despite the CERRF land suitability analysis (used to support the Review) which states the importance of proximate sources of recycled water to augment agricultural land versatility.

Notwithstanding, City of Whittlesea is in close proximity to recycled water storage reservoirs and wastewater treatment plants that have the potential to increase their production of recycled water over time<sup>2</sup>.

City of Whittlesea's Land Capability Assessment Report documents the potential for recycled water to transform local agriculture by widening the range of commodities that can be grown and opening new horticultural markets. The projected increase in urban population in the municipality will result in increased wastewater which will be a disposal problem. Collaboration with the water sector can potentially turn a disposal problem into an environmental solution and valuable agricultural resource.

The importance of this resource is demonstrated in the agricultural commodity modelling for the Land Capability Assessment Report. All commodities show an increase in water needs between now and 2050 due to increased temperatures, changes in soil moisture and, possibly, changes in rainfall patterns. Areas of high suitability for each commodity will be drastically reduced without irrigation<sup>2</sup>. Currently, 80% of City of Whittlesea's irrigation water comes from on-farm dams, 10% from recycled water, with the remainder coming from rivers, creeks, lakes, groundwater and reticulated town water. The use of recycled water as a source of irrigation is still relatively new, with trials being undertaken in Werribee South and on the Mornington Peninsula<sup>2</sup>.

City of Whittlesea is a project partner of Foodprint Melbourne, an inter-faculty team at the University of Melbourne funded by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation. Foodprint Melbourne's 2019 report, *Roadmap for a Resilient and Sustainable Melbourne Foodbowl*, advocates for greater use of urban wastewater for food production, to increase the resilience of the city's food system to water scarcity. Water scarcity is likely to impact all of Victoria's food production areas in the coming decades due to drought. The Foodprint Melbourne report advocates for increased investment by state government and water authorities in infrastructure to supply farms with recycled water and stormwater in the future<sup>3</sup>.

Given food production forms a major justification for the Review, we would strongly advocate for the 'water access' criterion to be broadened, to consider future access opportunities from proximity to urban development and growth.

4. Whilst not named as a criterion, there is a Land Constraints Map in the consultation material which appears to identify large areas of City of Whittlesea as "constrained" by native vegetation.

Contemporary sustainable land management practice recognises the value brought by native vegetation, including (but not limited to) natural management of pasture and crop pests, and increased farm productivity from reduction in windspeeds and temperature moderation.

The classification of native vegetation as a ‘constraint’ to agriculture does not align with the implementation actions of Whittlesea’s *Green Wedge Management Plan*. Whilst native vegetation may not be compatible with intensive farming, the *Green Wedge Management Plan* seeks to encourage regenerative farming practices which balance high value production with enhanced biodiversity, positive soil health and water quality (refer to Point 2, above).

Rather than treating native vegetation as a constraint, the Review should acknowledge the values brought to agriculture by biodiversity and should also consider the broader regional role that *Green Wedge Management Plans* have in recognising biodiversity corridors, habitat links, and riparian zones that extend across municipal boundaries.

### What should the planning response achieve?

5. Whittlesea’s *Green Wedge Management Plan* sets the following preferences for the planning response to promote the agricultural potential of the green wedge areas:
  - Action L11 seeks to monitor State Government initiatives to support agribusiness and the right to farm in rural areas through improved planning provisions. Strategic work already being undertaken by the City of Whittlesea seeks to promote an agribusiness sector that is flexible, innovative and sustainable. Ideally, therefore, the planning response would:
    - encourage innovative farming practices;
    - respond to the challenges of emerging markets;
    - increase the sustainable, environmentally responsible productivity of the landscape; and
    - reinforce the purpose of the rural zones to produce food and fibre.
  - Action L18 seeks to develop mechanisms, including policy development, that discourage and regulate soil dumping, filling of land, and native vegetation removal. This aligns with the overall strategic direction of the *Green Wedge Management Plan*, which is to enhance and protect natural, productive and cultural resources to achieve the community’s vision for the Green Wedge.
  - Action L20 seeks the establishment of township boundaries to reduce the potential for conflict from urban uses in rural areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to ongoing engagement with DELWP officers throughout the Review, including greater consideration of local land suitability data, and bringing this work together with other important green wedge planning initiatives.

1. Oregon Department of Agriculture (2007) cited in Foodprint Melbourne 2019, *Roadmap for a Resilient and Sustainable Melbourne Foodbowl* p.30).
2. City of Whittlesea, 2018, *Future Prospects of Local Agriculture in the City of Whittlesea* p.3, 4, 5, 49
3. Foodprint Melbourne 2019, *Roadmap for a Resilient and Sustainable Melbourne Foodbowl*, p.30

**6.1.4 ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS REPORT - 2 JULY 2019**

**Responsible Officer:** Director Partnerships, Planning & Engagement

**Author:** Governance Officer

**RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY**

That Council note the record of the Assemblies of Councillors meetings as set out in the table in the report.

**KEY FACTS AND/OR ISSUES**

To report to Council the records of Assemblies of Councillors in accordance with Section 80A(2) of the Local Government Act.

**REPORT**

**BACKGROUND**

The Local Government Act 1989 requires records of Assemblies of Councillors to be reported to an ordinary Council meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

A meeting is an assembly of Councillors if it considers matters that are likely to be the subject of a Council decision or the exercise of a Council delegation and the meeting is:

- A planned or scheduled meeting that includes at least half the Councillors and a member of Council staff; or
- An advisory committee of Council where one or more Councillors are present.

A record must be kept of an assembly of Councillors which lists the Councillors and members of Council staff attending, the matters discussed, disclosures of conflict of interest and whether a Councillor left the meeting after making a disclosure.

**PROPOSAL**

Assemblies of Councillors records not previously reported to Council are detailed in the following table:-

Assembly Details	Councillor attendees	Officer attendees	Matters discussed
City of Whittlesea Australia Day Awards Advisory Committee Meeting <b>6 May 2019</b>	Cr Cox (Mayor) Cr Joseph (Deputy Mayor)	GOs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome 2019 recipient – Gillian Borrack to the Committee</li> <li>2. Amended Committee Terms of Reference Adopted by Council on 2 April 2019</li> <li>3. Expression of Interest Process for Community Representative to join the Committee</li> <li>4. Opening of Award Nomination Period</li> <li>5. Communications</li> <li>6. General Business: Feedback was provided regarding the 2018 Australia Day Award Nominee Recognition Function.</li> </ol> <p><i>Nil disclosures</i></p>
Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters Advisory Committee Meeting <b>14 May 2019</b>	Cr Cox (Mayor) Cr Alessi Cr Pavlidis	CEO MG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confidential Item: Quarter 3 Report on 2018-19 CEO KPIs</li> <li>2. Confidential Item: Draft CEO KPIs 2019-20</li> </ol> <p><i>Independent Member of CEMAC in Attendance: Agata Jarbin</i> <i>Nil disclosures</i></p>
Councillor Briefing <b>14 May 2019</b>	Cr Cox (Mayor) Cr Alessi Cr Pavlidis Cr Sterjova	CEO DCS DCRS DCTP PP MPUD ULPUF	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Signage Management Plan</li> <li>2. Street Tree Management Plan Review</li> <li>3. Confidential Item: CEO/Councillor Time</li> </ol> <p><i>Nil disclosures</i></p>
Councillor Briefing <b>21 May 2019</b>	Cr Cox (Mayor) Cr Joseph (Deputy Mayor) Cr Alessi Cr Desiato Cr Kozmevski Cr Monteleone Cr Pavlidis Cr Sterjova	CEO DCS DCRS DCTP DPPE MCBP SPPO TLSP	<p>Community Building Policy and Strategy</p> <p><i>Nil disclosures</i></p>



Assembly Details	Councillor attendees	Officer attendees	Matters discussed
Council Budget 2019/20 Advisory Committee Meeting <b>22 May 2019</b>	Cr Cox (Mayor) Cr Joseph (Deputy Mayor) Cr Pavlidis	CEO DCS DCRS DCTP DPPE GOs MFA TLFA TLG	<p>1. Hearing of Submitters:</p> <p>The following submitters made oral presentation in support of their submissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Denys Potts, Secretary/Treasurer, Whittlesea RSL Sub-branch (Illumination of Memorial and ANZAC Day)</li> <li>Sofi De Lesantis</li> <li>John Nugent</li> <li>Harinder Singh &amp; Kulwant Singh, Whittlesea Hockey Club</li> <li>Justine Sless, Manager, Thomastown Neighbourhood House</li> <li>Max Sargent, Manager &amp; Jo Lee, Committee Member, Creeds Farm Living &amp; Learning Centre</li> <li>Anthony Holding, President &amp; Dave Watson, Whittlesea Country Music Festival Committee</li> <li>Rob Mazniowski, Chairperson, Thomastown Precinct Activity Group &amp; President, Thomastown Football Netball Club</li> <li>Shane Hickey (Chairperson) &amp; Chris Fillipov, Waterstone Hill Owners Cooperation</li> <li>Alex Haynes, CEO, Whittlesea Community Connections</li> <li>Judy Clements &amp; Jan Hyndman, Friends of Toorourong</li> <li>Graeme Hunter (Chairperson) &amp; Peter Towt, Whittlesea Showgrounds and Recreation Reserves Committee of Management Inc.</li> </ul> <p>Other Submitters who elected not to speak:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles Castle, President, Whittlesea Courthouse Association</li> <li>Gary Doorbar, Victorian State Emergency Service</li> <li>Selina Demiris</li> <li>Christine Latimer, Road Trauma Support Services Victoria</li> </ul> <p>2. Confidential Item: Consideration of Submission and making of recommendations to Council</p> <p><i>Nil disclosures</i></p>
Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG) Meeting <b>23 May 2019</b>	Cr Sterjova	TLACD ALCO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acceptance of 18 April Minutes</li> <li>Membership</li> <li>WRG 2019-20 Budget</li> <li>Aboriginal Liaison Officer Report</li> <li>2019 Community Festival</li> <li>WRG website content</li> <li>Change the Date</li> <li>Aboriginal Gathering Place</li> <li>Treaty Elections of the First Peoples Assembly of Victoria</li> </ol> <p><i>Nil disclosures</i></p>
Councillor Briefing <b>28 May 2019</b>	Cr Cox (Mayor) Cr Joseph (Deputy Mayor) Cr Alessi Cr Kelly Cr Lalios	CEO MG	<p>Confidential Item: Draft CEO 2019-2020 KPIs</p> <p><i>Independent Member of CEMAC in Attendance: Agata Jarbin</i></p> <p><i>Nil disclosures</i></p>

The table below represents an Index of Officer titles:

Initials	Title of Officer	Initials	Title of Officer
<b>ALCO</b>	Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator – Donna Wright	<b>MG</b>	Manager Governance – Michael Tonta
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer – Simon Overland	<b>MPUD</b>	Manager Parks & Urban Design – Susan Hecker
<b>DCS</b>	Director Community Services – Russell Hopkins	<b>PP</b>	Project Planner – Ashely Baker-Finch
<b>DCRS</b>	Director Corporate Services – Helen Sui	<b>SPPO</b>	Social Policy and Projects Officer – Karen Greer
<b>DCTP</b>	Director City Transport and Presentation – Nick Mann	<b>TLACD</b>	Team Leader Aboriginal & Cultural Diversity – Nick Butera
<b>DPPE</b>	Director Partnerships, Planning and Engagement – Liana Thompson	<b>TLFA</b>	Team Leader Financial Accounting – Nicole Montague
<b>GOs</b>	Governance Officers – Amanda Marijanovic & Diana Vukic	<b>TLG</b>	Team Leader Governance – Angelo Mamatis
<b>MCBP</b>	Manager Community Building and Planning – Belgin Besim	<b>TLSP</b>	Team Leader Social Policy and Planning – Carmen Faelis
<b>MFA</b>	Manager Finance & Assets – Amy Montalti	<b>ULPUF</b>	Unit Leader Parks & Urban Forest – Michael Tanner

## CONSULTATION

Consultation has taken place with internal Council Officer representatives of each of the meetings and committees that qualify as an Assembly of Councillors.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

## POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION

Section 3C(2)(g) of the Local Government Act 1989 provides that one of Council's facilitating objectives is to have regard to ensuring transparency and accountability in Council decision making.

Accordingly, section 80A(2) of the Local Government Act 1989 requires that the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the written record of an assembly of Councillors is, as soon as practicable:-

- (a) reported at an ordinary meeting of the Council; and
- (b) incorporated in the minutes of that Council meeting.

## LINK TO STRATEGIC RISKS

**Strategic Risk** *Governance - Management - Ineffective governance of Council's operations and activities by Management resulting in either a legislative or policy breach*

Reporting assemblies of Councillor meetings is a legislative requirement which also promotes open and transparent decision making.

## LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Enabling the vision</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>Making it happen</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Our Council monitors and evaluates all of its operations</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Organisational Sustainability</b>

The provision of this report is in line with Whittlesea 2040 and the Council Plan by ensuring Council monitors and evaluates all of its operations.

**DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

**CONCLUSION**

That Council note the record of the Assemblies of Councillors meetings in the table set out in the report.

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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**THAT Council note the record of the Assemblies of Councillors meetings in the table set out in the report.**



### 6.1.5 EPPING COMMUNITY SERVICES HUB PARTNER ORGANISATION REQUEST

**Responsible Officer:** Director Partnerships, Planning & Engagement

**Author:** Social Policy and Projects Officer

#### RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

Council resolve to approve Merri Community Health Services Limited as a sub-tenant of the Epping Community Services Hub (713 High St, Epping).

#### KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES

- Council's establishment of the Epping Community Services Hub (ECSH) facilitates the expansion of much needed human service provision to the municipality. It responds to the needs of the community, providing innovative service and infrastructure delivery focused on integration and a partnership approach.
- Council's resolution on 24 February 2015 requires formal endorsement of all sub-tenancies of ECSH: "...Brotherhood of St Laurence will take on the lease for the facility for a five year period and with the consent of Council, will sub lease to appropriate services providers" (Council Report 24/02/15, p1). There are currently 24 services operating from ECSH.
- Merri Community Health Services Limited have applied to be a sub-tenant of the ESCH. This agency is committed to the vision of the ECSH as an integrated service model and will increase local communities access to home based allied health services, such as occupational therapy and podiatry.

**REPORT****INTRODUCTION**

The ESCH is a Council facility being leased to the Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) as the lead agency which then sub-leases to appropriate community service providers. The total capacity of the Hub is 110 desks. Currently 103.2 desks are leased.

Council has received an application from Merri Community Health Services Limited to locate their Age Care Services at the ESCH requiring 3 desks. This agency will provide increased community access to allied health home visiting service to older people in the municipality.

**BACKGROUND**

The ECSH was established in May 2016 to respond to gaps in service provision and infrastructure in innovative ways to better address needs in the community. The Epping Central Structure Plan (2011), the South Morang Civic Precinct Community Infrastructure Analysis (2013) and the Human Services Needs Analysis (2013) identified substantial demand for additional infrastructure and community services in the municipality, particularly those targeting the needs of young people, families, new migrants, CALD communities, seniors and people with disabilities. The ECSH provides an opportunity to meet the current needs of the community and respond to the evidence of significant population growth.

Through an Expression of Interest process undertaken in September 2014, Council sought interest from agencies to, firstly take on the role of lead agency and lead tenant, to manage the facility and to facilitate a collaborative environment, and secondly, to partner with other agencies that would like to be accommodated within the building as sub tenants. On 24 February 2015, Council resolved to endorse BSL as the lead agency and lead tenant and lease the site to BSL for a five year period. Council also confirmed that any sub-tenancies needed to be formally endorsed by Council.

**PROPOSAL**

Merri Community Health Services have requested approval from Council to locate their services at the ECSH and occupy three desks, taking the total desks leased to 106.2 out of a capacity of 110.

**Merri Community Health** – This service provides aged care allied health and homecare services. Merri Health currently receive in excess of 20-30 referrals per month from people living in the City of Whittlesea, for home based allied health services, such as occupational therapy and podiatry.

In accordance with Council's resolution on 24 February 2015 this report recommends that Council formally approve Merri Community Health Limited as sub-tenants of the Epping Community Services Hub (713 High St, Epping).

**CONSULTATION**

In discussion regarding this application between lead tenant BSL and Council officers, both BSL and Council officers are satisfied that the aged care allied health service is required by the local community. The 2018 Human Services Needs Analysis, nearly all local aged care support services who responded, identified increase demand and over half identified that there is unmet demand for services. Consultation with the City of Whittlesea Aged and Disability Department informs that the community would benefit from increased access to homebased aged care allied health services.

Council officers and BSL are satisfied that the agency supports the integrated service provision model stipulated by Council. BSL have identified that Merri Health do not require access to consulting rooms as the services are provided through an outreach model. Therefore, it is not anticipated there will be any additional pressure on consulting room utilisation.

## CRITICAL DATES

Merri Community Health Services Limited plan to commence operations at the ECSH as soon as possible pending Council approval.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The current model at the ECSH, endorsed by Council on 24 February 2015, involves a lead agency (BSL) leasing the building from Council and then developing sub-leases with individual agencies (subject to Council approval). There are no financial implications for Council from this report.

## POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION

The ESCH is intended to respond to gaps in service provision and infrastructure and is consistent with Council priorities and plans. The Epping Central Structure Plan (2011), the South Morang Civic Precinct Community Infrastructure Analysis (2013), the Human Services Needs Analysis (2014 and 2017) and the Council Plan identify substantial demand for additional infrastructure and community services in the municipality, particularly those targeting the needs of young people, families, new migrants, CALD communities, seniors and people with disabilities. The ESCH provides an opportunity to meet the current needs of the community and respond to the evidence of significant population growth. The addition of Merri Health age care services to the ECSH is also aligned with the City of Whittlesea Positive Ageing Strategy, Focus Area 8. Health and Support services when needed.

## LINK TO STRATEGIC RISKS

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

The ESCH is intended to respond to gaps and substantial demand for community service provision and infrastructure in the municipality. The ESCH provides an opportunity to meet the current needs of the community and respond to the evidence of significant population growth.

## LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Connected community</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>A healthy and safe community</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Health and human services are accessible and responsive to the needs and aspirations of all people</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>

## DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

## CONCLUSION

Merri Community Health Services Limited is committed to the vision for the ECSH as an integrated service model and will improve community access to homebased allied health services for City of Whittlesea older residents. This report, therefore, recommends that Council formally approve Merri Community Services Limited as sub-tenants of the ECSH.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT Council resolve to approve Merri Community Services Limited as a sub-tenant of the Epping Community Services Hub (713 Hight Street, Epping).**



**6.1.6 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS PROGRAM 2019 - 2020 ROUND ONE - SUMMARY OF FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Attachments:**                      1      **CDGP 2019-2020 Round One Summary of Funding Recommendations** [↓](#)

   2      **CDGP 2019-2020 Guidelines** [↓](#)

**Responsible Officer:**              **Manager Community Building and Planning**

**Author:**                              **Community Development Grants Officer**

**RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY**

That Council endorse the allocation of the Community Development Grants Program (CDGP) 2019–2020 Round One, totalling \$75,464.65, to the not-for-profit community groups outlined in Attachment One.

**KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES**

- The CDGP 2019–2020 has a total budget of \$142,429.00 to be split between two rounds.
- The CDGP 2019–2020 Round One received 38 applications totalling \$169,228.66 in funding requests, of these 17 applications are recommended for funding.
- Applicants were offered support to develop their applications via a range of information sessions, grant writing workshops, drop-in support sessions, and communication with the Community Development Grants Officer via phone, email and face to face meetings.
- Each application was independently assessed and scored by two assessing officers and reviewed by the Grants Management Panel.
- The applications recommended for funding (see attachment 1) meet the objectives of the program by addressing local needs, building local capacity, promoting social cohesion and improving the quality of life and wellbeing of the City of Whittlesea community.
- Where applicable applications not recommended for funding will be supported to resubmit for future grant rounds.

**REPORT****BACKGROUND**

Council's Community Development Grants Program (CDGP) contributes to achieving 'Whittlesea 2040: A Place for All' by providing financial support for community initiatives that address local need, build on local capacity, promote social cohesion, and improve the quality of life and wellbeing of the City of Whittlesea community.

The CDGP 2019–2020 has a total pool of \$142,429.00 to be split between two rounds with a maximum of \$5,000 per application. The CDGP 2019–2020 Round One grant application period ran from 25 February to 8 April 2019. Round two opens on Monday 19 August and closes Sunday 29 September 2019.

**Community Feedback**

The effectiveness of the CDGP in achieving the program goals is evidenced by community feedback from previously funded projects. Participants have said:

- "I didn't know anyone when I came to Whittlesea, and now I've got a great deal of friends" – Barry (Forever Forest).
- "For us with kids with a disability it gets us really involved in the community and it's really important for our students to have that involvement within the community and for the community to see us and us to see the community" – Ruth (Forever Forest).
- "I'm seeing increased confidence [in the students], I'm seeing a few smiles, I'm seeing them talking to each other...it's great for their engagement, it's great for their learning" – Peter (All Aboard).
- "Community is really important in Whittlesea and to see different groups come together and take advantage of the grants that are on offer and then expose our beautiful township to people who have never seen it before is amazing" – Tricia (Whittlesea Cruise Night).

**Information and Support**

Advertising for the CDGP 2019–2020 Round One was circulated through the Whittlesea Leader, *Whittlescene* and on Council's website and Facebook page. Information was also emailed to the CDGP database and eligible clubs and organisations across the municipality.

During the six-week application period, four applicant support sessions were held at Greenbrook Community House, Thomastown Library, Mernda Villages Community Activity Centre, and Whittlesea Community Activity Centre. Representatives from nine community groups attended these sessions.

A free grant writing workshop facilitated by OurCommunity was held on 6 March 2019 and was attended by representatives from 12 community groups. Prospective applicants had the opportunity to learn about the CDGP objectives, assessment criteria, gain tips on writing grant applications, and speak with the Community Development Grants Officer about their project ideas.

The CDGP Guidelines, a budget help sheet and Council's Accessible Events Guide were provided at all support sessions and the workshop.

## Overview of Applications Received

- The CDGP 2019–2020 Round One received 38 applications totalling \$169,278.66 in funding requested.
- The overall total value of projects submitted was \$346,671.92.
- The total estimated value of external contributions towards project applications was \$177,393.26 including \$78,714.60 of volunteer time.

## Assessment Process

The CDGP assessment process was run in accordance with Council's Grants Policy and Grants Administration Guidelines. Each organisation and project has been assessed against the criteria set in the CDGP guidelines and the provision of all mandatory documentation submitted.

The three-stage assessment process involved an initial eligibility review, two independent assessments by Council Officers, and a Management Panel assessment for final funding recommendations.

Each application was thoroughly assessed and weighted against the criteria, with 17 applications being recommended for funding, 11 not recommended and eight assessed as being ineligible according to the CDGP criteria.

## PROPOSAL

That Council give consideration to the recommended list of applicants under the CDGP 2019-2020 Round One. This funding provides valuable funding to community-based organisations to undertake a broad range of initiatives which engage and benefit local communities.

## CONSULTATION

Contact with the Community Development Grants Officer was a condition of applying for the CDGP to ensure accuracy and clarify any unclear items with applicants.

The Summary of Funding Recommendations (Attachment 1) has been developed in consultation with assessing Council Officers and the Grants Management Panel.

## CRITICAL DATES

Applicants to the CDGP 2019-2020 will be notified of grant outcomes immediately after Council's adoption of the funding recommendations, enabling projects to begin mid-July.

CDGP 2019–2020 Round Two will open on 19 August and close 29 September 2019. During July, internal and external communications will focus on announcing the successful applicants from Round One and launching Round Two.

A community event to celebrate both rounds of the CDGP 2019–2020 will be held in early 2020.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2019–2020 CDGP budget allocation is \$142,429.00 to be distributed between two rounds.

The Summary of Funding Recommendations for Round One totals \$75,464.65 with \$66,964.35 remaining for Round Two.

## POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION

The CDGP directly aligns with Whittlesea 2040: A Place for All - Goal 1: Connected Community. The CDGP 2019–2020 Round One was administered and assessed in accordance with Council's Grants Policy, adopted on 21 November 2017.

## LINK TO STRATEGIC RISKS

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

Round One was promoted, administered and assessed in accordance with Council's Grants Policy. Assessment of applications was transparent as applicants were made aware of the assessment criteria and process via the CDGP 2019–2020 Guidelines (Attachment 2) prior to submitting an application.

## LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Connected community</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>A socially cohesive community</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Programs, services and infrastructure encourage social connections and the development of a sense of community</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>

## DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

## CONCLUSION

The Community Development Grants Program leverages and builds on the existing skills and capacity of community-based organisations, providing an excellent 'return on investment' for Council. The 17 recommended applications totalling \$75,464.65 from the CDGP 2019-2020 Round One contribute towards the provision of a wide range of projects and initiatives led by and benefitting the local community.

Where applicable, unsuccessful applicants will be offered support to resubmit an application for consideration in future grant rounds.

## RECOMMENDATION

**That Council resolve to approve the funding recommendations for the Community Development Grants Program 2019–2020 Round One, as detailed in Attachment 1 of this report.**

## City of Whittlesea Community Development Grants Program 2019-2020 Round One

## Summary of Funding Recommendations

Project Title	Applicant	Category	Weighted score	Project Summary	Amount Recommended for Funding
<b>City of Whittlesea Open Studios Arts Trail</b>	Northern Suburbs Art Collective (auspiced by Auspicious Arts Projects Inc.)	Socially cohesive community	4.525	This project will plan and deliver an 'Open-Studios' event for local artists to open their studios to the public for one weekend and showcase their art practice through hands-on activities and demonstrations. The project will involve classes and workshops, 'meet the artist' events and a group exhibition, showcasing the variety of arts practices within the City of Whittlesea. Project outcomes include an increased profile and appreciation of the vibrant and diverse local arts community, an opportunity for local artists to share their passion and work with the broader community, an increase in visitors to the area, and the creation of an ongoing local arts network.	\$5,000.00
<b>Open Water Learning Experience – Aquatic Safety Education, Whittlesea Youth</b>	Life Saving Victoria	Healthy and safe community	4.5	The project will be based at the Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre and will involve delivering a program to teach and empower young people from low socioeconomic and/or newly arrived migrant backgrounds to use lifesaving skills. Qualified instructors will teach aquatic skills including resuscitation, emergency care, aquatic rescue, identifying dangerous aquatic situations, and basic water skills with floatation devices. Project outcomes include young people having increased knowledge of local aquatic environments and potential risks, learning lifesaving skills, increased skills and confidence to deal with emergency situations, increased physical and social participation for young people, and safer communities.	\$4,933.00
<b>Future Foundations Creative Workshops</b>	Future Foundations Limited	Socially cohesive community	4.4	This project will make a difference to disadvantaged young people and their communities by delivering a 16-week creative art and personal mentoring program to at least 12 children aged 10 – 12 years. The project will work with Lalor East Primary School, Lalor Primary and Thomastown Primary to identify and partner 'at-risk' students with a mentor to undertake weekend group activities, including excursions, artistic skills workshops, and a final group art exhibition. Project outcomes include increased resilience, self-esteem and confidence, a better understanding of emotions and communication techniques, and reduction in truancy and distraction.	\$5,000.00
<b>Women's Bike Skills Fun and Friendship Program</b>	Whittlesea Bicycle Users Group Incorporated	Healthy and safe community	4.375	This six-week bike program for women, aged over 18 years, will improve the skills and confidence of participants to ride on bike paths and low traffic roads. The project involves weekly two hour skill development and ride sessions, including a rider and equipment assessment, riding skills, bike maintenance, knowledge of local bike routes and introduction to cycling groups/clubs to encourage ongoing participation. Project outcomes include increased levels of confidence and skill amongst participants, greater awareness of safety issues when riding a bicycle on a bike path or low traffic road, increased participant knowledge of existing cycling infrastructure within the City of Whittlesea and surrounding areas, and increase in participation and frequency in cycling either independently or as a member of a cycling group.	\$2,220.00
<b>The Human Thesis</b>	Ondru Limited	Socially cohesive community	4.325	The project will conduct workshops to design and develop an art project by which people impacted by displacement, especially refugees and asylum seekers, can express themselves with autonomy and pride. The project aims to increase empathy and challenge the misrepresentation of people who have been impacted by displacement in the wider Australian community. Project outcomes include empowering people to take back ownership of the way in which their stories are represented, creating opportunity for people impacted by displacement to connect with each other and the wider Australian community, increasing empathy in the wider community, and building a sense of community (positive impacts of diversity in shaping Australia's identity).	\$5,000.00
<b>Beginners Cricket at THC</b>	The Himalayan Club Inc.	Healthy and safe community	4.325	The project will promote, coordinate and deliver a free 13-week introductory cricket program for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Participants will predominantly come from the Thomastown, Lalor and Epping areas and will be supported through the program by a qualified cricket coach and two volunteers. Project outcomes include decreased barriers to participation in physical activity, increased community participation, increased physical activity, good health and wellbeing, enhanced confidence level in participants, and stronger community connectedness.	\$4,924.65
<b>Youth Leading Whittlesea</b>	Oz Green-global Rivers Environmental Education Network (Australia) Incorporated	Participating community	4.3	The project will involve working with approximately 30 young people, from local schools, and the Darebin Creek Management Committee to participate in a two-day environmental congress followed by an evening community forum where young people will present their environmental action plans to their school community, Government leaders, local businesses, and other interested community members. The project will equip young people with the necessary information, skills and resources to develop and implement local environmental action plans that deliver positive environmental outcomes for their community. Project outcomes include building people's skills and knowledge; creating opportunities for community participation and connections; and addressing locally identified priorities.	\$4,992.00
<b>Whittlesea Landcare Community Planting Sessions</b>	Whittlesea Landcare (auspiced by Whittlesea Community House Inc.)	Participating community	4.25	This project will facilitate a community planting and BBQ day where Landcare members and local community will join together for a day of hands-on volunteering to rehabilitate an area of Whittlesea's public rural landscape. The project will provide an opportunity for new social connections whilst boosting recognition of Landcare and rehabilitate the local environment in an educational and interactive way. Project outcomes include increased social and community connections between isolated rural community members, a stronger and more resilient Whittlesea Landcare, increased local volunteering, an ongoing community commitment to sustainable land management practices, and increased local knowledge and skills.	\$5,000.00



## City of Whittlesea Community Development Grants Program 2019-2020 Round One

## Summary of Funding Recommendations

Project Title	Applicant	Category	Weighted score	Project Summary	Amount Recommended for Funding
<b>2019 Whittlesea Uke Muster</b>	Whittlesea Community House Inc.	Participating community	4.25	The project will deliver a one-day event which consists of four workshops for ukulele players of different abilities, from absolute beginners to advanced, a public performance and an exhibition of ukuleles handmade by members of the Whittlesea Men's Shed. Project outcomes include community connectedness, increased confidence, knowledge and skills for participating musicians, a new form of artistic expression for those engaged in the beginner workshop, increased awareness of the Whittlesea Men's Shed's work, fostering youth interest in playing the ukulele, promotion of the Whittlesea Township, and building interest in playing the ukulele.	\$5,000.00
<b>Whittlesea Walking Book Clubs</b>	Yarra Plenty Regional Library	Socially cohesive community	4.05	This project will deliver free, high-quality, non-traditional access to library collections via active community participation sessions hosted by an experienced health and wellbeing practitioner with a background in writing, publishing, and libraries. The project involves a series of 1.5 hour 'walking book club sessions' across the municipality, focusing on themes developed in response to the group's individual interests and priorities. Project outcomes include increased public space exploration, increased physical activity, a sense of safety in public areas, connections with local service providers, new audiences for the library, and the establishment of partnerships between library staff, community groups, and industry networks.	\$4,840.00
<b>Fundi Homework Club (An AAWB Program NLDAT)</b>	African Australian Welfare Bureau Inc.	Socially cohesive community	4.05	This project will develop stronger connections between children (aged 11 – 18 years) from African migrant and refugee backgrounds, schools and the wider City of Whittlesea community. The project will provide a safe learning space for a group of African students and their families with parent workshops focusing on skills necessary for living comfortably in Australian society. Two African tutors and six volunteer teachers will support the students and their parents/carers, with a range of subjects including school work and understanding of Australian culture. Project outcomes include improved academic, social and personal outcomes, greater engagement and performance in school, higher self-esteem and better mental health for young people from African migrant and refugee communities.	\$5,000.00
<b>Breastfeeding Twins or More</b>	Diamond Valley Multiple Birth Association	Healthy and safe community	3.95	The project will help expectant mothers of twins or more learn how to breastfeed more than one baby. The project will involve delivering two, four-hour sessions spaced over a 10-month period. Sessions will be delivered by a trained lactation consultant and will provide practical, multiple specific information on breastfeeding. Project outcomes include participants increased knowledge and ability to start breastfeeding, increased support networks and contacts, and increased mental and physical health for both Mum and babies	\$880.00
<b>People, places and things- Sharing memories of Us.</b>	The Foundling Archive Victoria	Participating community	3.95	The project will involve producing an exhibition at the Lalor Library during local history month accompanied by a publication. The exhibition and publication will present a local history of Lalor through everyday objects offered by children. The project aims to create opportunities for community participation and connections which capture the local perspectives and Lalor's developing history and unique characteristics. Project outcomes include intergenerational communication; increased cultural confidence; increased participation in activities of the library; and recording local perspectives and memories.	\$3,875.00
<b>Connecting Women</b>	Creeds Farm Living & Learning Centre Inc.	Socially cohesive community	3.85	This project creates a safe space for women from all cultural backgrounds and life stages, from the Wollert and Epping North area, to come together and talk about various topics such as self-care, healthy eating and exercise, family relationships and positive parenting whilst creating sustainable home products. The group will provide a soft entry point for women who might be experiencing family violence and/or mental health issues through 20 fortnightly facilitated group sessions, with the additional support from a Community Development Worker. Project outcomes include increased sense of belonging, improved ability to participate in activities outside of the home, improved sense of self-worth, developing skills which can help future employment, increased opportunity for preschool aged children to socialise with similar aged peers, increased networking opportunities for recently arrived families.	\$5,000.00
<b>Community Cooking and Conversation - Pilot Program</b>	Edgars Creek Secondary College	Healthy and safe community	3.75	This project will provide delivery of a six-week, hands-on cooking and conversation pilot program at Edgar's Creek Secondary College for up to 20 participants – particularly from CALD communities. The program will cover basic food handling skills and techniques, health and nutrition, budgeting skills, and correct food storage. The program will be taught by a qualified Food Science, Health and Nutrition Teacher and encourages conversations between participants to create a supportive and connected atmosphere. Project outcomes include a healthier community through increased knowledge and understanding of a balanced diet, the development of cooking and budgeting skills and techniques, increased connections between participants, decreased social isolation, and a better understanding of cultural diversity.	\$3,800.00
<b>Promoting wellbeing and social cohesion through sharing popular African recipes Cookbook</b>	African Sisterhood Incorporated	Socially cohesive community	3.6	This project will bring women from different African backgrounds together to produce a cookbook that will be used as a way of sharing popular African dishes with the wider Australian community. The project involves collecting recipes into a 50-page cookbook, photographing and filming cooking sessions and then launching the cookbook at the Sound of Africa Festival and the Whittlesea Community Festival in 2020. Project outcomes include increased community cohesion, increased understanding of African food, traditions and cultures, promotion of healthy eating, and increased collaboration across diverse communities.	\$5,000.00

City of Whittlesea Community Development Grants Program 2019-2020 Round One  
Summary of Funding Recommendations

Project Title	Applicant	Category	Weighted score	Project Summary	Amount Recommended for Funding
Mindfulness Program	Foundation of Mindfulness Australia Inc.	Healthy and safe community	3.55	This project will deliver monthly mindfulness sessions for children, young people and adults at various locations throughout the City of Whittlesea. The sessions will be led by volunteer facilitators where the concept of mindfulness is explained and practised. The project will benefit the broad City of Whittlesea community, with a focus on the CALD community and young people. Project outcomes include the promotion of harmony, peace and social inclusion, and improved mental health outcomes and emotional resilience for participants.	\$5,000.00
					\$75,464.65







## Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

*The City of Whittlesea recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the traditional owners of this place.*



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## 01

## What is the City of Whittlesea Community Development Grants Program (CDGP)?

The City of Whittlesea Community Development Grants Program (CDGP) provides funding of up to \$5,000 to groups and organisations to assist in making the City of Whittlesea a place for all.

The program is open to a broad range of community groups including cultural, environmental, special interest, recreational groups, sporting clubs and community agencies provided they are not-for-profit and that the project directly benefits the City of Whittlesea community.

The CDGP is one way of achieving the goals of [Whittlesea 2040: A place for all](#).

The goals of the CDGP are to:

- Build people's skills and knowledge
- Create opportunities for community participation and connections
- Address locally identified priorities.

Community  
Development  
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Program



## 02 Key dates

Grants are offered in two rounds per year. Opening and closing dates for each year are listed on the website.  
[whittlesea.vic.gov.au/communitygrants](http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au/communitygrants)

Grant Round	Round 1	Round 2
Applications open	Late February	Late August
Applications close	Early April	Early October
Applicants notified of outcome	July	December
Project commencement date	Late July	Early January

\*Exact dates are listed on the website. Projects must be completed within 12 months of the project commencement date. Groups can apply in both grant rounds, but priority will be given to groups who have not received funding for the financial year.

## 03 Funding streams

Projects funded through the CDGP must demonstrate that they enhance the City of Whittlesea community in one or more of the following three areas:

### Socially cohesive community

Projects that help build a friendly and welcoming community, promote a sense of community and belonging, embrace and celebrate diversity, and create opportunities to connect and build social networks.



## 03 Funding streams

### Healthy and safe community

Projects that encourage good health and wellbeing, encourage increased physical activity, increase access to health and support services, and enhance safety at home and in public.



### Participating community

Projects that help build a well-informed community, foster local decision making, encourage volunteering and leadership, and support vibrant community groups.



Application Guidelines 4



# 04

## Application details

### Who can apply?

To be eligible for funding applicants must:

- Be registered not-for-profit, as classified by the Australian Taxation Office, or a kindergarten, primary or secondary education provider.
- Be incorporated or partnered (auspiced), by an incorporated organisation. The partner organisation will manage the funds and be responsible for the delivery and acquittal of the project.
- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or qualify to submit a Statement by Supplier.
- Hold current public liability insurance appropriate to the activity outlined in the application.

### How much can be applied for?

The maximum grant amount is \$5,000 ex GST. Applications seeking smaller amounts are also encouraged.

Applications can include equipment purchases; however equipment purchases cannot exceed more than 50% of the funding request.

Community  
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## Who cannot apply?

- Individuals.
- Political organisations.
- Groups who have not complied with acquittal conditions from previous Council funding.

## What cannot be funded?

- A group's day to day operational expenses or core business (for example, salaries for permanent staff, electricity, lease or rent payments, telephone, uniforms etc. that are part of the organisation's ongoing expenses).
- Projects that are part of the organisation's regular activities (for example, funding will not be provided for sports teams to hold regular training sessions, for playgroups to hold weekly playgroup sessions, for a theatre company to hold monthly rehearsals).
- Projects which have begun or are completed before approval of funding.
- Projects, activities, programs and events that have previously been funded through the CDGP.
- Projects that are a duplication of an existing service in the community.
- Projects that are solely for fundraising purposes, without broader community benefit.
- New building projects, capital works or facility maintenance projects.
- Events not open to the general public or where access is restricted to members or delegates.
- Community activities promoting gambling, drugs and/or alcohol.
- Projects that are the responsibility of other levels of Government
- Gift vouchers, gifts, prizes, trophies, scholarships, donations, other grant programs, air travel or accommodation.
- Catering costs where provision of food is not considered integral to the project.



# 05

## Decision making

### Assessment criteria

If your group and project meets the eligibility criteria, your project will be considered according to how well it meets each of the six assessment criteria. The percentages are provided as a guide to the importance of each question in the assessment process.

#### Aims and outcomes (30%)

- Are the aims and outcomes of the project clearly identified and do they align with at least one of the categories of the CGP?

#### Community need (20%)

- Is there a clearly identified and demonstrated local need for this project?

#### Community support (20%)

Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate local support for their project by partnering with other groups, consulting with community members, and including letters of support in their application.

- Does the application provide evidence of community support?

#### Equity, access and inclusion (15%)

Applicants are encouraged to consider how their project will be accessible and inclusive of all people, regardless of background or ability.

- Has the applicant addressed issues of equity, access and inclusion?

#### Project sustainability (10%)

- Will the proposed project and its outcomes continue beyond the funding period?

#### Budget and applicant capacity (5%)

- Is the budget reasonable?

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## Assessment process

To increase your application's chance of success, make sure you:

- Read these guidelines carefully before completing your application.
- Check your organisation is eligible to apply.
- Check your proposed project meets the funding criteria.
- Contact the Community Development Grants Officer to discuss your project.
- Have the contact details of two members of your executive committee for your application.
- Are able to provide your Certificate of Incorporation, letters of support, and quotes for items over \$500 (if applicable).

### Assessment process

1. Applications are reviewed for eligibility. You will be contacted if your application is ineligible.
2. Eligible applications are initially assessed based on how well the proposed project meets the assessment criteria.
3. Assessment recommendations are reviewed by a panel for approval.
4. Recommendations are submitted at a Council meeting for final approval.
5. Applicants are told of the outcome after the Council meeting.



# 06

## Next steps

### How to apply

- **Community information sessions**

Applicants are encouraged to attend a community information session. These sessions will go through the assessment process, assessment criteria and provide tips on what makes a good application.

Dates for community information sessions are on the website.

- **Contact the Community Development Grants Officer**

Applicants must make contact with the Community Development Grants Officer before submitting their grant application. The Community Development Grants Officer can provide assistance and advice on your application.

**Community Development Grants Officer**

9217 2397  
commgrants@whittlesea.  
vic.gov.au

- **Online application forms**

Applications for the CGP are submitted online at:  
[whittlesea.smartygrants.com.au](http://whittlesea.smartygrants.com.au)

Please note: to apply through SmartyGrants you will need an email address.

If you cannot access the internet, contact the Community Development Grants Officer.

**Information Privacy and Personal Information**

The personal information requested on the application form is being collected only for the purpose of assessing, processing and allocating CGP. If you fail to provide the requested information, your grant application may not be considered for funding.

Successful organisations will be identified, together with the purpose of their projects and amount of funding received in Council reports including Council's Annual Report.

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## What if you are successful?

### Conditions of grant

All funded groups must sign a 'Conditions of Grant' before receiving funding. This document outlines the conditions successful applicants must meet to receive the funding. Payment will be processed once the signed 'Conditions of Grant' has been received.

### Grant acquittals

Successful applicants must complete an acquittal which includes budget expenses and a brief report about the project's outcomes. The acquittal is due within three months of the completion of the project.

Recipients who do not complete their acquittal will be ineligible for any Council funds for a minimum of two years or until an acquittal is received.

## What if you are not successful?

Applications that are not eligible or do not rate highly against the assessment criteria will not be funded. A letter will be sent out to tell you of the outcome of your application and explain the reason for this decision.

If you have any questions about the outcome of your grant application you are encouraged to contact the Community Development Grants Officer.



Application Guidelines 10



# 07

## Glossary

### ABN

An ABN refers to an Australian Business Number issued by the Australia Tax Office. If your organisation has an ABN it must be recorded within your application. If your organisation does not have an ABN you must complete the **Statement by a Supplier** section in our online grant application.

### Capital works

Capital works are repairs or building to a property that create an asset and increase its value. Please note: Capital works are not eligible for funding.

### Incorporation

A legal process that makes a group a single entity with certain rights and legal protection as well as some additional obligations. Incorporating separates the individual person from the entity. If your group would like to become incorporated, contact the Office of Consumer Affairs Victoria on 1300 558 181 or visit: [consumervic.gov.au](http://consumervic.gov.au)

### Letters of support

Letters of endorsement or commitment for the proposed project from partners, other community groups or organisations, key stakeholders.

### Not-for-profit

An organisation whose constitution or governing documents state that any profits or surpluses must be used to further the objectives of the organisation rather than benefit its individual members.

### Partner organisation (auspice)

A partner organisation or auspice is an incorporated organisation that can receive and manage your group's grant money on your behalf. The partner organisation will enter into the 'Conditions of Grant' agreement and take responsibility for the expenditure of funds and make sure funded projects are completed. If your group is not incorporated it is essential you find an auspice organisation before you apply for a grant.

### Project

An initiative, activity, program or event planned to meet a particular community need.

### Public liability insurance

Public liability insurance provides community groups and organisations with protection against legal and court costs (i.e. legal liability) in the event that someone is injured, or has their property damaged while the group or organisation is providing a service to them.

You can purchase public liability insurance from any provider deemed appropriate for the project described in your application. The Municipal Association of Victoria recommends Local Community Insurance Services who can be contacted on 1300 853 800 or by visiting:  
[localcommunityinsurance.com.au](http://localcommunityinsurance.com.au)

### Website

[whittlesea.vic.gov.au/  
communitygrants](http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au/communitygrants)



**Community Development Grants Program**

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If you have any questions, please contact:  
 Community Development Grants Officer  
 Phone: (03) 9217 2397  
 Email: [commgrants@whittlesea.vic.gov.au](mailto:commgrants@whittlesea.vic.gov.au)  
 Website: [whittlesea.vic.gov.au/communitygrants](http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au/communitygrants)

**Free Telephone Interpreter Service**

العربية	9679 9871
Ελληνικά	9679 9873
हिंदी	9679 9879
Italiano	9679 9874
Македонски	9679 9875
简体中文	9679 9857
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ	9679 9879
தமிழ்	9679 9879
Türkçe	9679 9877
Tiếng Việt	9679 9878
Other	9679 9879

**6.2 COMMUNITY SERVICES****6.2.1 VISUAL ART AND CIVIC HISTORY COLLECTIONS ACQUISITIONS ADVISORY GROUP**

- Attachments:**
- 1 Visual Art and Civic History Collections Acquisitions Advisory Group - Terms of Reference** [↓](#)
  - 2 Visual Art and Civic History Collections Policy** [↓](#)

**Responsible Officer:** Director Community Services

**Author:** Team Leader Arts, Heritage and Events

**RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY**

THAT Council resolve to adopt the:

1. Visual Arts and Civic History Collections Acquisitions Advisory Group, Terms of Reference; and
2. Visual Art and Civic History Collections Policy.

**KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES**

- The Terms of Reference for the Visual Art and Civic History Collections Acquisitions Advisory Group were adopted by Council on 7 June 2016 and amended 18 December 2017
- An Expression of Interest process has been conducted twice since June 2016. Recruitment to the group has been advertised both locally and in industry-specific media but has generated only one application
- A review of the Terms of Reference highlighted that the requirement for community members to have knowledge of collection management was a barrier. The Terms of Reference have therefore been adjusted and the membership widened to include the following (in summary):
  - Five community members that have a 'range of arts and cultural expertise' and
  - 'Two industry professionals with demonstrated experience in curation, collection management and/or gallery management'
- The Visual Art and Civic History Collections policy has been updated and placed onto the new template aligning the membership composition with the revised Terms of Reference. Links to legislation and Council documents have also been updated in the Key Linkages section. All other content remains the same.

## REPORT

### BACKGROUND

Council adopted the Visual Art and Civic History Collections Policy on 23 February 2016 which provides clear direction for the future development and management of the Visual Art and Civic History Collections. The policy states that Council will establish an Acquisitions Advisory Group to make recommendations regarding significant acquisitions and deaccessions over \$2,000 in value. Terms of Reference for this group were adopted by Council on 7 June 2016 and amended on 18 December 2017.

Recruitment to the group's membership has been comprehensively advertised in both industry media and local media and promoted through local networks on two occasions - initially in January 2017 and again in June 2018. Only one expression of interest was received and efforts to recruit other community members with the specified skills and experience, particularly around cultural collection management, were unsuccessful.

Following a broad benchmarking exercise with other Local Government Authorities, consultation with industry professionals and with local artists, the Terms of Reference for the Acquisitions Advisory Group have been revised to remove the onus on community representatives to be knowledgeable about collection management and to, instead include industry professionals in the composition of the membership. Governance inconsistencies in relation to the voting rights of Council officers have also been addressed.

### PROPOSAL

Key proposed changes in the Terms of Reference relate to the membership structure, specifically:

- inclusion of two Councillors specified as Mayor of the day and one other
- the removal of Council officers as voting members
- an increase in community membership from three to five
- the inclusion of two industry professionals
- the removal of the requirement that community representatives be conversant and knowledgeable around cultural collection management.

These changes allow the group to be more community focused while maintaining arts sector expertise and will remove the barriers to establishing the group.

### CONSULTATION

Consultation was undertaken with:

- Local artists from the CAPOW network (Creative Arts Practitioners of Whittlesea)
- Other LGAs including City of Darebin, City of Melbourne, City of Yarra, City of Stonnington, City of Banyule and Shire of Nillumbik
- Bundoora Homestead – gallery manager.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no cost implications as a result of these changes.



## POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION

The formation of the Acquisitions Advisory Group is directly linked with Council's Visual Arts and Civic History Collections Policy which specifies the requirement to establish the group, and articulates the composition of the group. The policy has been updated and placed onto the new template aligning the membership composition with the revised Terms of Reference. Links to legislation and Council documents have also been updated in the Key Linkages section.

The requirement to provide best practice collection management for Council's Collections is articulated in Council's Cultural Collection Strategy 2008 – 2012.

The high standard of management of Council's Collections is an action referenced in Council's Arts Development Strategy 2016 – 2020 (Strategic Direction Two: Art and Creative Places), also the requirements that the value of the collection is preserved and enhanced.

Whittlesea 2040 – A Place for All (Goal 1: Connected Community). Key Direction 1.3 A Participating Community. This key direction supports the provision of opportunities for volunteering and leadership and also opportunities for local decision making.

## LINK TO STRATEGIC RISKS

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

Community engagement in this group ensures (a) transparency of decision making and (b) a local focus to Council's Cultural Collections and (c) provision of professional advice to guide the direction of the collections.

## LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Connected community</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>A participating community</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>All residents will have the opportunity to participate in, contribute to and enjoy arts, cultural and recreational activities</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Community Safety</b>

## DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

## CONCLUSION

The establishment of the Acquisitions Advisory Group provides opportunities for community to participate in local decision making, and to provide leadership on the direction of Council's Visual Art and Civic History Collections.

The proposed changes will make recruitment to this group more achievable while balancing an appropriate level of sector expertise with community involvement.

It is recommended that Council consider the changes and endorse the updated Terms of Reference for the Visual Art and Civic History Acquisitions Advisory Group.

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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**THAT Council resolve to adopt the:**

- 1. Visual Arts and Civic History Collections Acquisitions Advisory Group, Terms of Reference; and**
- 2. Visual Art and Civic History Collections Policy.**



## Visual Art and Civic History Collections Acquisitions Advisory Group

### Terms of Reference

#### 1. Purpose

The Acquisitions Advisory Group (AAG) is established to make recommendations to Council regarding acquisitions and deaccessions for the City of Whittlesea's Visual Art and Civic History Collections, as guided by the Visual Art and Civic History Collections Policy.

#### 2. Membership

Membership is comprised of nine members, including:

- a) Two City of Whittlesea Councillor representatives being the Mayor of the day and one other.
- b) Five community members to collectively represent a diverse range of arts and cultural expertise. At least two of these members to be practicing artists.
- c) Two industry professionals with demonstrated experience in curation, collection management and/or gallery management.

Community representatives must live, work or have a connection to the City of Whittlesea. Applications to the group will be via an Expression of Interest responding to selection criteria. Each representative shall be appointed for a term of two years with all positions undertaken on a voluntary basis. Councillor representatives shall be for a one-year term.

#### **Co-opted Members**

The Group may invite suitably skilled persons to a meeting of the AAG in an advisory capacity, for a specified purpose and for a specified period. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote.

Council officers will coordinate membership of the group and provide expertise and context as required. Council officers are not entitled to vote.

#### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the AAG is to:

- Make recommendations to Council for acquisitions and deaccessions over \$2,000 in value for the Visual Art and Civic History collections
- Provide a forum for any matters or issues arising in relation to the Visual Art and Civic History components of the Cultural Collection
- Be conversant with relevant Council plans and policies, particularly those related to the arts and the Cultural Collection
- Be aware of the activities, interests and concerns of the arts and cultural organisations and groups in the municipality, and the broader community in general
- Act as a champion and advocate for the arts in the City of Whittlesea.



Decisions for recommendations for acquisition will be made by consensus. Where the group is unable to reach consensus, a vote shall be conducted and a simple majority shall be sufficient.

Council officers will prepare documentation including meeting agendas, required readings and all other documents.

4. The AAG terms of reference and function will be reviewed on a biennial basis

#### 5. **Chairperson**

The meetings will be chaired by the City of Whittlesea Councillor representative.

#### 6. **Code of Conduct**

All members are expected to:

- Operate with integrity, objectivity, accountability, honesty and openness
- Declare any potential conflict of interest
- Dedicate appropriate time and effort to the functions of the AAG
- Prepare for and actively participate in meetings
- Exercise independent judgment
- Maintain effective working relationships with each other.

All members are also bound by Council's Code of Conduct.

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

A group member is considered to have a conflict of interest if the member:

- has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the matter and/or
- has a direct connection with a proposed artist/artwork and/or
- believes that their interest in the matter may conflict with their proper performance of duties in respect to the matter.

#### ***Disclosure***

If a member has a conflict of interest with a matter that is to be, or is likely to be, discussed at a Group meeting, the member must:

- disclose the nature of the conflict of interest immediately before the discussion or
- if not intending to be present at the meeting, disclose the nature of the conflict of interest to the Team Leader Arts, Heritage and Events before the meeting is held.

While any discussion or vote is taken relating to the matter, the member must:

- leave the room and notify the Chairperson that they are doing so and
- remain outside the room or other area in view or hearing of the room.



After the discussion, the Chairperson must notify the member that they may return to the room. The declaration and nature of the conflict of interest must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

## 7. Meetings

- The AAG will meet two times per annum, with meetings being convened at other times if required
- Meetings will be 1 to 1.5 hours in duration
- Other representatives will attend meetings as appropriate or requested.

### **Attendance**

- Within reason members are expected to attend all meetings
- If a community member fails to attend two consecutive meetings a new member will be sought through an expression of interest process.

### **Quorum**

A quorum of members must be present before a meeting can proceed. A quorum is half plus one of the membership. When a quorum is not achieved the members of the AAG may, at the discretion of the Chairperson, continue the meeting, but any decisions made at the meeting must be ratified at the next AAG meeting, or by email within one month.

### **Group Papers and Minutes**

The agenda and supporting documentation will be delivered to Group members one week in advance of each meeting. Minutes of Group meetings will be prepared and disseminated within one week of the meeting.

### **Reimbursement of Expenses**

In accordance with Council's Volunteer Policy, individual members of the AAG attending as volunteers, may be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses that have arisen whilst undertaking duties on behalf of Council. Prior authorisation by a nominated council officer must be given, otherwise claims for out of pocket expenses may not be met.

## 8. Public Statements

Members of the AAG cannot make public statements on behalf of Council.





## Visual Art and Civic History Collections Policy

### Policy statement

The City of Whittlesea will acquire, maintain, preserve, interpret and make accessible visual art and civic history items that represent and record the diverse range of social, physical, aesthetic, spiritual and cultural experiences in the past and present life of the city.

The City of Whittlesea Visual Art and Civic History Collections Policy will guide the development and management of each of these collections.

### Principles

The Visual Art and Civic History Collections policy is informed by the following City of Whittlesea Community Building Principles:

#### *Equity, access and inclusion*

The collections will:

- Reflect and express our diverse community and contribute to developing the City's cultural identity and engender a sense of belonging
- Acknowledge and reflect the municipality's rich and long-standing Aboriginal culture and history both pre and post-contact

#### *A place-based approach*

The collections will:

- Acknowledge and reflect the municipality's diverse post-settlement history, including agriculture, industry and urban development
- Reflect and document the built, environmental, cultural and social history of the municipality

### Objective(s)

The Visual Art and Civic History Collections will:

Council will:

- Acquire artworks within the broad parameters of Australian art with priority given to works by artists from the City of Whittlesea and works about the municipality
- Acquire artworks in a variety of media, including contemporary and innovative forms that reflect changing aesthetic styles
- Acquire artworks by Aboriginal artists and artists from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Acquire artworks and heritage items that have educational, social, cultural and economic value

Future Direction	Date of Adoption	Date of Review	Directorate Responsible
Connected Community	02 July 2019	02 July 2021	Community Services





- Acquire heritage material of significance and relevance to the City of Whittlesea and its people
- Manage the collections according to best practice curatorial principles and practices
- Make the collections accessible to the community and researchers where practical.

#### **Context/Rationale**

The Visual Art and Civic History Collections are part of the City of Whittlesea Cultural Collection, which is managed according to the Cultural Collection Strategy 2008-2012, or its successor.

The City of Whittlesea Visual Art and Civic History Collections are wholly maintained and managed by the City of Whittlesea and acquisitions are made periodically by the Council. Significant donations have seen the collections develop into an important cultural, social and heritage asset.

#### **Visual Art Collection**

The Visual Art Collection comprises over 320 artworks dating from colonial times to the present and includes: paintings, drawings, prints, textiles, ceramics, photographs and small sculptures. The collection reflects Australia's diverse cultural makeup with artworks by artists from a wide range of backgrounds, including: Aboriginal artists, European settlers, modern and contemporary artists and also works by artists who have recently made Australia their home.

For the most part the Visual Art Collection consists of paintings and works on paper. Painting and drawing are ideal mediums for depicting traditional and familiar scenes and this is a feature of the collection. It is a record of local life, as well as through important inclusions and donations, a more expansive vision of Australia is reflected in these works.

Most of the artworks in the Visual Art Collection have been purchased at local art and craft exhibitions. However, some notable bequests have also been made. Particular highlights include the John and Gillian Borrack Federation Bequest of 40 watercolours by John Borrack and also the Thomas de Kessler gift of 41 works on paper.

#### **Civic History Collection**

The Civic History Collection comprises over 2,000 heritage items relating to the history and activities of the City of Whittlesea. It includes a range of objects and memorabilia, such as: awards, plaques, badges, medals, clothing, photographs, documents, maps and plans, posters, signs, cultural and commemorative gifts, crockery and instruments used by Council staff in the course of their work.

The collection contributes to the history and corporate memory of the City of Whittlesea by providing a record of many of its activities and events. It also highlights the relationship between the Council and the community.

Future Direction	Date of Adoption	Date of Review	Directorate Responsible
Connected Community	02 July 2019	02 July 2021	Community Services





The majority of the heritage items in the collection have been acquired internally. Most were created, received or used by Councillors or staff in the course of their work or through community activities and events. A small number of heritage items have been donated, usually these relate to the City of Whittlesea or were donated by someone with a direct relationship with the City of Whittlesea.

The Collection is important for its value both as a corporate record as well as its local history significance.

#### Scope

The Visual Art and Civic History Collections will contribute to creating vibrant and self-sustaining communities by reflecting and documenting: growth and change; the diversity of people, land and environment; and the social and cultural life of the municipality.

#### Acquisitions

Acquisition is the process through which Council accepts artworks and heritage items into its collections. Methods of acquisition include:

- Donation / gift
- Bequest
- Purchase
- Commission by the City of Whittlesea
- Items relating to Council business

#### Governance

An Acquisitions Advisory Group (AAG) will be established to make key decisions regarding significant acquisitions and deaccessions over \$2,000 in value for the Visual Art and the Civic History collections. The AAG will comprise of nine members including

- a) Two City of Whittlesea Councillor representatives being the Mayor of the day and one other
- b) Five community members to collectively represent a diverse range of arts and cultural expertise. At least two of these members to be practicing artists
- c) Two industry professionals with demonstrated experience in curation, collection management and/or gallery management

in accordance with the Group's Terms of Reference.

Artwork and heritage items valued at \$2,000 or less can be accepted into or deaccessioned from the collections by the CEO, the Director Community Services or the Manager Community Cultural Development under delegation.

#### Measurement

The outputs and outcomes related to this Policy will be assessed according to the tools available through Council's Evaluation Framework, and reported back to Council.

Future Direction	Date of Adoption	Date of Review	Directorate Responsible
Connected Community	02 July 2019	02 July 2021	Community Services



#### Key linkages

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

This policy has clear linkages to a range of codes, charters, legislation and Council documents:

- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
- Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018
- Public Records Act (1973)
- Copyright Act (1968) and Copyright Amendment Act (2006)
- Museums Australia Code of Ethics for Art, History and Science Museums (1999)
- UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970).
- Whittlesea 2040 – A Place For All
- City of Whittlesea Cultural Collection Strategy 2008-2012
- City of Whittlesea Cultural Heritage Policy and Strategy 2015-2018
- City of Whittlesea Arts Development Policy and Strategy 2016-2020

This policy will help guide Council's work delivered through the:

- City of Whittlesea Cultural Collection Strategy 2008-2012
- City of Whittlesea Cultural Heritage Policy and Strategy 2015-2018
- City of Whittlesea Arts Development Policy and Strategy 2016-2020

Future Direction	Date of Adoption	Date of Review	Directorate Responsible
Connected Community	02 July 2019	02 July 2021	Community Services

### 6.3 CITY TRANSPORT AND PRESENTATION

#### 6.3.1 SINGLE USE PLASTIC PRODUCTS AT COUNCIL

**Responsible Officer:** Director City Transport & Presentation

**Author:** Unit Leader Environmental Operations

#### RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

That Council notes the current and proposed initiatives that are being undertaken to reduce the use of single use plastics through both Council operations and at its community events.

#### KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES

- Council at its meeting on 2 October 2019 considered Notion of Motion 859 – investigation into Council’s use of single use plastics, and resolved to prepare a report that:
  1. Identifies where single use plastic products are used within Council operations;
  2. Provides the operational and cost implications of eliminating or replacing these items with more sustainable alternatives.
- Plastic pollution is an urgent environmental problem and Council is committed and aspires to eliminate waste being sent to landfill or finding its way into the environment.
- Single-use plastic has many negative environmental, social and economic impacts. It is estimated that annually Australians use four to six billion single-use plastic bags alone, with only 3% of these being recycled and 80 million of these ending up as litter.
- Council operations generate an average of 60 kg of “single use” plastic and 618 disposable coffee cups per week. This equates to a total annual 3,120 kg of plastic and 32,136 coffee cups disposed of per annum. Council also generates single use plastic waste at its major community events.
- A number of programs are currently being undertaken to reduce single use plastic consumption both within Council operations and at the community events facilitated by Council.
- The purchase of a Wash Against Waste Trailer that can be used at larger council events and hired out at a nominal rate by the community will cost approximately \$10,000. This purchase can be funded from Council’s 2019/20 Fleet renewal budget.
- Further proposed initiatives could substantially reduce the amount of plastic waste generated through both Council operations and at Council run events.

**REPORT****INTRODUCTION**

This report responds to Notion of Motion 859 – investigation into Council’s use of single use plastics, and resolved to prepare a report that:

1. Identifies where single use plastic products are used within Council operations;
2. Provides the operational and cost implications of eliminating or replacing these items with more sustainable alternatives.

This report details the:

- Amount and type of single use plastics generated at Council’s operational facilities.
- Initiatives currently being undertaken to reduce or recycle single use plastic products both at these sites and at Council managed events, and
- Opportunities to further reduce the single use plastic generated through Council operations.

**BACKGROUND**

Single-use plastic has many negative environmental, social and economic impacts. It is estimated that annually Australians use four to six billion single-use plastic bags alone, with only 3% of these being recycled and 80 million of these ending up as litter. Globally, at least 8 million tonnes of mishandled plastic waste washes into our oceans and rivers each year.

Single use plastic products are designed to be used once then thrown away or recycled. They make up a large amount of litter that we see on our nature strips, roadsides and parks and open spaces and if not picked up end up in the waterways and oceans. Plastic items break up rather than break down thus becoming permanent pollution. In the process of breaking down, plastics release toxic chemicals which can make their way into our food and water supply.

For this reason the management of plastic products has become a significant environmental issue. There has also been increased attention around the waste and recycling industry since the War on Waste series aired on ABC TV and China introduced new trade measures to limit the import of plastics. This has resulted in a growing awareness of the environmental damage caused by single use plastic products and an increasing advocacy for the reduction of their use.

**PROPOSAL****Plastic Waste Generated in Council Operations and Events**

Council undertakes an annual audit of the waste it generates at its operational sites, which include the Civic Centre, Civic (including Civics Catering Kitchen), Epping Works Depot, PRACC North, Danaher Drive, Westfield including the Edge). The most recent audit was completed in June 2018. The waste generated at these sites includes both items introduced by staff members (e.g. food and drink containers consumed by staff) and items generated through operational functions (e.g. plastic packaging on purchased goods including stationary, IT equipment, etc.).

The audit identified that Council operations generate an average of 697 kg of waste a week. 61 kg of this waste is soft or “single use” plastic. The audit also identified that a total of 618 disposable coffee cups are disposed within the waste stream each week. Coffee cups are considered to be a single use plastic item on the basis that they contain a thin plastic liner that precludes them from being placed within the recycling stream. These figures equate to a total annual 3,120 kg of plastic and 32,136 coffee cups disposed of per annum. The audit

identified that an estimated 1,165 kg (37%) of hard plastic bottles and containers were recycled through Council's comingled recycling bin service. The remaining 1,950 kg consists of plastic bags / bin liners, plastic straws, coffee stirrers, balloons, plastic plates, cups and cutlery, polystyrene cups and packaging, tree guards, large plant pots, gloves, plastic packaging on purchased goods including stationary, IT equipment, new appliances and furniture, uniforms and personal protective equipment. The audit methodology employed within the 2018 audit does not provide a specific breakdown of the amount of each of these items.

Council also facilitates a range of community events. The audit of waste at this year's Community Festival revealed that 9kg of plastic drink bottles and 1 kg disposable coffee cups were sent to landfill while 33 kg of plastic drink bottles were sent for recycling. The only plastic used at the 2019 event was plastic drink bottles, as a result of a targeted plastic waste reduction initiative eliminated the use of coffee cups at the event (detailed within the next section).

### **The Initiatives Currently Being Undertaken to Reduce or Recycle Single Use Plastic Products**

While some single use plastic products are avoidable, others are more difficult to avoid for health and safety reasons, and for some there are no practical alternative, the audit demonstrates that there is a significant potential to further reduce the generation of plastic waste in Council operations.

As a result of this Council has implemented a range of initiatives aimed at reducing and eliminating the use of single use plastic packaging from purchasing, operations and events. These programs included:

#### **Operational Initiatives:**

- A Sustainable Purchasing action plan and policy has been implemented which includes strategies for the reduction of single use plastic items as part of Council's procurement processes.
- The purchased four kits of 24 reusable melamine plates, cups and spoons for staff to use when hosting external meetings, events or workshops.
- The provision of "soft" plastics recycling bins located at the Epping Depot, Civic Centre and the Edge.
- Target events such as the Plastic-free July challenge that encourage participants to choose habits they wish to cultivate in the month and may select some of the top four items (plastic bags, straws, bottles and coffee cups) or avoid single-use plastics all together. The challenge is also promoted to local schools and businesses through Council's environmental education initiatives.

#### **Staff Focused Initiatives:**

- Reusable Coffee Cup Program: PRACC and the Coffee van at the Civic Centre offers patrons a 50 cent discount if they bring their own reusable coffee cup. Staff can also purchase takeaway coffee cups at cost price.
- Corporate induction: As part of the Corporate Induction program new staff are given either a reusable water bottle or a reusable coffee cup.

#### **Community Focused Initiatives:**

- Staff have implemented a greening project to make Council's four major community events (Rockin' @ Redleap, Carols by Candlelight, Australia Day Celebration and Community Festival) more sustainable through changes to the event guidelines, procedures and expectations of vendors. This project seeks to eliminate polystyrene and plastic cups and packaging, plastic straws, plastic drink stirrers, plastic, plates and cutlery (if possible) from these events.

- Information is provided to community event organisers on how to include more sustainable event management practices on Council's website.
- Officers have trialled a 'Wash Against Waste Trailer' which has been successfully implemented at other metropolitan Councils. This trailer contains reusable cups, plates, bowls and cutlery and the equipment needed to set up a wash station to clean the dishes at outdoor events.

The effectiveness of these initiatives will be determined through the proposed re-audit of Councils waste generation scheduled for July 2019. This re-audit will categorise and provide quantities on the single use products that are produced and disposed of within landfill through council operations in order to allow a more targeted and considered approach to their reduction and illumination.

### **Opportunities to Further Reduce the Single Use Plastic Generated Through Council Operations**

Opportunities for the reduction of single use plastics fall within two categories. The first of these is plastics generated through Council operations. The second of these is plastics generated through Council events.

The effectiveness of the programs detailed earlier in this report aimed at reducing plastics within Council operations will be assessed through an analysis of the data obtained within the July 2019 waste audit of Council facilities. This audit will also provide a more detailed account of the plastics that remain within our general waste stream, allowing for the development of more targeted education (which leads to behaviour change) and product substitution where viable. In the interim, a range of initiatives could also be considered that would have a positive effect on single use plastic waste generation. This includes:

- Increase staff training and engagement to help reduce the procurement of single use plastic and engage suppliers to minimize plastic packaging on purchased goods.
- Investigating the potential changes to the internal cleaning contract so bin liners are not used in recycling and food waste bins.
- Conduct a feasibility trial to eliminate single use plastic products from Council facilities.
- Develop an internal greening project to work to reduce single use plastic for internal staff events.

Significant traction has occurred in reducing waste at Council's community events. There remains scope to further reduce plastic via targeted programs and the provision of alternatives. One of these potential initiatives is the provision of a 'Wash Against Waste Trailer' that can be used at larger council events and hired out at a nominal rate by the community. The trailer contains washing and other recycling collection facilities to assist community in disposing of the waste generated within community events in a sustainable manner.

### **CONSULTATION**

This report was developed in consultation with a range of Council departments.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The purchase of a Wash Against Waste Trailer that can be used at larger council events and hired out at a nominal rate by the community will cost approx. \$10,000. This purchase can be funded from Council's 2019/20 Fleet renewal budget.

### **POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION**

The following recommendations directly align with key objectives within Councils Whittlesea 2040 Plan, Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy and Environmental Sustainability Strategy which seek to reduce waste to landfill and enhance environmental sustainability.

## LINK TO STRATEGIC RISKS

**Strategic Risk** *Environmental - Failure to prevent significant negative impact of Council's decisions on land use planning relating to contaminated sites*

Plastic items break up rather than break down thus becoming permanent pollution. In the process of breaking down, plastics release toxic chemicals which act as environmental contaminants, compromising our land, food and water cycles.

## LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Sustainable environment</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>Leaders in clean, sustainable living</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>We reduce waste to landfill and take action to stop illegal dumping</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>

## DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

## CONCLUSION

Plastic pollution is an urgent environmental problem. The production and use of plastic all around the world continues to grow, and it is expected that plastic production will double over the next 20 years. Council and our community recognise the negative impacts that single use plastics and excessive packaging have on the local environment and on the earth's natural resources. Continued implementation of targeted reduction programs, as discussed within this report, provides the opportunity to further reduce, and ultimately eliminate, the main types of single use plastics items that get disposed into landfill and the environment through council operations and at council run events.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT Council resolve to note the current and proposed initiatives that are being undertaken to reduce the use of single use plastics through both Council operations and at its community events.**





### 6.3.2 STREET TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

**Attachments:** 1 [Greening Our Streets - Street Tree Management Plan](#)

**Responsible Officer:** Director City Transport & Presentation

**Author:** Unit Leader Parks & Urban Forest

#### RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

That Council endorse the revised Street Tree Management Plan, 2019

#### KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES

- Council has a current stock of approximately 101,000 street trees, the management of which is guided by the Council adopted Street Tree Management Plan 2016.
- Council currently manages tree assets with an amenity value in excess of \$600m. Benefits to the environment and carbon capture are in addition to this figure.
- The social, environmental and economic benefits of street trees make them an inherently valuable asset requiring far less investment than other elements of civic infrastructure.
- Council has an established approved species list which has undergone an iterative process of review and adaption. The list currently features 70 approved species.
- Council at the 6 March 2018 Council meeting resolved to support a Notice of Motion to review the Street Tree Management Plan 2016.

The review has identified that the Street Tree Management Plan 2016 is a robust document which is appropriately tailored to the urban and environmental conditions of the city. However, the review has found opportunities to deliver improved process, customer experience, and service levels across some measures.

The review of the Street Tree Management Plan proposes:

- Improved management of poor quality street tree outcomes, including footpath sweeping and increased street sweeping.
- Continuous improvement of street tree species selection;
- Introduction of a peer review process for tree removal requests;
- Improved customer experience;
- Growth area species ratios for new street tree planting.

## REPORT

**BACKGROUND**

Council's 2016 Street Tree Management Plan described a vision for the municipality of *"healthy, well managed street trees will be a defining feature of the City's attractive streetscapes and liveable neighbourhoods"*.

The social, environmental and economic benefits of street trees make them an inherently valuable asset requiring far less investment than other elements of civic infrastructure.

Australian government modelling shows that climate change by 2040 will likely see average temperature rises of 2-3 degrees Celsius and annual rainfall reductions of 10-15%. A current comparative city to Whittlesea in 2040 is Adelaide or Dubbo in 2019, providing context to the likely climate-changed environment the City's street trees will need to tolerate, adapt to or perish in.

Council currently manages street tree assets with an amenity value in excess of \$600 million (*Revised Burnley method*). This valuation looks at the contribution of a tree to its environment and doesn't include calculations for carbon capture.

Council resolved to review the Street Tree Management Plan through the Notice of Motion carried at its 6 March 2018 Council meeting, which was as follows:

*THAT Council resolve to refer consideration of the items listed below from the Notice of Motion to the Street Tree Management Plan 2016 review process to be undertaken within the next financial year:*

1. *Prohibit developers from planting gum trees in residential streets of new estates.*
2. *Not plant gum trees where there is a whole of street change as part of Council's Street Tree Renewal Program.*
3. *Provide residents with an option to select a species that is not a gum tree, where infill planting is required, or single trees need to be replaced, in a street where there is an existing predominance of gum species as the street tree.*
4. *Update the Street Tree Management Plan 2016 to note the above and remove Eucalyptus, Corymbia and Angophora species from the Whittlesea species list included in Appendix One of the Plan.*

Council has established an approved species list which has undergone an iterative process of review and adaption. The list currently features 70 approved species:

	Small (5-7m)	Medium (8-15m)	Large (15m +)	Native	Exotic	Total
<b>Evergreen</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>41</b> <b>(55%)</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(5%)</b>	<b>45</b> <b>(60%)</b>
<b>Included in the Evergreen trees are: Angophora (A), Corymbia (C), Eucalyptus (E)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b> <b>(33%)</b>

	Small (5-7m)	Medium (8-15m)	Large (15m +)	Native	Exotic	Total
<b>Deciduous</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b> <b>(1%)</b>	<b>28</b> <b>(39%)</b>	<b>29</b> <b>(40%)</b>
<b>Percentages shown are of total number of species on list</b>						

Council's top ten planted trees features seven species from the genera *Angophora* (A), *Corymbia* (C) or *Eucalypts* (E) and the frequency of these species accounts for approximately 30% of the current street tree forest. Developer and street tree renewal plantings indicate similar trends, with A, C and E genera continuing as the predominant native species type.

New development areas often align with conservation areas or corridors with planning overlays determining that planting along these interfaces requires an indigenous or native plant selection – typically involving A, C or E as dominate tree canopy species.

It is important to note that deciduous non-Australian natives make up a large part of the street tree population, with the ornamental pear, *Pyrus calleryana*, and the flowering plum, *Prunus cerasifera* feature in the top five planted species and together represent over 7% of the street tree population.

### The Values of Street Trees

Street trees are critical to the livability of the city and central to the health and well-being of the community. Healthy, established canopy trees provide essential eco-system services, such as clean air, pollution control, storm water mitigation, soil stabilisation, food and shelter, insulation from heat and cold, as well as beautifying and adding value to local neighbourhoods and enhancing local economies.

As urban development intensifies land use, more pressure is exerted on existing open space, especially the public realm to provide the tree canopy that is central to a liveable city. Whereas previously the connected tree canopies of the urban forest were formed by both the private and public tree population, nowadays infill and growth development means smaller allotment sizes with greatly reduced private realm trees. Whittlesea's street tree population now serves the largest role in making up the bulk of the urban forest. As Whittlesea's residential areas grow, its urban forest will become even more critical in delivering the essential ecosystem services the community relies on.

Whittlesea 2040 recognises the values the community place on natural landscapes, bio-diversity and quality open space. A healthy and diverse street tree population is central to these values and the key goals of W2040. Additionally, the Street Tree Management Plan (STMP 2016) established a canopy target of 30% cover for the city's urban forest. This target underpins the value of street trees in mitigating the effects of climate change on the community and in building a resilient city.

### City Cultural Landscape Character

Council acknowledges the substantial natural value that underpins the cultural landscape quality of the City of Whittlesea. This is seen and enjoyed in the living heritage of the City's 2,500 remnant red gums, its environmentally significant creek corridors and gorges and the natural character of the Quarry Hills precinct.

Gum trees are not only synonymous with the cultural landscape heritage of the urban and rural areas of the City, they are also central to the qualities and values expressed in Whittlesea 2040 as an essential part of the living identity that defines the municipality today and into the future.

Council's Urban Forest Master Plan (2000) identified a significant deficit in the planting of native street trees in the city. That master plan laid out a program to increase biodiversity and climate tolerance by planting indigenous and native street trees in growth areas and the replacement of aged and declining exotic street trees in established areas.

Based on the implementation of the 2000 Master Plan, Whittlesea is now regarded as having a higher than average tree species diversity, an essential target in creating healthy, adaptable and resilient urban forests. The three genera, A, C and E, are core to the ecological and aesthetic values of the City's species-diverse urban forest. Based on a broad body of knowledge and evidence, these three genera should remain central to the City's urban forest growth and response to climate change.

Council's STMP acknowledges that not every gum tree is the right choice for the City's conditions and needs, and Council is addressing this through the implementation of the *"the right tree, in the right place, in the right way at the right time"* policy outlined in the STMP. Gum trees are only a part of the mix of a healthy and diverse tree selection and the data of Council's most frequent (top 10) and overall tree numbers (total street tree population) demonstrate that gum trees make up approximately 30% of the species mix and total street tree numbers in the city.

Continuous adaption and diversification of the tree species list means the overall percentage mix and representation of A, C and E will change over time as new development areas and the street tree renewal programs select from a broader range of evergreen native street trees, such as *melia*, *acacia*, *brachychiton*, *melaleuca*, *callistemon* and others.

Of the approximate 30% of A, C and E in the City's streetscapes, there are a small percentage of legacy gum street trees which present ongoing challenges for infrastructure risk management and liveability for the community. In some cases, these legacy gum trees form significant parts of the amenity and ecological character of a street or suburb and their removal would fundamentally change the existing character and amenity of these neighbourhoods. Council progressively manages these legacy trees through auditing and risk management assessments. If the street tree planting in a given street is scheduled for renewal the Street Tree Renewal Program selects species that more holistically and accurately align with *"the right tree, in the right place, in the right way at the right time"* policy.

The unique diversification of Australia's native tree species translates to a restricted choice for trees suited to the often-hostile demands inherent with street tree applications. The attributes required for successful street tree planting, such as reliable and consistent growth, drought tolerance, soil compact tolerance, good canopy coverage, good response to pruning, high amenity value and long life largely determines selecting from a limited range of trees. Gum trees (A, C and E) make up a large part of the list of trees that are known to perform successfully in the conditions present in street planting in the City of Whittlesea.

Council officers will continue to join with other Northern Council's to ensure growers have available species stock suitable to changing climatic conditions, which extends beyond gums to other species and cultivars, found further North in Victoria and broader warm climate areas of Australia.

## Notice of Motion considerations

With respect to considering the items listed in the Notice of Motion, the review has identified the following:

1. Managing developer tree selection through landscape planning permit process and surveillance:

Developers have been encouraged through the 2000 Street Tree Masterplan and the Street Tree Management Plan, and approved species list to select street trees that are suited to current and expected climate and soil conditions, match likely uses and amenity values and serve community need, as well as meet the specific conditions of development, such as overlays.

The outcome of developers meeting their landscape planning requirements results in a tendency to indigenous or native tree species. The genera Angophora, Corymbia and Eucalyptus make up the largest part of Council's approved list. Notably these three genera most broadly match the criteria of soil tolerance, climate adaption, aesthetic function and community use within the context of City of Whittlesea

If these species were removed from the list, it would be detrimental to the character of the City and result in a very limited palette of suitable and reliable street tree species that could be readily used within growth area neighbourhoods.

2. Improving and expanding the Street Tree Renewal Program:

As part of the Street Tree Renewal Program, residents are provided the opportunity to select the tree to be planted in their street from two species types; an evergreen tree or a deciduous tree. Council pre-selects the two tree types to ensure the final planted tree species is suited to the location soil and climate conditions, the growing space (informing mature tree size) and the overall existing character of the street and neighbourhood. The latter is important in ensuring a diverse planting of tree species is maintained across individual streets and suburbs.

The Street Tree Renewal Program has developed an expanded operational species list to include a broader range of tree species with known attributes suited to the City's conditions. Attributes such as type (evergreen, deciduous), origin (indigenous, native, exotic), mature size (small, medium, large - height and width) and most significantly, demonstrated tolerance of soil types and conditions found through the City and to the expected climate conditions of the City's future (considering data and analysis through to 2050 - 2-3 C warmer and 10-20% less rainfall). Climate and soil tolerance is the most limiting factor for appropriate tree selection and informs the first step in assessing tree species for suitability to use in the City.

The STMP goal of *"the right tree, in the right place, in the right way at the right time"* is central to understanding and employing current best knowledge in urban forest management, including the ongoing review of species selection. Australian native trees from the genera A, C and E form a substantial part of a 'best tree' approach.

## PROPOSAL

A number of minor changes are recommended to the STMP following the review.

1. Improved management of poor quality street tree outcomes:

Current data indicates that approximately 13,500 trees or 14% of the City's street tree population present potential challenges in relation to leaf litter, fruit and capsule drop, and bark and limb shedding. These large street trees, which exist predominantly in Mill Park, Blossom Pak and South Morang, create a very strong neighbourhood character, which is valued by many residents. Because of the strong contribution these trees make to the character of these neighbourhoods, and the value they provide in eco-systems services such as addressing urban heat island effects, it is not feasible to remove these potentially challenging trees.

Rather, the approach outlined in the STMP, which is proposed to be strengthened through this review, is to better manage leaf litter and other amenity impacts. Within the public realm this can be achieved through increased street sweeping, which was implemented through the 2016 STMP.

As a result of the review it is proposed to extend this program of sweeping more streets more often, and include footpath sweeping to further address problem streets (such as the 14% above) and areas where existing tree populations contribute periodic negative outcomes for residents.

2. Continuously improve street tree species selection:

The STMP is a ten-year policy document. The tree species list will remain separate from the STMP, so that it can be regularly amended, which allows for:

- more flexibility with annual selection, in line with the STMP principles,
- the use of new cultivars which are best suited to changing climate including reduced leaf litter; and
- replacement species in situations where growers are unable to provide required species.

3. Introduction of a peer review process for tree removal requests:

To further ensure Council provides a robust and empathetic customer experience in challenging circumstances, where requests for tree inspections arise out of resident complaints for nuisance, damage, condition or function, or deliver an outcome that residents are unsatisfied with, or disagree with, officers will provide a formal peer review process utilising a second internal consulting arborist.

4. Improved Customer Experience:

Aligned to and guiding all proposed improvements, review and develop supporting processes and communications material that improve customer interaction, provide clear information on street tree benefits and Council's management approach.

5. Growth area species ratios:

New tree planting in growth areas will be managed by Council applying a species mix ratio to development applications, ensuring that street tree species continue to remain diverse and representative of both exotic and native trees, and A, C and E tree numbers are aligned with the percentages of urban forest health already established in the STMP. Gum trees in new growth areas should not exceed the approximate 30% frequency already established through the existing street tree population.

## CONSULTATION

This review undertook a consultation with a broad range of Council departments, including City Presentation, Risk, Development Engineering, Local Laws, City Design and Transport, Aged Services, and Parks and Urban Design.

Additionally, views and themes extrapolated from the Community Engagement Findings Report completed for the 'Whittlesea 2040 – A place for all' document have been incorporated where this supports an understanding of the currency of the plan and provide links to further improvement.

Community consultation associated with the STMP review is not proposed, as significant community consultation will occur relating to street trees and more broadly the City's urban forest, as part of the development of Council's Urban Forestry Strategy in 2019/20.

In addition, considerable community consultation was undertaken during the development of the 2016 Street Tree Management Plan.

## CRITICAL DATES

Ongoing implementation of the Street Tree Management Plan will occur in the 2019/20 year.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This review has identified improvements which are within the existing Council Resource Plan, including Department operational budget and the 2019/20 draft Council Action Plan project budget for the preparation of the Urban Forest Plan.

Costs for increased street and footpath cleaning are estimated at \$250,000 annually to provide additional staffing and equipment.

## POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION

Council endorsed Street Tree Management Plan 2016 and Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2012-2022.

## LINK TO STRATEGIC RISKS

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

Strategic Management of Street Trees is critical to planning and responding to the protection of Council and public assets and meeting service levels.

**Strategic Risk** *Climate Change - Failure to mitigate or adapt to the risks of climate changes*

The strategic planning of and ongoing management of street trees is essential to Council's efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

## LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Sustainable environment</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>Leaders in clean, sustainable living</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>We promote sustainable development for housing, transport, public buildings and open spaces</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>



The Street Tree Management Plan is a key document underpinning W2040 Goal 4: Sustainable Environment. The management of street trees is a vital element to maintaining clean sustainable living and planning for the development of streetscapes and will ensure that the right species is planted in the right location and that the species will be a resilient asset for future climatic conditions.

Council's 2016 Street Tree Management Plan vision for the municipality is that *"healthy, well managed street trees will be a defining feature of the City's attractive streetscapes and liveable neighbourhoods"*.

The social, environmental and economic benefits of street trees make them an inherently valuable asset requiring far less investment than other elements of civic infrastructure.

### **DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

### **CONCLUSION**

Council has a current Street Tree stock of approximately 101,000, valued at \$600m, which is supported by the Council adopted Street Tree Management Plan 2016.

The social, environmental and economic benefits of street trees make them an inherently valuable asset requiring far less investment than other elements of civic infrastructure.

Council supported a Notice of Motion 6 March 2018, which requested a review of the Council adopted Street Tree Management Plan 2016. Council's 2016 Street Tree Management Plan vision for the municipality is that healthy, well managed street trees will be a defining feature of the City's attractive streetscapes and liveable neighbourhoods.

The City of Whittlesea Street Tree population is dominated by deciduous species with gum trees forming less than 30% of the overall suite. Of this 30%, a small percentage of legacy trees are presenting challenges.

The review has identified that the STMP is a robust document which is appropriately tailored to the urban and environmental conditions of the city. However, changes to the document structure, tree assessment processes, improved customer experience, and service levels in some situations have been identified.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT Council resolve to endorse the Street Tree Management Plan 2019.**

# **Greening Our Streets**

## **Street Tree Management Plan**

### **2019- 2029**

*"The right tree, in the right place, the right way and at the right time"*

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## Executive Summary

Our vision for the municipality is that healthy, well managed street trees will be a defining feature of the City's attractive streetscapes and livable neighbourhoods.

The social, environmental and economic benefits of street trees make them an inherently valuable asset requiring far less investment than other elements of civic infrastructure.

As outlined in the Whittlesea 2040 and Environmental Sustainability Strategy, street trees are an important community asset playing a vital role in the City's functionality and sustainability.

The City's street trees line the streets across each suburb, quietly improving the City's liveability.

They provide a vast wealth of benefits to the community including much needed shade in urban areas and habitat for native wildlife. They contribute significantly to neighbourhood character and positively impact streetscape amenity. They are one of the most efficient and cost-effective tools for reducing air pollution and storm water flows, mitigating the urban heat island effect and adapting the City to climate change.

Street trees also play a critical role in place-making, creating a unique sense of place down each street, boulevard and main road, as well as enhancing the unique brand of liveability for the municipality.

The majority of the municipality's existing street trees are healthy, relatively young and include a diverse array of species. They make the City of Whittlesea a better place to live, work and visit.

Street trees require considerable care, planning and maintenance to ensure that they provide the maximum benefits to the community. To help guide an ongoing commitment to street trees Council has developed Greening Our Streets, the City of Whittlesea's Street Tree Management Plan.

*Our guiding principles are to:*

1. Enhance the community's sense of place through the provision of attractive tree lined streets
2. Ensure safe and functional streetscapes through the implementation of best practice street tree management
3. Ensure social equity through the equitable delivery of the street tree planting programs across all suburbs
4. Retain street trees through appropriate management
5. Engage the community and raising awareness of the importance of street trees in influencing positive public health and wellbeing outcomes
6. Improve the liveability of suburbs by working together across Council, with the community and developers to ensure street trees are adaptable to future changes in climate and maximise the benefits of street trees to the community.

*We will achieve our vision by:*

- Planting the right tree, in the place, in the right way, at the right time
- Achieving a minimum canopy cover of 30% across the urban streetscape
- Ensuring all urban streets within the City will be lined with uniform tree planting by 2026
- Improving the diversity of our street trees, with no individual species or age of tree being over represented

- Coordinating a multi-year street tree renewal program to fill approximately 11,000 vacant tree sites update with 2019 figures
- Working with developers to improve the type, number, health and quality of trees being handed to Council in new developments and ensure they meet or exceed the appropriate standards
- Only undertake street tree removals in line with this Street Tree Management Plan and as a last resort.

The Greening Our Streets, City of Whittlesea's Street Tree Management Plan and the technical documents will enable the City of Whittlesea to implement best practice management of its street tree population, ensuring a resilient urban forest now and for future generations. Its implementation will drive the greening of all residential streets, create beautiful boulevards and provide dappled shade around shopping centres and welcoming gateways into the municipality.

A series of evidence based, comprehensive, technical documents support the plan. They include:

- A Street Tree Renewal Program Plan
- Technical Guidelines for street tree management which includes (a comprehensive set of policies, standards and protocols for tree planting, maintenance, risk management, protection, removal and valuation.

## Benefits of the City of Whittlesea's street trees

Many Councils are recognising the benefits from the shade provided by street trees in reducing the urban heat island effect.

The City of Whittlesea's street trees are very important for the community and the environment, they:

- provide shade and shelter for pedestrians and cyclists
- improve the desirability of neighbourhoods and encourage people to spend time outdoors and interact with their community
- provide green, open space which is vital to community health and wellbeing, particularly as urbanisation and densification continues
- increase economic benefits such as higher property values and improved commercial vitality
- connect biodiverse locations by creating a green corridor
- greatly improve the character and liveability of the City
- significantly reduce stormwater flows and improve stormwater quality
- can provide a return on capital of up to five times e.g. New York's street trees (New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, 2016) local example of property values increases
- deliver a multitude of health and well-being benefits (specifics – heart and lung health)
- are one of the most cost effective and efficient assets for adapting urban areas to climate change
- are the best mechanism for reducing the Urban Heat Island Effect (i.e. the build-up of heat in hard surfaces during periods of hot weather)

The Urban Heat Island Effect is the absorption of daytime heat into hard urban surfaces and its release at night time. It is significantly increasing night time minimum temperatures. (Infrastructure.org.au, 2015). It is heightened in Melbourne, whereby heatwaves in summer are exacerbated by the urban heat island effect and impacting on human health and wellbeing. Many Councils are recognising the benefits from the shade provided by street trees in reducing the urban heat island effect e.g. City of Melbourne's Economic Assessment of the Urban Heat Island Effect (2012), and City of Moreland's Urban Heat Island Action Plan (2016).

### Pop up tree facts:

- Street trees can improve retail activity in commercial areas by 20%\*
- House prices in Brisbane and Perth are higher in streets with street trees (Dunn, 2016) (Pandit, Polyakov, Tapsuwan, & Moran, 2013).
- A 10% increase in tree cover can reduce heating and cooling needs by 5-10%\*
- Shade trees reduce daytime temperatures between 5 – 20C\*
- Motorists will drive more slowly along treed streets\*
- Improved street amenity encourages pedestrian activity, especially in areas of socio-economic disadvantage (Van Dillen, et al, 2012).
- Large healthy trees absorb 60-70 times more air pollution than smaller trees (McPherson et al, 1997).

\* (Mullaney, Lucke & Trueman, 2015)

Due to their wide-ranging benefits, the City of Whittlesea's street trees contribute positively to the following Council priorities which are outlined in the Whittlesea 2040 and the Environmental Sustainability Strategy:





## Introduction

The majority of the municipality's street trees are healthy, relatively young and include a diverse mix of native and exotic trees and a wide array of species. The City of Whittlesea manages almost 101,000 street trees across a diverse range of neighbourhood types, including established, rural and growth areas.

Attractive tree lined streets are valued by the community and are an important part of the City's liveability,

Street trees provide a wealth of benefits to the community including shade, amenity, habitat for wildlife, and streetscape beautification.

They also reduce air pollution and stormwater flows, and the amount of heat that radiates from buildings, footpaths and roads on hot days.

More importantly, street trees are an important element of place-making, creating a unique sense of place, as well as a unique brand of liveability for the municipality.

In the City of Whittlesea, street trees provide the backdrop for urban and neighbourhood character, especially in town centres such as Epping, Lalor and Whittlesea. Their form, colouring and canopy spread contributes directly to streetscape amenity.

The majority of the municipality's street trees are healthy, relatively young and include a diverse array of species. They make the City of Whittlesea a better place to live, work and visit, and help the City become better adapted to coping with climate change.

Policies, technical guidelines, and a street tree renewal program plan have been developed specifically to meet the needs and demands of The City of Whittlesea now and for the future.

The Street Tree Management Plan outlines Council's commitment to the establishment of attractive streets and suburbs in urban areas through extensive street tree planting and newly considered street tree management.

The Plan:

- Includes an evaluation of the state of the current street tree assets
- Highlights opportunities and challenges for the City's street trees
- Details transparent and accountable processes and principles that will be consistently applied when Council makes decisions about street tree management, maintenance and planting
- Addresses the key management tasks associated with street trees
- 
- Sets a series of guiding principles to ensure all tree management work contributes positively towards a shared vision.

## Current state of street trees within the City of Whittlesea

Council plants around 2,620 street trees each year as part of the street tree planting program.

The City of Whittlesea's Street Tree Inventory as at December 2018, shows that Council has 101,000 urban street trees under its management. Council removes around 1,600 street trees each year because they are dead, dying or dangerous. Council also plants around 3,000 street trees each year as part of the street tree planting program. Due to the large amount of urban growth in the municipality, Council also receives approximately 5,500 extra trees per year that were previously managed by developers.

### Some quick facts:

- The two most common street trees species are Wallangarra White Gum (*Eucalyptus scoparia*) and Yellow Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon*). Both represent only 6% each of the total street tree population.
- Nine of the top 10 species are natives.
- Flowering plums (*Prunus cerasifera*) are the most common exotic tree.
- There are 275 remnant or protected street trees, most of which are indigenous River Red Gums
- 60% of all street trees of the 79,624 street trees are under 5m tall
- 87% of all street trees have a useful life expectancy over 41 years
- 88% of all street trees are semi-mature or younger
- 93% of all street trees are planted in grass verges
- There are approximately 17,616 vacant tree planting sites along streets
- Council strives for a 90% success rate of all the street trees it plants.

### Tree Species Diversity

Table 1: Top 10 street tree species in the City of Whittlesea by number

	Tree Species	Total number	Percentage of population	Average height
1.	<i>Eucalyptus scoparia</i> (Wallangarra White Gum)	4601	6.0%	15m
2.	<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon</i> (Yellow Gum)	4557	6.0%	10-18m
3.	<i>Angophora costata</i> (Smooth-barked Apple Myrtle)	3879	5.0%	18-20m
4.	<i>Prunus cerasifera</i> 'Nigra' (Purple-leafed Cherry Plum)	3286	4.0%	5-6m
5.	<i>Corymbia ficifolia</i> (Flowering Gum)	3059	4.0%	5-6m
6.	<i>Corymbia maculata</i> (Spotted Gum)	2780	3.0%	18-20m
7.	<i>Corymbia citriodora</i> (Lemon-scented Gum)	2550	3.2%	20-25m
8.	<i>Eucalyptus mannifera</i> (Brittle Gum)	2141	2.7%	15-18m
9.	<i>Melia azedarach</i> (White Cedar)	1955	2.5%	10-12m
10.	<i>Melaleuca styphelioides</i> (Prickly Paperbark)	1724	2.2%	15-18m

There are some general rules of thumb dictating resilient and sustainable species diversity within an urban forest population. It is accepted best practice that:

- no more than 30% of any one family, 20% of any one genus, or 10% of one species in an urban tree population (Santamour, 1990)
- "liberal use" of a species should not exceed 10% (Miller and Miller, 1991)
- species lists should achieve a 5%-10% ceiling on any one tree species (Jaenson et.al., 1992).

The City of Whittlesea's street tree population is currently managed to be adaptable to environmental pressures. This management ensures the City's urban forest is inherently resilient and meets or exceeds the best practice of these guidelines, whilst providing functional and aesthetic benefits as well as ecological advantages.

Street tree species rarely occur as a monoculture (i.e. a single crop in a given area) to the extent found in agricultural crops or forest plantations; nor are monocultures logical over the range of street conditions encountered over a municipality. Most urban tree populations around the world are dominated by relatively few species that have proven adaptable and useful under challenging urban growing conditions. The use of too few species may heighten the vulnerability of the tree population; conversely the use of too many species may diminish the perceived landscape continuity and preclude species better suited to some site conditions. A simple approach is to make a conscious effort to prevent an over reliance on a few species.

Species diversity in the City of Whittlesea will evolve over the program of street tree removal and replacement works. These program works will consider developments in species availability, changing environmental conditions, differences in planting sites and changes to community expectations. Species diversity will be further influenced by Precinct Structure Planning and the implementation of the Street Tree Management Plan.

### Useful Life Expectancy

Useful Life Expectancy (ULE) is a measure of the expected number of years that a tree will be able to remain in the landscape before it will need to be removed and/or managed for decline due to environmental stresses. As presented in Figure 1 below, Councils street tree inventory data reflects that only 13% of all street trees will be nearing the end of their useful lives within 40 years and suggests that Council will not need to invest heavily in tree renewal of declining trees for a few decades to come.

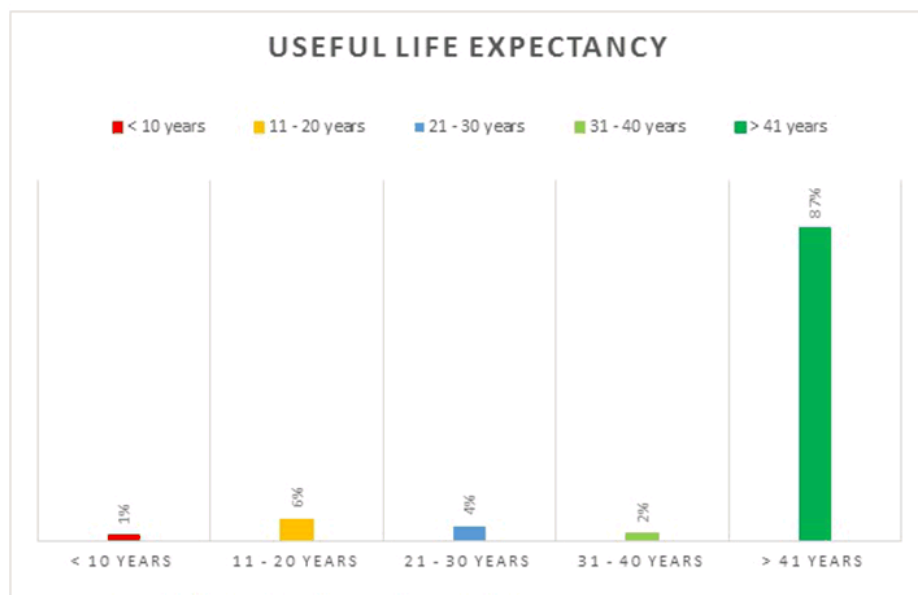


Figure 1: Graph showing distribution of useful life expectancy across the street tree population.

Whilst there is a small percentage of low ULE trees, there are three distinct areas in the City of Whittlesea that have a higher concentration of low ULE trees. These are highlighted in Figure 2 below. The older established suburbs of Epping, Lalor and Mill Park have streets that will need to be prioritised for a tree renewal program in the near future. The trees highlighted in Mill Park are predominantly *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* (Yellow Gum), *Prunus cerasifera Nigra* (Purple leafed Cherry Plum) and various other native species such as *Melaleucas* and *Hakeas*.

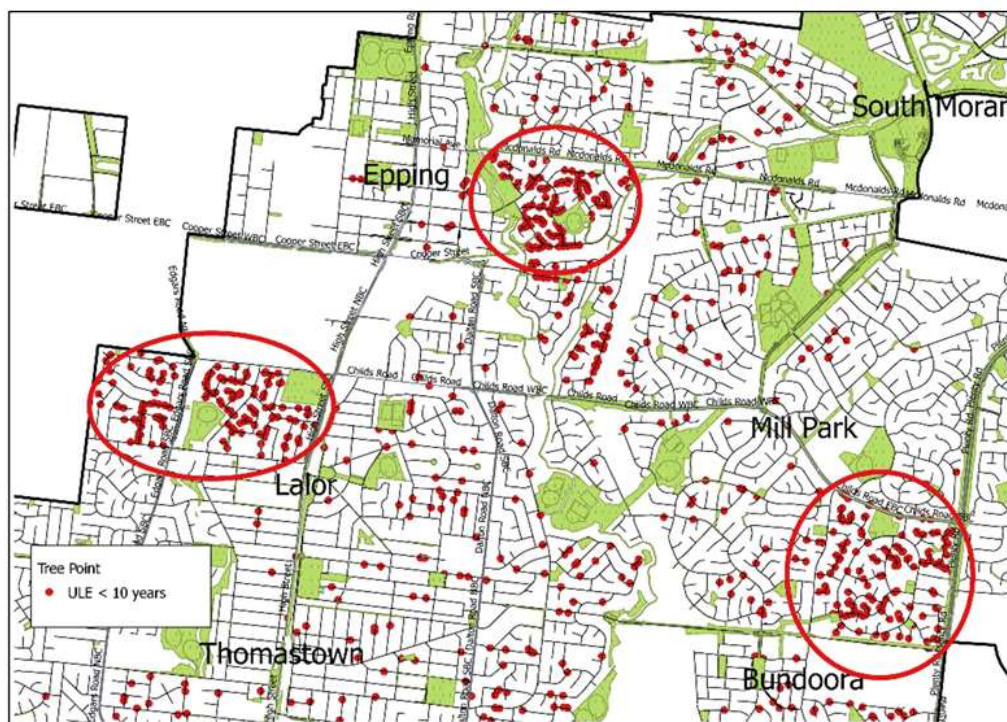


Figure 2: Map showing concentrated areas where street trees have a useful life expectancy lower than 10 years.

### Tree Size

The tree inventory also highlights that the majority of the City of Whittlesea's street tree population is small in canopy width and height. Figure 3 shows that 91% of street trees have a canopy width under 5m, Figure 4 shows that 60% are under 5m in height, which is representative of a small tree. However, not all of these smaller trees are young in age. Figure 5 shows that whilst 51% of trees under 5m in height are either new or juvenile, 45% are in fact semi-mature, meaning half of these trees have almost reached their mature height.

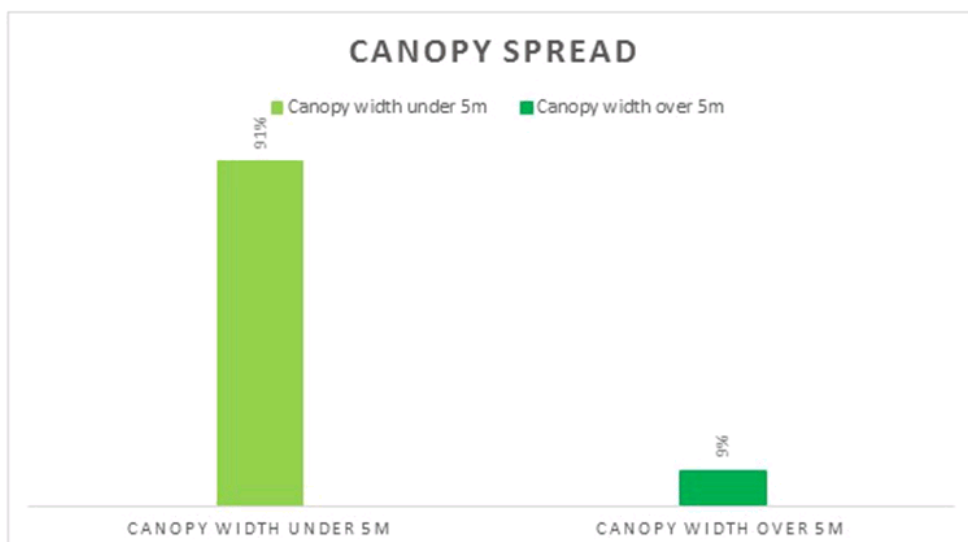


Figure 3: Graph showing distribution of tree canopy size across the street tree population.



Figure 4: Graph showing distribution of tree height across the street tree population.

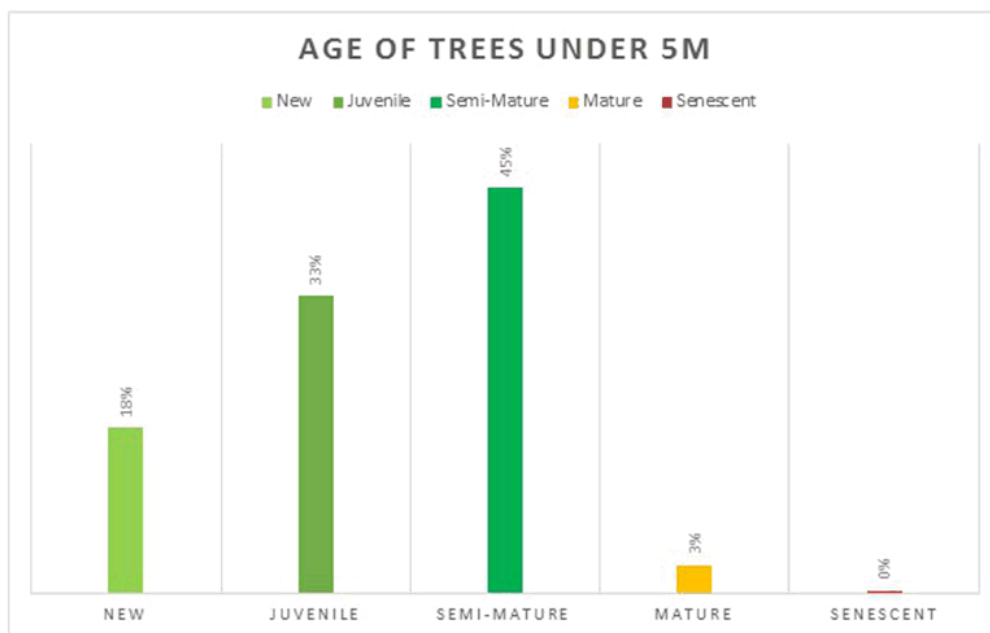


Figure 5: Age distribution of trees under 5m in height

Figure 5: Age distribution of trees under 5m in height

There are only 138 trees which are 20m or over in height across the Municipality. The majority of these are in Mill Park as highlighted in Figure 6. Along Mill Park Drive and Childs Road, there are tall Spotted Gums (*Corymbia maculata*) which are all in good health with relatively long useful life expectancies. These are in similar locations to a concentration of low ULE *Eucalypts* and *Prunus*.



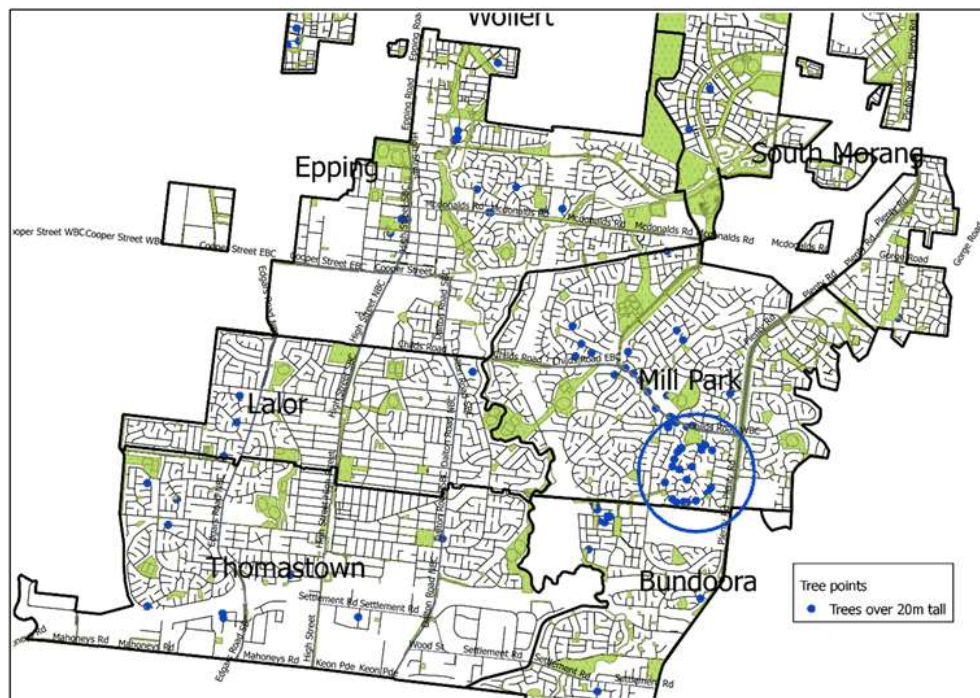


Figure 6: Map showing distribution of trees 20m or over in height across the established urban area of the City of Whittlesea. A small concentration of tall trees exists in Mill Park Drive.

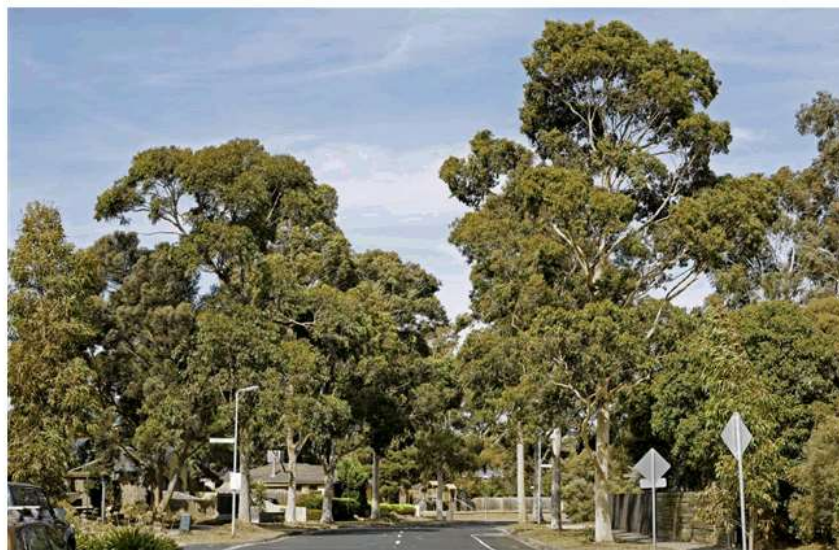


Figure 7: The tall spotted gums in Mill Park Drive providing significant streetscape amenity

### Tree Age

The tree age data shown below in Figure 8 supports the ULE results. Those trees that are older and moving into senescence (old age) have a lower ULE as expected.

88% of street trees are either semi-mature or younger and have a life expectancy greater than 41 years.

In the short term, this is a good result as long as Council continues to keep these trees healthy and functional in the landscape. Best practice recommends a good diversity of ages spread across the tree population to ensure dynamic succession. It is recommended that when combined, the trees categorised as new or juvenile in age should represent about 40% of the population, semi-mature 30%, mature 20% and senescent (aging or deteriorating)10%.

The majority of the City of Whittlesea's street tree population is categorised as being semi-mature in age, with a useful life expectancy (ULE) of greater than 41 years. This is because of the relatively new development within the municipality and is not deemed to be a short to medium term management issue because semi-mature trees generally require less maintenance input.

A constant tree planting program, implemented over the next 10-20 years will however ensure a better spread of age diversity.

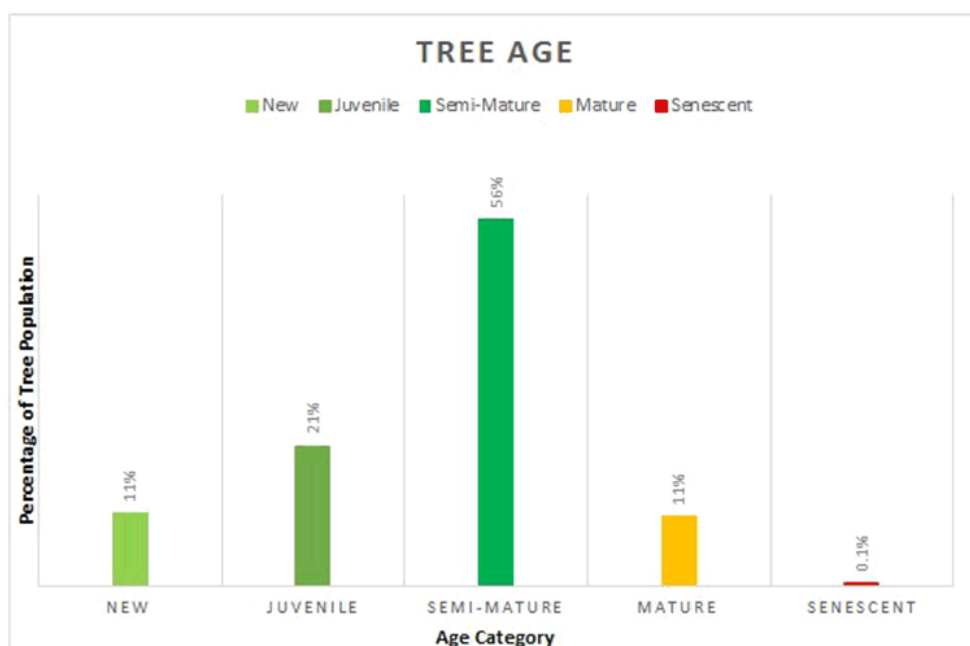


Figure 8: Graph showing distribution of tree ages across the street tree population.

Whilst the number of senescent ageing trees is small (364 trees in total), there appears to be a small concentration in Lalor as highlighted in Figure 9 that will require active management as they decline followed by renewal.

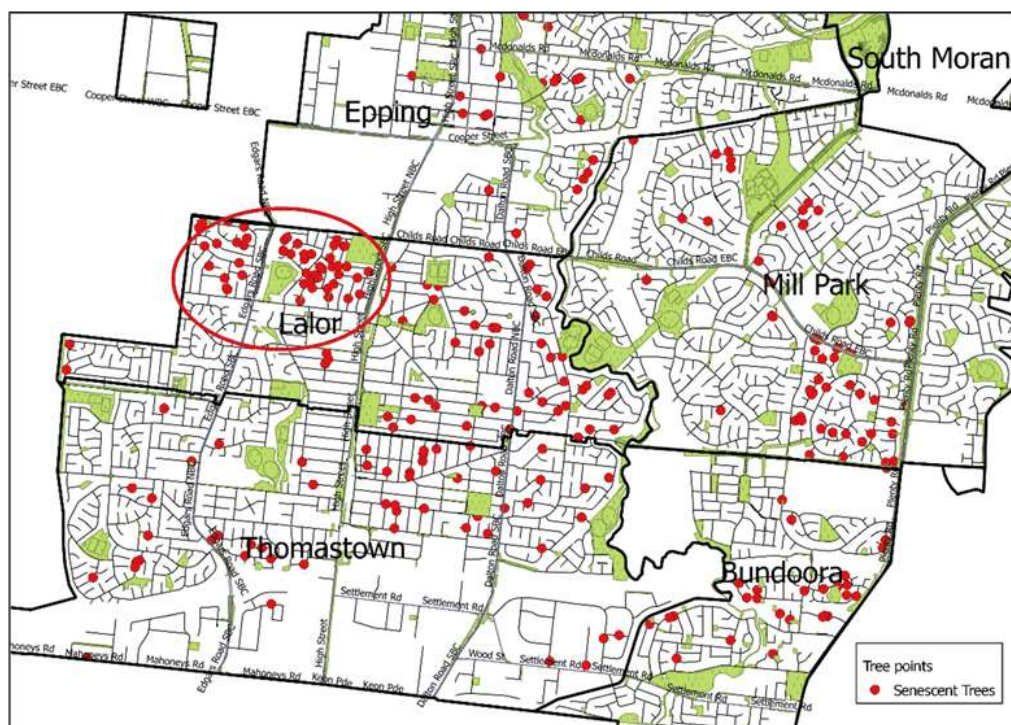


Figure 9: Map showing distribution of senescent trees across the established urban area, showing their concentration in Lalor.

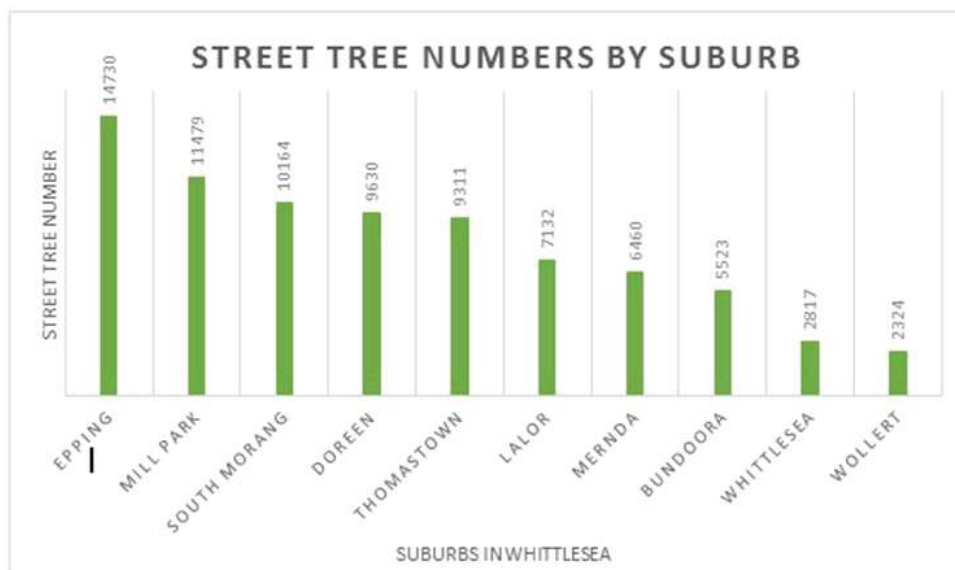


Figure 10: Graph showing distribution of tree numbers across the suburbs of the City of Whittlesea.

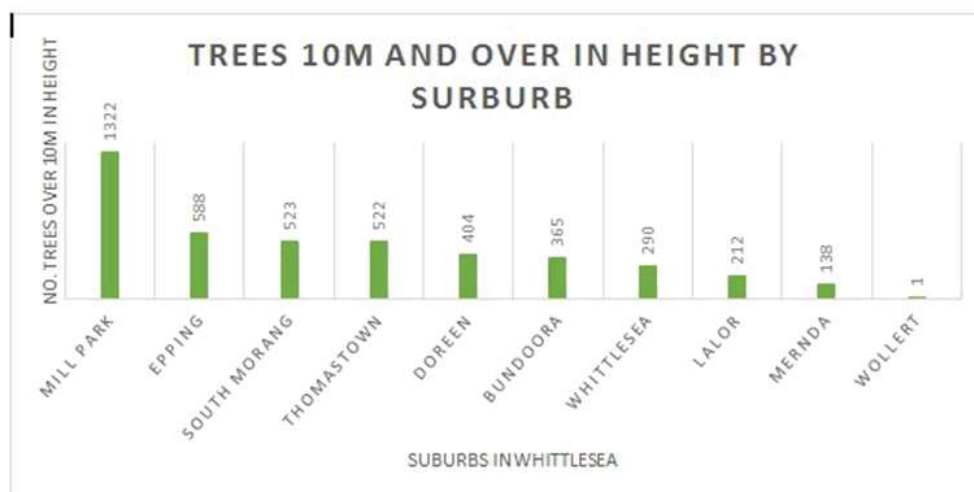


Figure 11: Graph showing distribution of trees 10m and over in height by suburb.

## Key objectives of the Street Tree Management Plan

The Street Tree Management Plan will aim for the following:

1. To ensure the right tree is planted in the right place, in the right way, at the right time
2. To implement best practice tree management in the City of Whittlesea
3. To minimise the challenges with street trees



4. To set appropriate benchmarks for the management of street trees
5. To establish a robust tree management and decision-making framework.

## Guiding principles for Street Tree Management

All planning, management and decision making regarding the City of Whittlesea's street trees will be guided by the following principles:

1. Enhance sense of place: through the provision of attractive tree lined streets
2. Ensure safe and functional streetscapes: through the implementation of best practice street tree management
3. Ensure social equity: through the equitable delivery of the street tree planting programs across all suburbs
4. Retain street trees: through appropriate management
5. Engage the community and raise awareness of the importance of street trees in influencing positive public health and wellbeing outcomes
6. Improve the liveability of suburbs: by working together across Council, with the community, partners and developers to ensure street tree benefits are maximised for the community and street trees are adaptable to future changes in climate.

## Opportunities for street trees in the City of Whittlesea

Significant opportunities for street tree management in the City of Whittlesea have been identified to implement the vision. These include:

OPPORTUNITY	OUR APPROACH
Utilise street trees to enhance the look and feel of the City	Prioritise the planting of seasonal colour around retail and shopping precincts through the delivery of township masterplans.
Align the benefits of street trees into existing Council policy for health and wellbeing, stormwater management, integrated transport, biodiversity, environmental sustainability, climate change and heatwave management	Ensure the benefits of street trees are incorporated into the preparation and revision of relevant Council documents.
Ensure all future plantings are best fit for each site.	Adhere to the right tree, right place, in the right way, at the right time
Ensure attractive presentation and entry into the City through suitable future tree planting along main roads	Work with VicRoads to implement VicRoads Tree Planting Policy Develop a main roads planting program Commit to the development of attractive tree boulevards along all future main roads, working with VicRoads Investigate road safety measures to reduce the constraints placed on the establishment of effective main road planting
Continue to renew street trees in existing suburbs	Implement the Street Tree Renewal Planting Plan Program
Fill the estimated 11,000 vacant trees sites	Implement Street Tree Renewal and Annual Street Tree Planting Programs.
Ensure that streets in new areas have appropriate and healthy street trees when developed and handed over to Council	Adhere to technical guidelines and ensure developers of new estates are working with the Guidelines for Urban Development. Negotiate the possibility of longer establishment period before handover to Council. Promote planting of large tree stock along collector roads and high-profile areas coupled with increased establishment periods.
Mitigate the urban heat island effect	Ensure shade provision through the planting of broad canopied trees in suitable areas

## Challenges for street trees in the City of Whittlesea

The City of Whittlesea's street trees face a unique set of challenges that correlate with being a growth municipality. Geography, soil type, the rapid pace of urban development, transport networks, community lifestyles and the natural environment all pose various challenges for the planning, planting and ongoing care of street trees.

CHALLENGES	OUR APPROACH
<b>The need to raise the community's appreciation and value of street trees acknowledging how they improve the City of Whittlesea's liveability</b>	Education and community engagement
<b>Existing large street trees which still have a long useful life expectancy</b>	Retain trees and manage issues through the development and implementation of a specific large trees management program. Incorporate increased street tree inspections, increased street sweeping frequency, increased road and footpath repair. Consider widening verges to allow larger trees more space.
<b>Poor streetscapes in older suburbs caused by age of trees or quality of species planted.</b>	Implement Street Tree Renewal Program. Implement a program which will rejuvenate inconsistent streetscapes with homogenous avenues of high quality street trees.
<b>Reactive clay soils which pose contraction and expansion issues, increasing the risk of ground movement around infrastructure and buildings.</b>	Implement Street Tree Management Plan and Technical Guidelines
<b>Provision of attractive streetscapes under and around powerlines.</b>	Continue to plant street trees under and around powerlines. Increased powerlines for telco's and changes to the Electrical Line Clearance Regulations since 2010 have had implications on the visual amenity of street trees under power lines. Council has completed an investigation which identified a number of street trees under power lines that would be better managed if they were pruned more frequently. The additional resources required to implement this change have been considered and could be accommodated through a variation to existing Council contracts. Council will also carefully select trees which can be pruned around power lines and advocate for reduced power line clearance requirements and undergrounding of electricity where appropriate.



CHALLENGES	OUR APPROACH
Trees which drop excessive debris including leaves.	Identify potentially challenging street tree species and tailor the frequency and timing of street sweeping to address debris and leaf litter build up. Implement targeted footpath sweeping in streets where existing street trees drop excessive debris and this is deemed as a safety risk.

## Street Tree Management in the City of Whittlesea

### Policy Position

Street trees are a critically important asset for the City of Whittlesea's future liveability and will be valued and managed to enhance their benefits.

### Benchmarks

A series of targets have been set for the management of the City of Whittlesea's street trees:

- Canopy cover: City of Whittlesea will have a minimum urban tree canopy cover of 30% within 10 years
- Boulevards in all streets: All urban streets within the City will be lined with uniform tree planting within 10 years
- Species diversity: The street tree population will remain healthy and diverse, with no one species or age category being over represented
- Reduce vacant sites: Vacant planting sites will be systematically restocked through Council's street tree planting programs
- Improve quality and number of complete plantings in developer handovers which will meet criteria and specifications set out in the Guidelines for Urban Development.

These benchmarks, the guiding principles and the vision will be met through the implementation of a set of Technical Guidelines, the Street tree management plan Action Plan and an ambitious annual planting program.

### General Urban Tree Management

Street trees are vital for enhancing neighbourhood amenity, particularly in the City of Whittlesea. Therefore, their management is critical to maximise the benefits that trees provide. As part of Council's street tree management arborists proactively inspect and assess every street tree in the city at least once every 2 years.

The goal of tree management is based on an understanding of:

- the dynamic nature of the street tree population
- the aesthetic contribution of street trees to the urban landscape
- tree risks to public safety
- public attitudes and perceptions
- the need to sustain well-presented neighbourhoods and the natural environment
- The importance of engaging and working with the community.

Sustainable arboriculture comprises management and practices that are sustaining environmental quality, resource conservation, economic development, psychological health, wildlife habitat and social well-being (Clark et al., 1997).

Council recognise that as trees age they require increasing management to maintain them in a low risk but aesthetically acceptable condition. Similarly, trees have a finite lifespan and at some point in time some trees will need to be removed and replaced because they are either dead, dying, dangerous or have reached the end of their ULE.

The City of Whittlesea's Street Tree Management code is:

- ▶ Public safety is a priority
- ▶ Retain healthy trees unless specific tree removal conditions have been met
- ▶ Property damage from trees is a valid risk and trees must be managed to minimise this risk
- ▶ Achieve a sustainable street tree population taking into consideration ecological principles, the dynamic nature of trees in the urban landscape, community expectations and the built environment
- ▶ Implement and manage appropriate tree removal/replacement programs that ensure the tree resource is continually renewed thereby ensuring a biological diverse and sustainable street tree population
- ▶ Implement tree management in line with relevant legislative requirements, strategic policies and accepted tree care practices. Any operation that is known to be detrimental to long-term tree health is not appropriate
- ▶ Engage and educate the community on the benefits of trees and their management requirements and assist community participation.
- ▶ Sensitively acknowledge and address the concerns of the community in relation to street tree management

Relevant Australian Standards and policies relating to the Street Tree Management Plan and the Technical Guidelines are as follows:

- ▶ *AS 2303-2018 Tree stock for landscape use*
- ▶ *AS 4373 – 2007 Pruning of amenity trees*
- ▶ *AS 4970-2009 Protection of trees on development sites*
- ▶ *AS 2870 – 2011 Residential slabs and footings*
- ▶ *AS 4454-2012 Composts, soil conditioners and mulches*
- ▶ *VicRoads Tree Planting Policy 2017*
- ▶ *The Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations*

City of Whittlesea's tree managers will undertake the following as part of their daily work:

- Maintain and enhance the existing tree population by preserving tree health, biological diversity, aesthetic appearance and amenity value to ensure a quality asset will be inherited by future generations.
- Maintain high standards of tree management to meet current best practice and recognised standards and provide adequate resources to ensure effective tree management.
- Utilise a program of systematic tree assessment and implement best practice tree management approaches to mitigate tree risk for residents and visitors to the City.
- Remove hazardous trees to ensure public safety and plant replacement trees in order that the City's streetscapes are reinvigorated.
- Investigate street trees where concern has been expressed in relation to their appropriateness e.g. condition, size, level of risk, or damage they may be causing.

- Select tree species for planting based on their suitability to the site, climatic conditions, biological diversity, performance, and potential to contribute to the landscape. Tree selection, placement and planting of trees will be undertaken to mitigate potential conflicts with infrastructure and to reduce long-term risk.
- Arrange planting programs to ensure that street tree planting in established areas is a priority.
- Arrange street tree planting within naturestrips where tree planting opportunities have been identified to facilitate a yearly net increase of street trees across the City.
- Protect Council street trees from development and other activities that threaten their health and viability by minimising the conflict between trees and infrastructure wherever possible.
- Foster communal pride in street trees to mitigate the incidence of vandalism.
- Consult with the community when street tree renewal is proposed for specific streetscapes.
- Maintain accurate and current documentation on the management of Council's street tree assets by ensuring the street tree inventory is continually updated.
- Undertake performance monitoring and ongoing review of the street tree population to ensure that tree management techniques employed are relevant and facilitate adaptation of the population to changes in the climate, technologies, resource allocations and community expectations.
- Ensure that street trees are recognised as a valuable Council asset through inclusion in all relevant Council documents.

### Key tree management tasks for The City of Whittlesea

There are six key tree management functions that take place within the municipality:

1. Tree selection and planting: **Council will undertake the planting of trees along streets and roadsides using the right tree, in the right place.**
2. Tree risk management: **Council will systematically assess all street trees located on Council managed land. Following assessment, the implementation of works will be prioritised based on tree hazard and assessed risk.**
3. Tree maintenance programs: **Council will implement proactive and reactive tree maintenance programs to ensure that street trees are well managed.**
4. Tree Protection: **Council will protect all existing street trees within the Municipality where possible.**
5. Tree removals: **Council will only remove trees that meet the tree removal criteria as set out in Section 5: Tree Removals**
6. Tree value: **Council will attribute a dollar value to street trees, charge appropriate cost recovery fees and acknowledge that their value appreciates over time.**

### 1. Tree Planting

*The City of Whittlesea will proactively carry out street tree planting in a programmed manner to meet a range of priorities including preserving neighbourhood character and to increase the number of street trees planted.*

Street Tree Planting will meet the following priorities:

- ▶ To preserve and enhance the local character of the distinct areas within the City
- ▶ To increase the number of street trees and aim for full street tree plantings
- ▶ To increase tree canopy cover across the Municipality
- ▶ Select tree species for their suitability to the site, biological diversity, performance and potential to contribute to the landscape without onerous management implications
- ▶ To reinforce habitat, pedestrian and cycling links and to enhance the pedestrian experience
- ▶ Set and maintain high tree planting and establishment standards and
- ▶ Consult and inform the community about all major projects involving tree planting.

Trees are the dominant component in landscapes and street tree planting is one of the simplest and most effective ways of improving the image and landscape character of a city.

The urban landscape bears little resemblance to the natural environment on which trees originally thrived. The further threat of changing climatic conditions means that a firm understanding of the environmental and management needs of street trees is required for them to flourish.

Council will implement a planned approach to tree planting within the municipality taking into consideration available funding, landscape requirements, environmental constraints, site and seasonal conditions, availability of stock and community expectations. As a result, Council will *'Plant the right tree in the right place in the right way and at the right time'*.

Tree planting will be programmed through the following avenues:

- ▶ The Street Tree Renewal Program Plan
- ▶ The Annual Street Tree Planting Program
- ▶ Co-ordination with infrastructure improvement works program, for example road redevelopment
- ▶ Major Community Facility Developments
- ▶ Community requests.

Council will ensure it is supplied with high quality tree stock and allocates adequate resources to the supervision of tree planting activities and levels of after-care maintenance.

## Tree planting programs

### Street Tree Renewal Program Plan

A Street Tree Renewal Program has been developed based on assessments of streets within the urban areas of the municipality. The assessment was conducted based on the following criteria:

- Condition of existing trees
- Assessment of necessity of new street tree planting
- Percentage of vacant tree sites
- Road hierarchy e.g. major roads, arterials and suburban streets
- Design considerations e.g. proximity to open space, walking or cycling route, existing private tree canopy cover, street typology.

The objective of this program is to replace poor streetscapes and develop significant avenues throughout the municipality.

The program will be efficient and effective in developing significant avenues by providing continuity of species type and size, focus of resource and standardisation of management practices. The impact that the trees have upon the landscape once established will be consistent with the City of Whittlesea's vision for streetscape amenity.

The program can result in the sudden change of visual amenity of the streetscape and may create community discontent. Consequently, rigorous community consultation is required.

The Street Tree Renewal Program Plan is considered within existing budgets and looking at existing opportunities. If the annual budgets were to increase, this program would be expanded to include the renewal of low quality streetscapes e.g. streets with trees that have not proven successful, have diminished amenity value and could benefit from a whole of street tree renewal program. The program would involve tree removal and replacement with a single species to enhance the appearance and consistency of the street.

### Annual street tree planting program

The objective of the annual street tree planting program is to reinforce an existing consistent street tree theme within a street or main road.

When determining the suitability of the existing street tree theme, consideration will be given to the site limitations that exist within the street and the appropriateness of continuing with this theme. If the existing theme is inappropriate and an alternative tree species can satisfactorily maintain the streets character, it shall be planted as the preferred street tree species. In most cases species selection will be derived from the street tree species palette.

Individual street tree plantings occur throughout the municipality for the following reasons.

- ▶ A replacement for a tree removed as part of normal maintenance.
- ▶ A resident request to have an individual tree planted outside their property where sufficient space permits.
- ▶ Council officer or resident request to plant available sites within a street to complete the avenue.

Street trees that are removed shall be replaced unless site restrictions deem the planting of a tree to be inappropriate which are included in Technical Guidelines Section 1.7.2. *Existing street features restrictions*.

Council is responsible for the planting and maintenance of street trees and seeks to develop uniform streetscapes that complement landscape and neighbourhood character, meet design standards and are not onerous to maintain. To ensure Council can meet these requirements residents are not permitted to plant trees within the nature strip or other sites within the road reserve without Council approval. This is outlined in Council's General Municipal Law (Local Law) and the Urban Nature Strip Guidelines. Council may remove such plantings and no compensation will be available to residents for the removal of these trees or shrubs (the Urban Nature Strip Guidelines provide for nature strip planting by residents if plants do not exceed 300 mm in height).

Council encourages residents to nominate a street, or section of street, to be included in Council's annual planting programs. The community will be able to lodge their requests for additional street tree planting via Council's website, by writing in or by calling Council directly.

### Placement of trees

Council will aim to plant trees at regular intervals and at a density that will provide a sense of continuity and scale to the streetscape. Where reasonable, one tree will be planted in front of each property within residential urban streets of the City or alternatively at approximately 15 metre spacing. The growth characteristics of the tree and the capacity of the street will also determine spacing.

Other street tree placement considerations include:

- ▶ private or other vegetation that exists on or close to the road reserve precluding the growth of a street tree
- ▶ if the tree species are small, there may be potential to plant two trees in front of a property
- ▶ established planting theme or available space (long nature strip or corner allotment) allow for more than one tree per property and
- ▶ location of infrastructure, such as underground services, street lights, power poles or fire hydrants.

There are many different styles of street tree planting that could be utilised within the City. The ultimate style will be dependent on the existing street tree character, street type, dominant land use and planting space.

When planting trees on declared VicRoads roads consideration is to be given to the *VicRoads Tree Planting Policy 2017*.

The avenue effect of uniform species is the preferred planting style within the City where appropriate.

Commercial/retail areas and industrial areas, may require specific design input and site modification to reduce the limitations to plant growth.

Council will also investigate initiatives to incorporate water sensitive urban design features, passive water filtration or other storm water harvesting techniques into tree planting systems where appropriate.

Wherever possible, large canopied trees should be planted within the streets of the City of Whittlesea. This may require the development of specialised planting systems to accommodate larger trees such as underground structural cells to allow better root growth, or replacement of soil with better growing media or water sensitive urban design to allow for more water filtration to tree root zones.



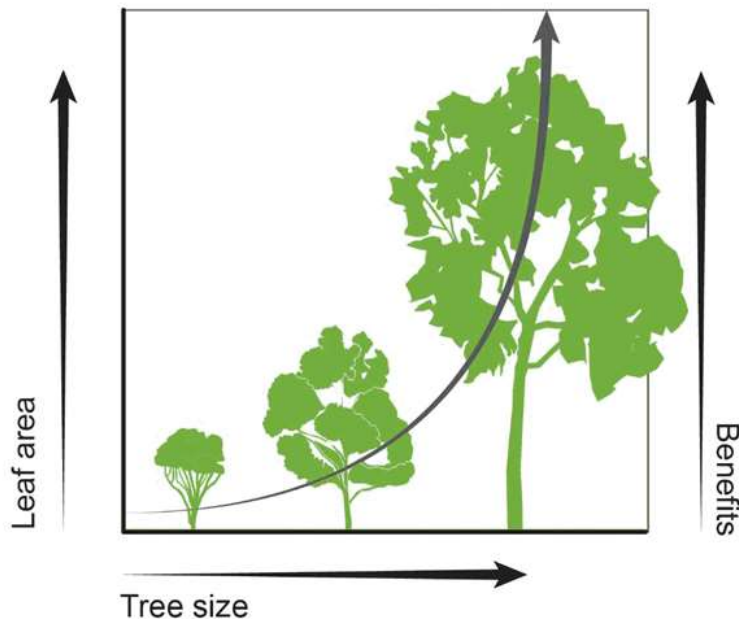


Figure 12: The larger the tree the greater the benefits (<http://www.urbantreealliance.org/resources/why-trees/>)

### Species selection

To ensure the right tree is planted a Street Tree Species List. The list includes small, medium and large trees representing native, exotic, evergreen and deciduous species that are deemed to be appropriate for planting within the City.

Of the Top 10 existing tree species (2016), some not been included on the revised Species List. E.g. *Melaleuca styphelioides*, the Prickly Paperbark has not been listed as it is deemed inappropriate for use as a street tree. Street trees identified as inappropriate will not be replanted once they have been removed. Other species, such as *Melia azedarach*, will be replaced with more suitable cultivars that grow to a smaller height or produce less fruit and leaf litter.

Though the list of tree species is not definitive, the species listed should be considered the 'signature' species that will contribute to the pervading landscape character of the City's streets, provide ongoing amenity and assist Council and the community to respond to the pressures of climate change.

The Parks and Urban Design Department will conduct periodic reviews of the species list and investigate new tree species in line with aesthetic, functional, climatic and environmental requirements.

Species selection will:

- be based on existing street species, availability of stock, suitability of species to climate, future climatic change, and site conditions and constraints.
- aim to mitigate impacts on adjacent infrastructure and reduce onerous management requirements.
- consider a tree's ability to be pruned to meet the above ground site constraints presented by the City.

- will endeavour to utilise tree size and form (shape of the canopy) in order to reduce pruning requirements.
- aim to avoid the use of trees that drop excessive litter, particularly fruit, which can cause trip hazards.

The Street Tree Species List will be reviewed as needed, modified and incorporated into other relevant Council documents for distribution to developers and other third parties planting street trees where required.

### **Tree establishment**

Along with appropriate species selection and selecting quality tree stock, planting, if done correctly, will have a lasting influence on future tree development.

Trees will be planted properly and an after-care maintenance program implemented to achieve a successful tree establishment rate of greater than 90%. Council will implement a minimum 2-year establishment maintenance program.

Typically, Council uses containerised stock for planting within the City and all tree stock supplied should conform to AS 2303:2015 Tree stock for landscape use. AS 2303 will also be included in future tree planting contracts and information for developers.

## 2. Tree Risk Management

*The City of Whittlesea will seek to maintain public safety and reduce the risk of property damage through the use of best practice tree assessment and treatment approaches.*

Council will:

- ▶ Utilise a program of systematic tree assessment and best practice tree management to mitigate street tree risk to residents and visitors to the City
- ▶ Maintain accurate and current documentation on the management of Council's tree assets
- ▶ Ensure selection, placement and planting of trees is undertaken with due consideration of the associated long-term risk
- ▶ Maintain high standards of tree management to meet current best practice and recognised standards
- ▶ Provide adequate resources to ensure appropriate tree management to mitigate risk potential.

The City of Whittlesea manages vast numbers of trees over a large area and within many varied landscape contexts. The management of these trees takes place in a complex operating environment with many variables and subjective views.

Risk from trees, even in 'natural' urban landscapes, is typically very low and in most instances, is no more than a recognised risk of everyday life, which most people accept without question. (National Tree Safety Group (UK), 2011). Consequently, planning decisions about the management of trees in general should proceed on a rational, cost-effective basis. Public safety, though paramount, is not the only concern when deciding how to manage trees. Other broader concerns, such as ecological, landscape and aesthetic value, are also taken into consideration.

Council recognise that some community members may be exposed to an increased risk due to their age, disability or health condition. In some cases, these risks may be associated with Council trees and the leaves, flowers, fruit and other objects that naturally fall from them.

There can also be risks associated with conflicts such as tree roots and infrastructure, soil heave or shrinkage and blockages to underground surfaces. Other risks associated with trees include debris drop, pest and diseases, sight and overhead electric line clearances and the possibility of fire.

Another component of a risk management program is the need to ensure that the procedures implemented for inspecting, identifying and addressing tree risks are clearly and properly documented. This is because not all tree defects are observable and not all the potential structural concerns associated with trees can be eliminated. Trees as biological organisms will always pose a residual risk, even after mitigation works are completed.

The City of Whittlesea's existing risk management system includes:

- ▶ A clear documented procedure for inspection of street trees with information on location, species, size, health and structure.
- ▶ A documented system of logging complaints or notification of problems with respect to street trees.
- ▶ A documented system for assessing the risk posed by street trees and prioritising the risk posed by such trees.

- ▶ A documented maintenance system for abating the identified risks.

The process Council has adopted for assessing risk associated with street trees is;

1. A Council arborist assesses tree condition using industry endorsed methodologies.
2. Requestor notified of assessed tree condition and advised of proposed action to minimise perceived risk.
3. Remedial work undertaken if required.
4. If requestor is still concerned, a second peer-review council arborist assessment reassessing the tree condition.
5. If requestor is still concerned, level of tree risk will be assessed using industry endorsed tree risk assessment methodologies and/or aerial inspections as necessary.
6. Requestor notified of assessed level of tree risk and advised of proposed actions to minimise risk. Comparison of residual risk to other life situations will also be provided.
7. If requestor is still concerned (per Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) guidance obtained in 2015) an independent risk assessment by suitably qualified arborist with tree risk assessment qualifications will be arranged.
8. Requestor notified of independently assessed level of tree risk and advised of any proposed action to further reduce risk. Comparison of residual risk to other life situations will also be provided.

The following tasks are included in Council's comprehensive tree risk management program:

- ▶ Pruning: Well- maintained trees develop fewer hazardous defects and pose less risk to public safety. Any street tree pruning undertaken will comply with industry standards and best practice, which includes formative pruning to enhance the form and improve the structure of young trees.
- ▶ Select appropriate species suitable for site conditions and constraints. Allow space for trees to attain expected mature size.
- ▶ Select good quality nursery stock (refer to *AS 2303:2015 Tree stock for landscape use*). Plant and implement post-planting maintenance of trees to match site conditions and industry best standard.
- ▶ Establish level of risk assessment appropriate for tree resource and location.
- ▶ Implement scheduled tree inspections by qualified, experienced arborist(s) based on risk.
- ▶ Recommend inspection of individual trees in high target areas after severe storm events and when impacted by construction or maintenance activities.
- ▶ Implement appropriate tree protection during construction activities. Refer to the Australian Standard *AS 4970-2009 Protection of trees on development sites*, for guidelines.
- ▶ Maintain documentation on tree inspection and maintenance activities.
- ▶ Employ techniques such as root barrier installation, aerial cable bundling and other innovative approaches to mitigate risk.

In line with *AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk Management*, ongoing review is essential to ensure that tree risk management remains relevant. Factors that affect the likelihood of inspection activities may change, for example, severe drought may cause rapid tree decline prompting the need for more frequent inspections. Similarly, knowledge gained through experience and implementation of tree management could provide beneficial insights and allow refinement of tree risk management approaches.

As a component of Council's continual improvement approach and to ensure the process is effective in managing tree risk, the risk assessment process will be reviewed annually.

The expected outcomes from reviewing and developing this systematic approach to managing tree risk are:

- ▶ Reduced tree-related risk over time
- ▶ Improved tree health
- ▶ Reduced liability claims
- ▶ Accelerated response following significant storm events, resulting in faster clean-up of debris, and restoration of services.

### 3. Tree Maintenance Programs

*The City of Whittlesea will provide adequate resources to carry out proactive tree maintenance on trees in streets to meet the following objectives:*

- ▶ *Undertake tree inspection and maintenance works as required to protect, enhance and preserve existing trees to a high standard.*
- ▶ *Undertake tree pruning to comply with relevant legislative requirements, strategic policies and accepted tree care practices.*
- ▶ *Integrate latest technology to ensure tree maintenance programs continue to meet best tree care practices.*

Well maintained trees meet landscape aspirations and community expectations, develop fewer hazardous defects and pose less risk to public safety and property damage.

Council implements a proactive, routine street tree inspection and pruning program. Through this program Council aims to meet its obligations to manage public risk and provide adequate road, pedestrian, visibility and electrical line clearance requirements. Council also undertakes reactive street tree inspections and pruning to address failed or damaged trees and respond to various requests from the community. Other tree maintenance works include management of tree root conflicts, management of pests/diseases and other arboricultural works as required.

Visual tree risk assessments and any subsequent pruning on the City's street trees are undertaken at least once every two years as part of the urban area street tree inspection and pruning program. Visual tree risk assessments are also undertaken as a result of resident requests or after storm events.

The proactive urban area street tree inspection and pruning program and updating of Council's tree inventory database, form the basis of the visual tree assessment and risk management process applied for the majority of street trees within the municipality.

However, some street trees may require an annual assessment to determine any risk potential and identify if remedial work needs to be undertaken. Typically, these trees will be of high environmental/aesthetic value or will be older or larger in stature. To manage the debris shed by these larger, older trees, increases in street sweeping activities may also be required.

Council will implement a large tree management program which includes:

- ▶ Increasing proactive inspections towards an annual program for trees which are large, older or under electrical powerlines and
- ▶ Widening verges to create more space for existing larger trees where appropriate.

Similarly, annual inspection may also be required where the combination of tree species and electrical or other assets necessitate a more frequent attendance. This inspection will enable Council to identify any pruning necessary to ensure compliance with relevant Electricity Safety (Electrical Line Clearance) Regulations. To best manage the interaction between these street trees and overhead electrical lines, increases in the frequency of tree pruning activities may also be required to reduce the impact on tree health and the aesthetics of the associated streetscape.

To summarise, Council undertakes inspection and pruning programs on publicly managed trees to:

- ▶ Reduce the risk to public safety
- ▶ Decrease potential damage to property
- ▶ Provide clearances for pedestrians, vehicles and sight lines
- ▶ Provide clearances around services and electric power lines
- ▶ Manage tree health and aesthetics
- ▶ Formatively shape young trees.

Any pruning that is required must be carried out in accordance with the Australian Standard, AS 4373-2007 *Pruning of amenity trees* by trained and competent arborists who have a thorough knowledge of tree physiology.

### Tree Clearance Requirements

Council is not responsible for the clearance of vegetation around non- electrical aerial conductors.

Council will maintain clearances around overhead electric lines in compliance with the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2015; S.R. No. 67/2015, or subsequent updates, which prescribe the Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance and City of Whittlesea Electric Line Clearance Management Plan.

Clearance from trees over roads and footpaths are outlined in Council's Road Management Plan.

Table 2 below provides a practical guide to the crown clearances that Council will aim to achieve when conducting pruning work within the municipality.

Council will also advocate to reduce conservative clearance requirements in urban areas and undergrounding of electricity where possible.

Table 2: Tree crown clearance requirements for street tree pruning.

Access Type and Clearance Location	Clearance
Electric line clearances (H.V. and L.V.) and service wires	Maintain the clearances as per the Electrical Line Clearance Plan

Access Type and Clearance Location	Clearance
<u>Vehicular/ Over roadways</u>	
Local roads	4.0 m Rural roadsides as required (1m behind back of kerb)
Main Roads	4.3 m
Driveways	3.5 m
<u>Pedestrian</u>	
Over footpaths, walkways, nature strips	2.5 m
Motorist/pedestrian visibility	2.5 m
Approved road signage, lines of sight and traffic control devices	Allow for driver & pedestrian visibility in accordance with VicRoads/Council sight clearance standards.
Buildings on private property	Maintain a minimum 2.0 m clearance from tree canopy to built structures (excluding fences) through annual or biennial pruning cycle.

### Tree root management

Root systems are vital to the health and longevity of trees. However, in urban areas where there is competition for available space, tree roots are often associated with situations that cause damage to structures, footpaths, and underground services. There can be dichotomy between sustaining a healthy urban tree population with all of the associated benefits, while endeavouring to mitigate the negative impacts that these trees can have on adjacent infrastructure. Although tree roots are often blamed for the cracking and lifting of concrete, it is worth noting that these structures can also fail because they have not been properly engineered to function in a landscape that contains growing trees and their root systems.

It is not possible to avoid or eliminate all conflicts between tree roots and hard surfaces or pavements within urban landscapes. Given that trees are vital to the urban landscape it is accepted that trees come with assumed levels of risk as do all public assets such as roads and buildings. In this regard Council accepts that there are some increased costs associated with the repairing of roads and pavements damaged by tree roots as a trade-off for having tree lined streets.

A multidisciplinary approach to reducing the risk of root damage to infrastructure within the City is required. This involves a coordinated approach from various departments and professionals involved with the



management of the City's assets. It is not possible to remove all risk associated with trees and infrastructure, but strategies for addressing conflict can be preventative, to reduce the risk of damage occurring or remedial, to correct damage or avoid further damage (Costello & Jones 2003).

Key aspects of City of Whittlesea's Tree Root Management program:

- The property owner is responsible for inspecting and maintaining all built structures on their land including services and that run through or adjoin private and public land.
- Certain tree root treatment work, including root pruning and root barrier/deflector installation, is sometimes required for risk management, to maintain public safety and to contain tree root growth.
- Root pruning is the practice of removing a portion of a tree's root system to mitigate potential property damage or as otherwise required. The circumstances necessitating root pruning vary, but the key is to ensure it does not impact on the health, stability or longevity of the affected tree. To meet this aim, root pruning of Council managed street trees will always be undertaken in accordance with AS 4373.
- All root pruning and root barrier installations shall be recorded.
- Aspects of tree root management may also be influenced by street tree protection requirements and underground services.
- Under its duty of care, Council will adopt a proactive approach to planting the right tree in the right place in the right way. This includes design solutions to mitigate potential root impacts if it is deemed that the 'right tree' is a large tree (i.e. has the potential to reach over 20m in height).

### **Types of damage**

#### **Tree roots and buildings**

Roots from large trees can sometimes damage buildings, but these are just one of many reasons a building may start to show signs of damage. It is important to have expert advice to establish the cause of a problem, who is responsible and how it can be resolved.

The assertion that tree roots have taken water from a clay soil causing it to shrink and the foundations to subside resulting in structural damage is an over-simplification.

It is well known that the presence of trees can contribute significantly towards the problem of subsidence, especially in clay soil areas where the soil shrinks and swells according to its moisture content. A common feature of the problem is that there is often no obvious or direct relationship between the tree and the damage to a building and there are usually a number of non-biological factors involved as well, including how the structure was constructed and whether it considered the site conditions.

The Australian Standard AS2870-2011 acknowledges that minor foundation movements occur on nearly all sites and that it is impracticable to design a footing system that will protect the building from movement under all circumstances.

The best way to prevent root damage to new buildings or other structures is to ensure they are built to the relevant industry code. If a new building will be close to existing trees, particularly on a reactive clay soil, the standard design and construction methods may need to be altered to account for these factors.

Similarly, properties may have leaking or disconnected stormwater or sewerage pipes that allow excess water to waterlog the soil close to a building. This can cause subsidence and may encourage tree roots to grow in that area. Fixing these types of problems can prevent future damage occurring.

Inadequate compaction during construction or excess moisture in foundation soils can also cause subsidence and movement in buildings.

The problem is therefore very complex in nature. The damage is often many metres distant from trees and usually involves a variety of arboricultural, spatial, geotechnical, climatic, engineering and utility issues acting at the same time.

Large or wide cracks (wider than 5mm) in the structural supporting walls of a building may indicate movement in the foundations of a building or other structural weakness.

Steps in an investigation of tree root damage:

1. Residents/property owners should notify Council if they think that Council trees are contributing to the damage. Upon notification, Council will apply a consistent process based on MAV guidelines to assess the extent to which its trees may be contributing to the damage reported.  
Should the results of this assessment show that Council's street trees are not contributing to the damage, the resident/property owner may be asked to provide further information which may include a report by a suitably qualified engineer.
2. The property owner needs to undertake an investigation into the damage and document the reasons or evidence that clearly show why they believe the Council owned tree is contributing to the damage. This may involve root sympathetic excavations within the property to locate and photograph roots and their proximity to the building or structure. If the investigation or repair works require an excavation on a Council road or footpath, they will need to obtain a road-opening permit from the City of Whittlesea.
3. For a claim to be considered, where tree roots are exposed at or under the footings and foundation of the building or structure, these roots would need to be identified as being those from the Council managed tree. Claimants may need to engage an arborist to verify the origin of the roots at their own cost.
4. If an engineer is engaged to assist in the investigation, the engineer must base their assessment on evidence and show that the footings and/or foundations were constructed to appropriate standards. The engineer should have valid professional indemnity insurance and formally sign off on the report. Reimbursement of costs associated with obtaining engineer's reports may also be considered at the time a claim is accepted.

### Tree roots and drains

Tree roots can sometimes inadvertently impact sewer and stormwater pipes. It is important to establish the cause of the problem and who is responsible for rectifying it.

A property owner is responsible for the services to their property. This includes sewer and stormwater pipes and services that run through or adjoin private and public land until they reach infrastructure drainage points such as City of Whittlesea sewer mains, street gutters or stormwater pits.

The most common cause of pipe leakage is from old terracotta pipes. Movements in the surrounding soil cause joint failure or cracking causing moisture and nutrients to leak into the soil. Failure of joints between PVC and terracotta pipes is also common. PVC pipe systems have fewer joins and rarely fail.

It is important for the property owner to consider repairing or replacing old infrastructure especially when undertaking renovations and especially on all pipes across the property boundary into Council pits and gutters.

Roots do not actively search for water, they tend to follow water gradients (if oxygen is also present) in the soil. If these lead to a leaking pipe then roots will tend to grow along lines of least resistance such as are likely to be found around cracked, poorly installed or leaking pipework. While cracked or leaking pipework may often be to blame, other factors affect how roots interact with underground water pipes, including sewers. When intact drains and other service pipes are cooler than the surrounding soil, water may condense on the outer surface and root growth may develop along the moisture gradient developed in the soil (Cutler, 1995; Coder, 1998). This can give a false impression that roots are enveloping the drain (Brennan, Patch & Stevens, 1997), but equally it can attract roots towards potentially vulnerable joints in the pipework. The cultivation of soil through the installation of services by open trenching also provides ideal conditions for root growth adjacent to underground services.

Tree roots will usually enter pipes that have a fault, which allows the tree to access the available water, nutrients and oxygen.

Tree roots can enter services via leaking joints and blocked pipes, through deteriorated seals, where the joint has failed or been dislodged or through previous damage. It is rare for a tree root to crack into a properly installed and well-maintained pipe.

Once a pipe has deteriorated or is damaged, roots from all different types of trees, plants and even grasses can grow into the pipe.

The most efficient way to prevent root damage to your services is to replace the old terracotta pipes with new PVC or UPVC ones and use pressure seals. Other methods include the type and compaction of the backfill around these services, which help prevent root growth in these areas. Mechanical forms of plumbing equipment can help control root development in pipes, however this is only a short-term solution.

What do residents/property owners do if they suspect Council managed trees contribute to damaged pipes?

Where possible the resident or property owner should carry out the repairs and ask Council to investigate. If it can be proved that Council-owned trees have caused the damage, the resident or property be able to claim for the cost of the repairs. In any event, it is best if the resident or property owner undertakes the following:

1. If the works require an excavation on a Council road or footpath, the resident/property owner will need to obtain a road-opening permit from the City.
2. Carry out any necessary repair work to avoid any further damage and/or reduce the hazard. This does not mean that Council has accepted any liability for damages. It is the property owner's decision to carry out repairs.
3. Most importantly, notify the Council of the scheduled works so that Council can arrange for an appropriate City Officer to inspect the exposed pipe during the works. This will enable all parties to confirm if Council tree roots have caused the problem or if the pipe has been damaged for some other reason.
4. While on site, the Council officer will take photos to keep on record. The resident/property owner should also keep your own records of the damage and repairs.

If the above investigations reveal the damage has been caused by council- owned trees, the resident/property owner can make a formal claim for the cost of repairs. Council will assess liability and decide as to whether Council can assist the resident/property owner with the cost of the repairs.

This approach is required for insurance and governance purposes because the works relate to a private asset and may involve spending public funds on the repair. It is important to have clear evidence for any insurance claim, particularly if there is a chance the initial damage may have been the result of other causes. The clearer the evidence provided, the greater the likelihood of a positive result in any claim.

### **Pest and disease management**

Pest and diseases are a component of the urban landscape and Council recognises that control measures will be required at times to maintain healthy and aesthetically pleasing landscapes.

Council will adopt the principles of Plant Health Care to address pest and disease management with a focus on problem prevention through appropriate tree selection, planting and tree maintenance.

When selecting tree species for the City of Whittlesea's streets, priority will be given to species that are known to be pest and disease resistant. However, there will be situations where the existing street tree species may be under threat but its on-going use is imperative considering its strong contribution to landscape character or cultural importance.

Pest and disease management will be approached in the following ways:

- ▶ Tree managers will have a thorough understanding of the biology of the plants and key pests in relation to the ecosystems they are managing. On-going training and education will occur for the staff to maintain current best practice approach to pest management.
- ▶ Council will support research into biological controls for pests and diseases that pose a threat.

- ▶ If a pest outbreak is identified and damage thresholds exceed accepted levels and other trees are at risk, all possible action will be taken to effectively decrease the risk to other trees from the pest outbreak.
- ▶ An integrated approach to pest management will be adopted that employs methods and materials that preserve and augment the ecosystem while facilitating permanent control of the pest.
- ▶ Advice and management programs will be sought from other agencies or pest control regulator, for example Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to ensure the best approach is being adopted for any pest outbreak.
- ▶ Trees will be removed when they are infected with an epidemic insect or disease where the recommended control is not applicable and removal is the recommended practice to prevent transmission.
- ▶ Species of tree will be selected that are known to be pest and disease resistant.
- ▶ Monitoring systems will be developed to check pests and tree health regularly.
- ▶ Trees that are recognised woody weed species will be removed when opportunities are presented through the normal management of the City of Whittlesea tree population.
- ▶ If stakeholders suspect nearby Council trees of harbouring termites that can damage their homes, they will need to provide Council with written documentation outlining the species of termite observed and detailing the extent of the damage caused. Requests for termite treatment of street trees will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be referred to Council's principle contractor who will undertake the assessment and carry out all treatments as required.
- ▶ To better protect newly constructed dwellings in the municipality from termite damage Council will continue to investigate the benefits of declaring the municipality (or sections of it) as 'Termite Prone'.

### **Tree inventory**

The foundation of an effective street tree management and maintenance program is a detailed tree inventory. Council will maintain a dynamic inventory of the street tree resource wherein proactive tree management activities are recorded.

The inventory provides a current record of the street tree population. It allows planning, scheduling, budgeting and monitoring of maintenance activities and contains vital data to facilitate long-term assessment projections and analysis of the condition of the street tree population.

The tree inventory will be utilised for asset value determination and insurance purposes.

The tree inventory will be integrated into Council's Geographic Information System (GIS). It will provide Council the ability to conduct spatial analysis and strategic placement of the street tree population, which will become more important as the impacts of population growth and climate change are felt in the City of Whittlesea.

### **Canopy Cover**

Council will also establish a methodology for calculating the municipality's urban street tree canopy cover. This will allow Council to easily benchmark its progress in providing adequate tree cover for areas of need in the City of Whittlesea e.g. areas of high socio-economic disadvantage, retail and commercial areas. This can be calculated through a number of methods available to Council:

- i-Tree Canopy tool
- LiDAR and NDVI cover which will need to be undertaken by the GIS team
- Canopy width measurements taken as part of tree inventory

Canopy cover is to be measured every five years to determine progress, commencing in 2016. This is a more valuable tool than simply calculating tree numbers as it can determine the overall benefit provided by trees such as shading, air pollution reduction and stormwater interception.

#### 4. Tree Protection

Street trees shall be protected at all times, to the negative impacts of construction and other activities such as maintenance that threaten tree condition, safety or amenity.

Street trees are subject to a variety of pressures, conflicts, changes to land-use and public requests. These pressures lead to damaged trees which may affect their function and viability in the landscape. The primary goal of tree protection is the long-term survival and viability of a tree.

Protecting street trees is a multi-departmental, community wide endeavour. Protecting and maintaining healthy, safe and aesthetically pleasing street trees is vital to Council achieving its desired landscape, social and environmental objectives for the City.

The Australian Standard AS 4970-2009 Protection of trees on development sites is used as a guide in the allocation of Tree Protection Zones for trees.

Considering the unpredictability of tree root growth in urban landscapes, it is impractical to prescribe a symmetrical tree protection zone to street trees. Tree protection measures, as outlined in the Technical Guidelines and Appendix 2, will be implemented for street trees threatened by construction impacts. To eliminate the possibility of construction work undertaken around street trees threatening public safety, a minimum distance, the structural root zone (SRZ), as outlined in AS4970, shall be maintained for street trees at all times.

Maintaining the structural integrity of Council managed trees is paramount in the risk management process.

Major root pruning will not be permitted without the approval of the Parks and Open Space Department. All proposed construction/excavation works within the root zones of Council managed trees should be approved by the Parks and Open Space Department.

#### Protection of River Red Gums

Mature River Red Gums in an open plains grassland environment are generally recognised as the most important visual and environmental feature of the City. Remnant River Red Gums are protected by the City of Whittlesea Planning Scheme, specifically, Clause 22.10. This clause has enabled the City of Whittlesea to retain as many River Red Gums as possible. The specific tree protection guideline applicable to River Red Gums is endorsed by the Department of Environment Water Land and Planning has proven effective in protecting these trees throughout the subdivision development of the City.

#### Vandalised trees

The act of wilfully vandalising or poisoning trees breaches Council's General Municipal Law (Local Law) and undermines all of Council's efforts to sustain trees in the public realm in a safe and aesthetically pleasing manner. The Local Law states that "Unless with the written approval of Council, a person must not in any way interfere with roadside or park land trees; or plant trees or shrubs on roadsides".

The illegal action of tree vandalism has led to the destruction of many valuable public trees and requires intensive management regimes that impact on Council's time and resources. The management of the urban green space to ensure it is of a high standard can help to reduce the prevalence of crime and vandalism.

To address the wider issue of tree vandalism, Council will take the following steps:



- Educate the public and improve public perceptions of trees, including:
  - Encouraging people to report vandalism when seen
  - Reminding people that it is against the law to vandalise a Council tree
- Where street trees are suspected of vandalism, erect signs to inform the public as to what has happened to the tree and reinforce Council's commitment to trees.
- Replace vandalised trees, particularly younger trees, as soon as is practicable to reinforce Council's commitment to trees.
- Vandalism is a significant cause of young tree mortality. Trees damaged or vandalised to the point that their replacement is required shall be removed, the site reinstated to grass and the vacant site noted for subsequent planting programs.
- Larger tree stock shall be used in areas known to be prone to vandalism.

## 5. Tree Removals

The City of Whittlesea will investigate all tree management options before recommending tree removal. Council will consider the contribution each street tree makes to neighbourhood character, livability, wildlife habitat and the tree's role in adaption to climate change when making all tree management and removal decisions.

Street trees provide significant benefits to the community by way of improved amenity and reduction in the Urban Heat Island Effect, therefore Council will not support individual requests to have trees removed, or subjected to additional pruning, in order to:

- ▶ Reduce or eliminate leaf litter or tree debris
- ▶ Improve private amenity
- ▶ Increase car park numbers
- ▶ Reduce overshadowing and/or preservation of solar access and
- ▶ Preserve lines of sight to advertising boards.

There are circumstances in which tree removal is an acceptable management option for public trees. In this regard, tree removal may be required:

- when trees pose an unacceptable risk to human health and safety or infrastructure
- when trees pose an unacceptable risk to private and/or public infrastructure.

To assess and validate these risks, Council will apply the process outlined in Section 2.

Tree removal may also be required to:

- facilitate Council approved development and infrastructure improvements
- maintain a healthy urban tree population and/or control epidemic pest/disease outbreaks
- eliminate environmental woody weeds.

Generally, removal of dead and dangerous trees is undertaken during the proactive urban area street tree inspection and pruning program.

Tree removal will also occur in response to emergency, such as a burst water main, or storm events. In emergency situations notification to affected residents may not be possible prior to removal.

Tree removal and replacement programs will also be instigated based on the low useful life expectancy (ULE) trees identified in the tree inventory and within the 10-year Street Tree Renewal Program Plan.

Council will consult with the community about all major projects involving tree removal.

Requests for tree removal will be subject to the tree removal request assessment procedure and will only be accommodated when one or more of the following criteria are met:

- ▶ The tree is dead or in severe decline
- ▶ The tree or tree group poses a very high potential risk that cannot be corrected by pruning, transplanting or other contemporary arboricultural treatments. In this case, the MAV tree risk assessment tool used by Council's arborists must identify that the tree or tree group pose an unacceptable level of risk

- ▶ The tree severely interferes with a neighbouring tree to the extent that neither tree can develop to its full potential. In this case, the more desirable tree will be preserved
- ▶ The aesthetic values of the tree or tree group are so low that the site is visually enhanced by the removal of the tree or tree group
- ▶ All efforts to develop a technical solution to preserve the tree or tree group are considered and implementation of the technical alternative will not be cost effective
- ▶ The tree is found to be contributing to damage to public or private property and no other viable means are available to rectify the situation
- ▶ The tree or tree group is infected with an epidemic insect or disease where the recommended control is not applicable and removal is the recommended practice to prevent transmission
- ▶ The tree or tree group is recognised as an environmental woody weed species
- ▶ The tree or group of trees is included in Council's street tree renewal program.

Council acknowledges that all trees will shed debris, leaves, bark, flowers, or fruit at some time during a given growing season. Tree selection will aim to avoid the use of trees that drop excessive debris, particularly fruit, which can cause trip hazards. Debris alone will not be the sole criteria for the removal of a street tree.

Similarly, some street trees may be considered as contributors to seasonal allergies or hay fever. However, street trees will not be automatically removed if they are reported as a potential allergen. Residents reporting trees as a cause of allergic symptoms must provide a medical statement from a specialist in the relevant field supporting their claim. The certificate should certify that the specific tree a person identifies as causing a specific allergenic problem is significantly diminishing the quality of life that person enjoys.

Decisions on tree hazard and associated risk rating will be made after the tree has been inspected and assessed by a suitably qualified person.

## 6. Tree Value

Street Trees will be financially valued proportionate with the many benefits that they provide to the community. Council will charge a cost recovery fee to ensure the community are compensated for the loss of street trees as a result of development.

When a stakeholder makes a request to modify Council land which results in the removal of a Council street tree asset, a cost recovery fee will be charged by Council.

The fee is charged to enable Council to recover the value associated with removing any existing street trees as a result of development. It ensures the community are compensated for the loss of the trees and also allows Council to replant new trees as required, along the same frontage where possible, and maintain the replacement trees for a period of two summers.

The fee structure is outlined below and is structured such that small trees i.e. those less than 5m in height, currently attract a cost recovery fee of \$500 inclusive of GST. Cost recovery fees applicable to Council trees over this size however are calculated using the following formula:

Revised Burnley Method (ATV) + Purchase + Planting (BASE VALUE) + two summers establishment.

Table 3: Cost recovery fee structure associated with street tree replacement

STREET TREES	CURRENT COST Inc. GST FY 18/19
Cost Recovery and Replacement Fee (New or Juvenile); 5m in height or less	\$500
Cost Recovery and Replacement Fee (Other)	(ATV) + Purchase + Planting + 2 Summers Establishment = ATV + 145 + 78 + 271

This fee is subject to change based on approval from the Finance Department.

### Community Engagement

Council will engage thoroughly with residents about street tree planting and management in their local areas.

An improved understanding of street trees and urban greenery will be provided through:

- a. Regular articles in local papers and Council newsletters on trends relating to urban greenery covering a range of related topics such as health and wellbeing, the importance of green in growing cities, innovative ways to bring nature into the City, nature's role in shaping perceptions of neighbourhood satisfaction
- b. Website content dedicated to information about the City of Whittlesea's urban street trees i.e.
  - i. Benefits of trees including Q&A's specifically about benefits of street trees to the municipality
  - ii. Myths about trees
  - iii. Contact Council about your street tree
  - iv. Street Tree Management Plan
  - v. Community Activities
  - vi. Information about the proactive urban street tree inspection and pruning program
- c. Consultation about tree selection for the Street Tree Renewal Program will be undertaken with residents where street tree planting and renewal will occur through written correspondence.
- d. Advice on tree removal where appropriate

City of Whittlesea officers, councillors, residents and stakeholders were consulted in the development of the 2016 Plan. A summary of the community consultation responses is presented in Appendix 3.

## Actions for ongoing street tree management

Street trees are an important Council asset.

The following actions have been developed to ensure that street trees remain an important Council asset. It is imperative that their management processes are regularly reviewed and that street tree information is regularly communicated to the community.

Council will undertake the following actions over the course of this Street Tree Management Plan which will run for 10 years to the year 2026. At this time, the Policy, the Technical Guidelines, the 10-year Planting Renewal Program Plan, and the species selection palette should all continue to be reviewed and updated where appropriate. The species selection palette should be removed from the Plan and maintained as a separate list.

Council will:

1. Actively promote the benefits of street trees, current works and relevant information through a range of communication tools e.g. Council website, social media, local news outlets
2. Include diagrams on the website on best practice street tree management that is relevant to residents e.g. how to plant a tree, planting in hard paved areas, species selection based on site analysis.
3. Integrate street tree benefits and outcomes into the following documents as and when reviews arise:
  - i) Council Plan
  - ii) Environment Sustainability Strategy
  - iii) Open Space strategy
  - iv) Road Management Plan: incorporate effects of trees on traffic calming
  - v) Stormwater Management Plan
  - vi) Climate Change Adaptation plan
  - vii) Green Wedge Management Plan
  - viii) Playspace Planning
  - ix) Whittlesea Township Strategy
  - x) Integrated Transport Strategy/summary
  - xi) All Masterplans and Structure Plans
  - xii) City of Whittlesea Community Plan
  - xiii) Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Planning and Climate Change
  - xiv) Neighbourhood Character Study (when commenced).
4. Continue to consult local residents on street tree planting program
5. Update the Developer Guidelines to reflect best practice street tree management as per this Plan.
6. Conduct information seminars for all contractors and relevant internal staff on various aspects of best practice street tree management e.g. quality control, tree planting, pruning etc.
7. Print and distribute fact sheets for all relevant contractors and staff on best practice street tree management. Also, to be handed out at pre-commencement meetings for developer works.
8. Develop a Street Tree Communications plan to map out activities and target audiences for improving information sharing between Council and the community
9. Advocate to include the tree inventory in Councils asset management system
10. Measure canopy cover and set methodology so it can be measured easily every five years
11. Build regional relationships advocating principles and objectives of STMP: developers, NAGA, conferences, MPA, other growth area Councils. Ask NAGA to be a conduit for this discussion.
12. Review best practice biannually and ensure technical manuals, standards and guidelines are updated

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revised Draft Street Tree Management Plan July 2019

13. Strengthen planning permit conditions around the protection and retention of street trees
14. Coordinate the Street Tree Renewal Program with the Road Rehabilitation Program
15. Investigate increasing street sweeping frequency where tree debris is excessive due to species type
16. Implement a large tree management program which includes:
  - Increasing proactive inspections towards an annual program for trees which are large, older or under electrical powerlines and
  - Widening verges to create more space for existing larger trees where appropriate.
17. Develop and implement tree removal request and tree root damage assessment procedures
18. Develop fact sheets for tree removal request and tree root damage assessment procedures
19. Develop a drought response plan which includes:
  - Street Tree Renewal and Annual Street Tree Planting Programs may be placed on hold subject to water availability
  - Street Tree Renewal funds will be diverted to maintain existing tree health where required
  - Once the drought has broken, Street Tree Renewal and Annual Street Tree Planting Programs will resume to ensure gaps in streets are filled and dead trees removed and replaced as required
  - A community engagement strategy to tell the community what we are doing in response to the drought.

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## Appendix 1

### TPZ requirements

#### Tree protection fencing

Street tree protection fencing used must:

- ▶ allow for free and clear passage of pedestrians on the footpath and adjacent portion of the street;
- ▶ provide for clear visibility of fire hydrants, driveway access, crosswalks, etc. (mesh fencing should be used).

Australian Standard AS 4687-2007 Temporary fencing and hoardings provides guidelines for temporary fencing. The TPZ fencing must be secured to restrict access. Existing perimeter fencing can be incorporated into the protective fencing. Signs identifying the TPZ are to be placed on the fencing.

Tree fencing shall be erected before demolition or construction begins and remain in place until final inspection. No advertising material is to be placed/displayed on the TPZ fencing at any time.

Groups of trees can be incorporated into one fenced area using linear fencing to encapsulate the group.

An example of signage for TPZ includes a black sign with the words 'Tree Protection Zone – No Access'.

An example of appropriate TPZ fencing around a street tree is an image of a street tree on a nature strip. Surrounding the tree is a temporary fence, made of wire, secured by concrete feet, measuring about six feet high.

#### No fencing

If no fencing can be installed around a street tree to protect it during development then the street trees will require trunk and branch protection. An example of trunk protection can be seen to right. The trunks are to be loosely wrapped in hessian to approximately 50 mm thick to act as padding. This could be secured with some form of tape while 45 mm thick wooden slats are placed around the trunk and firmly secured. Caution shall be used to avoid damaging any bark or branches. Major scaffold limbs may also require this treatment (dependent on any scaffolding or gantries installed). To finish off, para webbing is to be wrapped around the timber slats to improve visibility and reduce public risk.

## Appendix 2

Welcome to Wurundjeri Land

Wominjeka Wurundjeri Bik

The City of Whittlesea recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the traditional owners of this place.

This report was produced by Tree Logic and Urban Forest Consulting in conjunction with officers, Councillors, residents and stakeholders of the City of Whittlesea in 2015/2016. This version of the report was reviewed in 2019 by officers.

Tree Logic is an arboricultural consultancy providing professional advice about trees and street tree management, as well as engagement and community education programs relating to the essential role that trees play in cities and towns.

Urban Forest Consulting provides strategic and technical advice to help green cities across Australia.

Example of Banyules statement on the web

Our trees are managed by qualified staff who:

- Inspect each tree for safety once every two years;
- Remove dead trees as required;
- Routinely prune each tree to improve its structure once every two years;
- Ensure our trees are pruned to avoid power lines as per legislative requirements;
- Inspect and manage, as a priority, trees suspected of being a hazard;
- Respond to over 3,000 service requests from residents each year;
- Manage tree related pest and disease issues;
- Provide a 24-hour emergency service, particularly during and following storms;
- Identify vacant sites suitable for tree planting;
- Ensure that trees are protected from construction and civil works.

## 6.4 CORPORATE SERVICES

#### 6.4.1 CONTRACT 2017-93 - MS4333 - 2017 MICROSOFT ENTERPRISE LICENSING AGREEMENT - CONTRACT VARIATION

**Attachments:**                    1      2017-93 MS4333-2017 Microsoft Enterprise Licensing Agreement - Confidential

Confidential in accordance with Section 89(2)(d) of the Local Government Act 1989 as it contains details relating to contractual matters.

**Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services**

**Author:** Team Leader Network Operations

## RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

It is recommended that Contract Number 2017-53 for MS4333-2017 Microsoft Enterprise Licensing Agreement:

- Is varied by \$170,000 (excluding GST)
- To a new contract sum of \$1,304,344.14 (excluding GST)

### KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES

The contract manager advises that:

- This contract was awarded to Winc Australia Pty Ltd
- The contract is performing satisfactorily
- The variation is required to accommodate the increase in Microsoft licensing fees as a result of current and future staff growth and the introduction of a new financial monitoring system utilising Microsoft products.

**REPORT****BACKGROUND**

This contract was awarded to Winc Australia Pty Ltd. A summary of the financial performance of the contract is provided in the confidential attachment.

The contract commenced on 1 July 2017 and the current approved end date is 30 June 2020.

**VARIATION**

The contract is performing satisfactorily however a variation of \$170,000 (excluding GST) is now required to cover increased number of staff utilising Microsoft's licensed products for the remainder of the Contract, as part of the mobility rollout. License growth is not just due to staff growth but also reflects an increase in roles that now require computer access. As the number of staff that interact with technology increases so will our licensing, this is estimated at \$80,000 for the remainder of the contract period. A new Financial system is also anticipated within the next 12 months at an estimated license cost of \$90,000. As both of these items are purchased utilising the Microsoft Enterprise agreement the total variation is anticipated to be \$170,000. Further details of the requested variation are provided in the confidential attachment.

**LINK TO STRATEGIC RISKS**

**Strategic Risk** *Information Management - Failure to effectively manage Council's information and records, including IT systems*

Licensing is required to access Microsoft Office 365 product suite as a set of tools utilised for creating and modifying office documents eg email, word, excel.

Licensing is required to access Microsoft Dynamics 365 product suite as a set of tools utilised to maintain accurate financial records and reporting.

**LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN**

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Enabling the vision</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>Making it happen</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Our Council monitors and evaluates all of its operations</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Organisational Sustainability</b>

This is an enabling service associated with IT Infrastructure services allowing all four goals of the Whittlesea 2040 plan to be achieved.

**DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Under section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

## CONCLUSION

Variation of the contract is sought in accordance with the contract's terms and conditions and Council's applicable policy and procedures.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT Council resolve, in relation to Contract No. 2017-93, for Microsoft Enterprise Licensing to:**

- 1. Approve a variation of \$170,000 (excluding GST) making a revised contract sum of \$1,304,344.14 (excluding GST).**
- 2. Approve the funding arrangements detailed in the confidential attachment.**



#### 6.4.2 UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

- Attachments:**
- 1 Unconfirmed Minutes of Audit & Risk Committee Meeting - 30 May 2019** [↓](#)
  - 2 In-Camera Minutes - For Councillors Only - Confidential**  
Confidential in accordance with Section 89(2)(h) of the Local Government Act 1989 as it contains details relating to any other matter which the Council or special committee considers would prejudice the Council or any person.
  - 3 Strategic Risk: Governance - Councillors** [↓](#)
- Responsible Officer:** Director Corporate Services
- Author:** Internal Compliance Officer

#### RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

The Audit & Risk Committee met on 30 May 2019. The minutes of that meeting are attached for the information of Council.

As part of the Committee's discussion, a presentation was provided on the updated Strategic Risk: *Governance – Councillors*. The Committee resolved for a copy of the risk assessment considered by the Committee to be provided to Council at this meeting.

That Council resolve to:

1. Note the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 30 May 2019.
2. Note the Strategic Risk assessment: Governance – Councillors.

#### KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES

As required by the Audit & Risk Committee Charter, minutes of meetings are to be provided to Council after each Audit & Risk Committee meeting.



**REPORT****BACKGROUND**

The Audit & Risk Committee is an independent advisory committee of Council and its role is to report to Council and provide appropriate advice and recommendations on matters presented to it. It acts in this capacity by monitoring, reviewing and advising on issues within its scope of responsibility and assisting Council's governance obligations to its community.

The Audit & Risk Committee considered a number of reports at the meeting held 30 May 2019, as well as confirming minutes from the previous meeting held on 7 March 2019.

Main agenda items included:

- Audit & Risk Committee Work Plan
- Financial Performance Report for Period Ended 31 March 2019
- Risk Management
  - Toxic Chemical Storage
  - Risk Management Update
  - Councillor Governance Strategic Risk Review
- Internal Audit:
  - Internal Audit Status Report
  - Internal Audit Reviews: Social Inclusion and Partnership Framework
  - Outstanding Action Items Report from Previous Internal Audits
  - Strategic Internal Audit Plan
  - Review of Internal Auditor's Performance
- External Audit:
  - External Audit Strategy
  - Outstanding Action Items from External Audit Reports
  - Interim Management Letter – Year Ending 30 June 2019
- Internal Compliance Reviews
- Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Standards
- Review Compliance with Policies Related to Use of Motor Vehicles

**Strategic Risk Review: Governance - Councillors**

At the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 7 March 2019, the Committee requested that the Strategic Risk *Governance – Councillors* be updated to reflect information provided in-camera to the Committee at that meeting.

At its meeting on 30 May 2019, the Audit & Risk Committee was provided with an update on the process undertaken and outcomes from the review of the Strategic Risk: Governance - Councillors. The Committee received and reviewed a copy of the risk assessment undertaken and resolved for that the assessment be provided to Council at this meeting. The risk assessment is provided as Attachment 3. Independent members of the Committee also

requested that they be provided with an update of any feedback received from Councillors in relation to this risk assessment.

## LINK TO STRATEGIC RISKS

**Strategic Risk** *Governance - Management - Ineffective governance of Council's operations and activities by Management resulting in either a legislative or policy breach*

The Audit & Risk Committee assists Council in monitoring its governance requirements and provides advice to Council to assist with fulfilling its oversight responsibilities.

## LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Enabling the vision</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>Making it happen</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Our Council monitors and evaluates all of its operations</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Organisational Sustainability</b>

The establishment of the Audit & Risk Committee and the reports it receives are reflective of Council's commitment to the implementation of good governance principles. The Committee provides advice to Council to assist with fulfilling its oversight responsibilities for the financial and non-financial reporting process, internal controls, the audit process, risk management and Council's process for monitoring compliance with legislation and regulations and the Code of Conduct.

## DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

## CONCLUSION

The Audit & Risk Committee met on 30 May 2019 to consider the items included on its Agenda. As required by the Committee's Charter, minutes from that meeting are to be provided to Council.

At this meeting, the Committee considered an item in relation to the Strategic Risk assessment undertaken in relation to the *Governance – Councillors* risk. The Committee resolved for this assessment to be provided to Council at this meeting.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT Council resolve to:**

- 1. Note the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 30 May 2019.**
- 2. Note the Strategic Risk assessment: *Governance – Councillors*.**





**City of  
Whittlesea**

**Audit & Risk Committee Minutes**

4.30pm Thursday  
30 May 2019

**Location:** Conference Room 1, Civic Centre

	Present	Apology
<b>Members:</b>		
<b>Independents</b>		
Geoff Harry, Chairperson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michael Ulbrick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Theresa Glab	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Councillors</b>		
Cr Stevan Kozmevski	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cr Sam Alessi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Officers:</b>		
Simon Overland, Chief Executive Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helen Sui, Director Corporate Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amy Montalti, Manager Finance & Assets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
David Gauci, Internal Compliance Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frank Joyce, Manager Corporate Accountability & Performance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Samantha Boyle, Risk Coordinator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Julian Edwards, Manager Building & Planning (Item 7.1)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Belgin Besim, Manager Community Building & Planning (Item 8.2)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>In attendance:</b>		
Martin Thompson, Partner, Crowe Horwath	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kathie Teasdale, Partner, RSD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Audit & Risk Committee Minutes  
Thursday 30 May 2019



## Matters in Discussion

### 1. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

### 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

#### ITEM 2.1 Resolution:

That the minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 7 March 2019 be noted and confirmed.

Moved by: Ms Glab  
Seconded by: Cr Alessi

CARRIED

### 3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

#### ITEM 3.1 The Outstanding Items Register from Previous Meetings was presented for discussion. The Committee briefly discussed the items listed and requested the following:

- A further update be provided regarding the controls established / to be established to protect confidential information, in particular, what processes / systems are in place to track (audit trail) who has accessed information. The Committee requested this information be provided to members as soon as possible.

#### Resolution:

That the Matters Arising from Previous meetings be noted.

Moved by: Cr Alessi  
Seconded by: Ms Glab

CARRIED

### 4. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

#### ITEM 4.1 The Annual Work Plan Matrix was presented for general discussion. The Committee noted the amendments made to the Work Plan to include the Agenda Item number against each Charter requirement.

The Committee also queried the timing of the development of the Capital Management Strategy and requested it be presented at the 28 November 2019 Committee meeting.

### 5. CEO'S REPORT ON COMPLIANCE/NON-COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION AND POLICIES INCLUDING TENDERING AND PROCUREMENT

#### ITEM 5.1 This item was considered as part of an in-camera session with the Committee, CEO and Director Corporate Services.

The Committee requested that future CEO reports also include an update on

**Audit & Risk Committee Minutes  
Thursday 30 May 2019**



business activities, as well as the update on compliance / non-compliance with legislation and policies.

**6. FINANCIAL REPORT**

**ITEM 6.1 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2019**

A copy of the Financial Performance Report for the period ended 31 March 2019 was presented, with management responding to questions from the Committee.

The Manager Finance & Assets addressed the query received prior to the meeting from the Chairperson in relation to the difference between expenditure on assets appearing in the Cashflow Statement compared to the year to date value of capital works expenditure appearing in the Statement of Capital Works.

Resolution:

**That the Committee note the Financial Performance Report for the period ended 31 March 2019.**

Moved by: Mr Ulbrick

Seconded by: Ms Glab

CARRIED

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

**ITEM 7.1 TOXIC CHEMICAL STORAGE**

Management provided the Committee with an update on actions taken in response to the illegal toxic chemical storage in Epping issue that was recently reported in the media and responded to questions from the Committee.

The Committee queried the status of relationships Council has with state authorities when it comes to addressing such issues and suggested it may be worth Council considering entering into MOUs with these organisations. Management advised that whilst no formal relationships have been established, all agencies worked well in conjunction with each other and steps have been taken to address any gaps identified.

Management also advised that this issue has presented an opportunity for Council to review, understand and consider how best to address and respond to other issues when they are related to Council.

Discussion concluded with the Committee asking if this issue appears in the Risk Register. Management advised it has been addressed under operational risks.

Resolution:

**That the Committee note the report and the current range of initiatives being implemented.**

Moved by: Mr Ulbrick

Seconded by: Ms Glab

CARRIED

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Thursday 30 May 2019



**ITEM 7.2 RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Manager Corporate Accountability & Performance and Risk Coordinator presented the Risk Management report and responded to questions from the Committee.

The process for reviewing operational risks was outlined and the timeframe for reporting on operational risks to the Committee was discussed. Reporting timeframes will be adjusted to best fit with the Committee's Work Plan responsibilities.

The process undertaken to conduct Council's risk maturity assessment was also discussed. The Committee requested that future updates including the Risk Maturity Diagram also show previous maturity levels.

Resolution:

**That the Committee:**

1. Note the progress made in relation to managing the operational risks.
2. Endorse the change in the timing of reporting of the operational risks to the Committee, subject to consideration of other Work Plan responsibilities.
3. Note the current risk maturity assessment and goals.
4. Note the explicit definition of risk within ELT and Council reporting.
5. Note the status of the treatments against the strategic risks.
6. Note the status of the insurance tender process.

Moved by: Cr Alessi  
Seconded by: Mr Ulbrick

CARRIED

**ITEM 7.3 COUNCILLOR GOVERNANCE STRATEGIC RISK REVIEW**

The Manager Corporate Accountability & Performance presented the review undertaken into the Governance – Councillors Strategic Risk and responded to questions from the Committee. An overview of the process undertaken to develop this risk was provided, as well as next steps.

The Committee noted that the information presented was intended to be provided to Council at their 2 July 2019 meeting, via reporting from this Committee. The Committee requested that its independent members be advised of the outcomes from presenting the Governance – Councillors Strategic Risk to Council.

Discussion concluded with the Committee complimenting management on the quality of information provided in the risk management reports.

Resolution:

**That:**

1. The Committee note the revised Governance - Councillors Strategic Risk.
2. The updated Governance - Councillors Strategic Risk assessment is included as an attachment to the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee so that Council are informed of the risk assessment and planned treatments.
3. The six-monthly review of Strategic Risks will occur in July/August 2019

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and be brought to the Committee meeting in August 2019.

Moved by: Ms Glab  
Seconded by: Cr Alessi

CARRIED

## 8. INTERNAL AUDIT

### ITEM 8.1

Crowe Horwath presented the Internal Audit Status Report and responded to questions from the Committee.

#### Resolution:

**That the Committee note the Internal Audit Status Report.**

Moved by: Mr Ulbrick  
Seconded by: Ms Glab

CARRIED

### ITEM 8.2 INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEWS

- Social Inclusion

Crowe Horwath presented the Social Inclusion report and gave an overview of the findings. Officers responded to the report and questions from the Committee. Management noted that the findings were positive and provided a clear path forward for improving outcomes for the Community. Management also confirmed that they were comfortable with the target dates of management actions included in the report.

The Committee briefly discussed ways in which the outcomes from this internal audit could be presented to Council. The CEO advised that he would give consideration to the most appropriate approach.

- Partnership Framework

Crowe Horwath presented the Partnership Framework report and gave an overview of the findings. Officers responded to the report and questions from the Committee. Management also confirmed that they were comfortable with the target dates of management actions included in the report.

The Committee acknowledged the quality of both internal audit reports.

#### Resolution

**That the Committee note the contents and findings of Crowe Horwath's internal audit reviews: Social Inclusion and Partnership Framework.**

Moved by: Cr Alessi  
Seconded by: Mr Ulbrick

CARRIED

### ITEM 8.3 OUTSTANDING ACTION ITEMS FROM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

The Outstanding Action Items Report from Previous Internal Audits was presented. Management responding to questions from the Committee.



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Resolution:

**That the report of Outstanding Action Items from Previous Internal Audit Reports be received and noted.**

Moved by: Ms Glab  
Seconded by: Cr Alessi

CARRIED

**ITEM 8.4 STRATEGIC INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN**

Crowe Horwath presented their Strategic Internal Audit Plan (Plan) and responded to questions from the Committee. A brief overview of how the Plan was developed was provided.

The Committee noted that the Summary of Council's Strategic Risks table provided in the Plan did not link to internal audits to be undertaken or previously undertaken. The Committee requested that this table be updated so that each risk is linked to the relevant internal audits, as well as other assurance activities being undertaken by Council.

The Committee also noted that the Plan did not include any coverage in relation to capital works / infrastructure. Management / Crowe Horwath advised that they will review the Plan and give consideration to including an audit in relation to capital works / infrastructure in either year two or three of the Plan. An update will be provided to the Committee at the 22 August 2019 meeting.

Resolution:

**That the Committee approve the Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2019/2020 and the Strategic Internal Audit Plan for 2019/2020 - 2021/2022, subject to the changes requested by the Committee**

Moved by: Mr Ulbrick  
Seconded by: Ms Glab

CARRIED

**ITEM 8.5 REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDITOR'S PERFORMANCE**

The performance review of the Internal Auditor was discussed. Crowe Horwath advised the Committee of changes to be made to address some of the feedback provided through the performance review.

Resolution:

**That the performance of the Internal Auditor be noted.**

Moved by: Cr Alessi  
Seconded by: Mr Ulbrick

CARRIED

**9. EXTERNAL AUDIT**

**ITEM 9.1 EXTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY**

Ms Teasdale from RSD presented the External Audit Strategy (Strategy) for the year

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ending 30 June 2019, highlighted key points of the Strategy and changes from the previous year.

The Committee noted that the timetable included in the Strategy did not make any reference to the processes / steps involving the Committee. The Committee requested that the timetable be updated by RSD to reflect all steps undertaken, in particular those involving the Committee, as part of the annual external audit process. Ms Teasdale advised that the template used to develop the timetable was provided by the Auditor-General, however, did not see any reason why it could not be amended. The Committee requested that Ms Teasdale provide feedback to the Auditor-General, that it is this Committee's view that the Strategy should include all requirements needed to successfully undertake the annual external audit (i.e. Audit & Risk Committee processes) and not just those required of the Auditor-General or its agents.

Discussion concluded with Management confirming that they were on track to present the audited Financial Statements and Performance Statement at the Committee meeting to be held on 22 August 2019.

Resolution

**That the Committee note the Audit Strategy for the year ending 30 June 2019.**

Moved by: Ms Glab

Seconded by: Cr Alessi

CARRIED

**ITEM 9.2 EXTERNAL ACTION ITEMS FROM EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS**

The Outstanding Action Items Report from External Audit reports was presented for discussion. Management noted that substantial work has been undertaken relating to land improvement assets and their accounting treatment, with agreement reached between the external auditor and Council.

Resolution:

**That the report of Outstanding Action Items from External Audit Reports be received and noted.**

Moved by: Cr Alessi

Seconded by: Mr Ulbrick

CARRIED

**ITEM 9.3 INTERIM MANAGEMENT LETTER - YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2019**

The Interim Management Letter for the year ending 30 June 2019 was presented. Ms Teasdale noted that one new issue was identified in relation to Corporate Credit Cards controls.

Resolution:

**That the Committee note the Interim Management Letter - Year ending 30 June 2019.**

Moved by: Mr Ulbrick

Seconded by: Ms Glab

CARRIED

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## 10. COMPLIANCE

### ITEM 10.1 INTERNAL COMPLIANCE REVIEWS

An update on the status of Internal Compliance Reviews undertaken since the last meeting was provided, with officers responding to questions from the Committee. In particular, the review undertaken in relation to the implementation of the EziTracker software to manage Home Support Worker timesheet processing was discussed.

Discussion centred around the processes established within Council to manage IT related projects, with management providing an update on changes being implemented to improve culture, the change management process and frameworks for non-capital works projects.

The Committee requested a report be provided at the 28 November 2019 Committee meeting outlining progress against the recommended actions included in the Internal Compliance Review report, as well as changes made by Management to improve the project management framework for smaller / IT related projects.

#### Resolution:

**That the Committee note the Internal Compliance Reviews report.**

Moved by: Cr Alessi  
Seconded by: Mr Ulbrick

CARRIED

### ITEM 10.2 CODE OF CONDUCT

An update on the review of the Code of Conduct for Staff and Others was provided.

The Committee noted that the Code of Conduct did not specifically address conduct related to children and requested that this be included in either the Code of Conduct or Council's Child Safe Policy.

#### Resolution:

**That the Committee note the update on the Code of Conduct.**

Moved by: Ms Glab  
Seconded by: Cr Alessi

CARRIED

### ITEM 10.3 CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

An update on the process undertaken by Council to implement the Child Safe Standards was provided.

#### Resolution:

**That the Committee note the update on the implementation of the Child Safe Standards.**

Moved by: Mr Ulbrick  
Seconded by: Ms Glab

CARRIED

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**ITEM 10.4 REVIEW COMPLIANCE WITH POLICIES RELATED TO USE OF MOTOR VEHICLES**

The Director Corporate Services provided the Committee with an update on activities being undertaken in relation to Council's fleet of motor vehicles. The Committee requested a further update be provided at the 28 November 2019 Committee meeting.

Resolution:

**That the Committee note the update on policies related to motor vehicles.**

Moved by: Cr Alessi  
Seconded by: Mr Ulbrick

CARRIED

**11. OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ITEM 11.1 UPDATE ON SIGNIFICANT LEGAL MATTERS**

This item was considered as part of an in-camera session with the Committee, CEO and Director Corporate Services.

**ITEM 11.2 IN-CAMERA MINUTES - 7 MARCH 2019**

Resolution:

**That the minutes of the in-camera session held on 7 March 2019 be noted and confirmed.**

Moved by: Ms Glab  
Seconded by: Cr Alessi

CARRIED

**12. CORRESPONDENCE**

Nil

**13. GENERAL BUSINESS ITEMS**

The Director Corporate Services advised the Committee that the Valuer General has finalised the 2019 General Valuation, reducing the potential risks discussed at the 7 March 2019 Committee meeting. Council will monitor the objection process and any risks that may arise from that process.

**14. CONFIRMATION OF DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

- 22 August 2019

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**City of  
Whittlesea**

**15. IN-CAMERA DISCUSSION WITH INTERNAL AUDITOR**

The Committee met in-camera with Mr. Thompson, Partner, Crowe Horwath.

**16. IN-CAMERA DISCUSSION**

The Committee met in-camera with the CEO and Director Corporate Services. Confidential minutes of this discussion were taken.

**Meeting concluded at 7.06 pm**

Risk	Causes	Consequences	Current controls to manage the risk	Residual risk assessment			Controls to manage risk once it occurs	Planned Treatments	Time Frame to implement	Responsibility	Anticipated Risk Assessment			Risk Owner		
<b>Governance - Councillors</b>  Ineffective Council governance resulting in - legislative non-compliance; - breaches of duties of a Council; - breaches of duties of a Councillor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Poor Councillor behaviour and working relationship</li><li>• Poor knowledge of new or existing legislative and policy requirements</li><li>• Non-attendance at Council meetings and Councillor briefings</li><li>• Poor relationships and communication between Councillors and Administration</li><li>• Lack of clarity in legislative framework regarding Councillor roles (eg governance vs operational)</li><li>• Councillors not understanding their role</li><li>• Insufficient or inadequate training</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government intervention</li><li>• Legislative breach</li><li>• Decisions not in accordance with the requirements of the LG Act (for best interest for whole community for longer term)</li><li>• Workplace injury to Councillors or staff</li><li>• Reputational damages</li><li>• Litigation</li><li>• Ministerial intervention, including Monitor or Administrators being appointed</li><li>• Poor working relationships</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Councillor and staff interaction protocol</li><li>• Induction for Councillors</li><li>• Ongoing Councillor L&amp;D program</li><li>• Strategic planning workshops for Councillors and ELT (High priority - ineffective due to lack of participation by some Councillors)</li><li>• Audit and Risk Advisory Committee (High priority - effective)</li><li>• Annual independent board performance review for Councillors</li><li>• Governance Forums conducted for Councillors at least twice per annum</li><li>• Comprehensive business papers for Council meetings and Councillor briefings</li><li>• Policies and procedures relating to Councillors</li><li>• Engagement of organisational psychologist to work with Executive and Councillors</li></ul>	Likelihood - Almost Certain	Consequence - Major	Risk Rating -Extreme	Risk Appetite -Medium - Council Reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• External advisors eg legal advisors, auditors</li><li>• Annual audit by Auditor General</li><li>• Internal Audit and Compliance Program (High priority - effective)</li><li>• Audit and Risk Advisory Committee (High priority - effective)</li><li>• Local government inspectorate oversight</li><li>• Annual reporting submitted to Minister</li><li>• Appointment of a Local Government Monitor</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Councillor participation in governance and relationship improvement program</li><li>• Intervention by CEO where Councillor behaviour poses a risk to the effective governance or health and safety of other Councillors or staff</li><li>• Councillors comply with and enforce code of conduct</li><li>• Internal audit of Council's governance</li></ul>	Dec-19	CEO	Likelihood - Almost Certain	Consequence - Major	Risk Rating -Extreme	Risk Appetite -Medium - Council Reputation	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Director Partnerships, Planning and Engagement
ongoing	CEO	<b>Supporting Director:</b> Director Community Services														
ongoing	Council	<b>Manager:</b> Manager Governance														
Aug-19	CEO															





### 6.4.3 CONTRACT NO CT0809107C CIVICA AUTHORITY CONTRACT EXTENSION

**Attachments:** 1 Civica Contract Extension CT0809107C - Confidential

Confidential in accordance with Section 89(2)(d) of the Local Government Act 1989 as it contains details relating to contractual matters.

**Responsible Officer:            Director Corporate Services**

**Author:** Team Leader Business Systems

## RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

It is recommended that contract number CT0809107C for Civica Authority Software Licence is:

- Extended from current expiry date of 30 September 2019 to up to 30 June 2024.
- Varied by \$1,289,512.14 (excluding GST) to a new contract sum of \$5,641,756.14 (excluding GST).

### KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES

The contract manager advises that:

- This contract was awarded to Civica Pty Ltd and commenced on 1 October 2009. The current approved end date is 30 September 2019. Options exist to extend the contract up to 30 September 2024.
- The contractor has performed adequately.
- Due to the new IT Strategy, some replacement modules are currently being implemented, while replacement of other modules is still being investigated. It is expected to take multiple years to replace all modules provided by the Civica Authority product.
- A contract variation and extension are required for business continuity of the current corporate system, Authority, which manages the Property, Rates, Financial Accounts, Animal Registrations, Planning and Building applications, Local Laws and Customer Request Management modules.
- The last three financial years of the contract are predicted to be at a lesser rate reflecting that the City of Whittlesea will be using less and less modules. The licence model is not currently based on the number of modules, so this lesser rate is based on, and subject to, successful negotiations with Civica Pty Ltd.



## REPORT

### BACKGROUND

This contract was awarded to Civica Pty Ltd in 2009 to provide the Authority application, as a single ICT application that supported many of Council's functions. Over the past 10 years, Council has from time to time stopped using various modules of Authority and replaced them with better 'best of breed' applications, eg Payroll, Asset Management and more recently Health Management. Future plans will see further erosion of the Authority application as Local Laws and Customer Requests (both already Council endorsed) and Finance all move to purpose built products better suited to support a modern organisation.

As Authority has been a single core application for such a long time and used by so many staff, many practices, procedures and roles have evolved as a result of the way Authority works, thereby making it difficult and risky to attempt to replace the complete Authority system all at once. The agreed approach is stage migration, tackling one or two functions/modules at a time to avoid disrupting all teams concurrently to ensure service delivery is maintained to the community during this transition.

As a result of the staged approach, Council needs to continue to license Authority until all Council teams are migrated to other applications.

A summary of the financial performance of the contract is provided in the confidential attachment.

The contract commenced on 1 October 2009 and the current approved end date is 30 September 2019. Options exist to extend the contract up to 30th September 2024.

### VARIATION AND EXTENSION

The contract has been performing satisfactorily however a variation of \$1,289,512.14 is now required for licensing of the software for use by City of Whittlesea. Further details of the requested variations are provided in the confidential attachment.

The contractor's prices have been checked and it is proposed to extend the contract term as required up to 30 September 2024.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Sufficient funding for this contract is available in the recurrent budget for information systems.

### LINK TO STRATEGIC RISKS

**Strategic Risk** *Information Management - Failure to effectively manage Council's information and records, including IT systems*

### LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Enabling the vision</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>Making it happen</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Efficient and effective Council services are responsive to community need</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Organisational Sustainability</b>

Civica Authority provides systems to manage current City of Whittlesea financial and revenue generation via rates and property management. This is critical to financial sustainability.

## DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

## CONCLUSION

Variation and extension of the contract is sought in accordance with the contract's terms and conditions and Council's applicable policy and procedures.

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
-----------------------

**THAT Council resolve, in relation to Contract No. CT0809107C, for Civica Authority Contract Licence to:**

- 1. Approve extension of the contract end date as required up to 30 September 2024**
- 2. Approve a variation of \$1,289,512.14 (excluding GST) making a revised contract sum of \$5,641,756.14 (excluding GST).**
- 3. Note the funding arrangements detailed in the confidential attachment.**



**6.5 EXECUTIVE SERVICES**

**6.5.1 MEETINGS OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER 23 MAY - 19 JUNE 2019**

**Responsible Officer:** Chief Executive Officer

**Author:** Executive Assistant

**RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY**

The Council note the record of meetings held by the Chief Executive Officer with external persons and organisations and significant internal issues as set in the table in the report.

**KEY FACTS AND / OR ISSUES**

This is to report to Council details of meetings held by the Chief Executive Officer with external persons and organisations and significant internal issues.

## REPORT

### BACKGROUND

Council has previously resolved, as part of the Chief Executive Officer's annual performance review, that the Chief Executive Officer provide Council with a regular report containing details of external persons and organisations with whom he has met and the purpose of such meetings and any significant internal issues. The report is designed to promote openness and transparency in the Office of the Chief Executive Officer.

### PROPOSAL

It is proposed that a standard report be included in the Council Notice paper in future meetings which will record details of external meetings and details of significant internal events.

EXTERNAL MEETINGS		
Date	Organisation or Individual	Purpose of Meeting
24/05/2019	Epping RSL	Commemoration of the Battle of Crete and Greece
28/05/2019	Women's Health in the North	Building a Respectful Community Executive Breakfast. Also in attendance HSui, Director Corporate Services
30/05/2019	Melbourne's Northern Councils	CEO Forum
05/06/2019	Interface Councils	CEO Meeting
05/06/2019	Interface Councils	CEO and Mayor Meeting
10/06/2019	Queen's Birthday Public Holiday	
12/06/2019	YSAS Board Meeting	Chair (external meeting)
17/06/2019	ICP Steering Group Meeting	Implementation of ICP system – Advisory Group member

SIGNIFICANT INTERNAL ISSUES	
27/05/2019	National Sorry Day
27/05/2019	ELT Operational Meeting
28/05/2019	Councillor Briefing
29/05/2019	ELT Governance Meeting
30/05/2019	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting
03/06/2019	Citizenship Ceremony (#1)
03/06/2019	Citizenship Ceremony (#2)
04/06/2019	Ordinary Council Meeting
05/06/2019	ELT Governance Meeting
06/06/2019	Special Council Meeting – Adopting 2019-2020 Budget
07/06/2019	ELT Strategy Meeting
10/06/2019	Queen's Birthday Public Holiday
11/06/2019	Councillor Briefing
12/06/2019	ELT Governance Meeting
18/06/2019	Councillor Briefing
19/06/2019	ELT Governance Meeting

### CONSULTATION

Nil

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Costs associated with these meetings are covered in the recurrent budget.

**LINKS TO WHITTLESEA 2040 AND THE COUNCIL PLAN**

<b>Whittlesea 2040 Goal</b>	<b>Connected community</b>
<b>Whittlesea 2040 Key Direction</b>	<b>A participating community</b>
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>We have access to information, skill development and knowledge to participate in decision-making in an informed way</b>
<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Organisational Sustainability</b>

**DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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

**CONCLUSION**

The Council note the record of meetings held by the Chief Executive Officer with external persons and organisations and significant internal issues as set in the table in the report.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT Council resolve to receive and note the report containing a record of meetings held by the Chief Executive Officer with external persons and organisations and significant internal issues.**



**7. NOTICES OF MOTION****7.1 NOTICE OF MOTION 872 - PROTECT SPECIALTY CHEESE MAKERS AND MANUFACTURERS OF AUSTRALIA**

**Author:** Cr Tom Joseph

Councillor Tom Joseph of the North Ward has given notice that it is his intention to move the following Motion at the Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held on Tuesday 2 July 2019 at 6:30pm:

<b>MOTION</b>
---------------

**THAT Council resolve to call upon the Australian Government to protect speciality cheese makers and manufactures of Australia by:**

- 1. Ensuring that any Free Trade Agreement, particularly the Australia -EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) does not include Geographic Indications (GIs). The use of GIs may preclude Australian cheese makers and manufacturers from using common names for products. This includes cheese names such as:**
  - a. Feta;**
  - b. Parmesan;**
  - c. Halloumi;**
  - d. Taleggio; and**
  - e. Any other speciality cheeses.**
- 2. Writes to local Federal Members and Senators of the Australian Government seeking their active support in protecting specialty cheese makers and manufacturers within the City of Whittlesea.**
- 3. Writes to the Victorian Government, including Ministers for Small Business and Agriculture seeking their active support in protecting specialty cheese makers and manufacturers in Victoria by advocating to the Australian Government directly and through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG).**
- 4. Writes to NorthLink and Melbourne North Food Group seeking their advocacy assistance on this matter.**





- 8.     **QUESTIONS TO OFFICERS**
- 9.     **URGENT BUSINESS**
- 10.    **REPORTS FROM DELEGATES APPOINTED BY COUNCIL TO OTHER BODIES**



**11. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

**11.1 PARTNERSHIPS, PLANNING & ENGAGEMENT**

**NIL REPORTS**

**11.2 COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**NIL REPORTS**

**11.3 CITY TRANSPORT AND PRESENTATION**

**NIL REPORTS**

**11.4 CORPORATE SERVICES**

**NIL REPORTS**



**11.5 EXECUTIVE SERVICES**

**11.5.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS - CEMAC MEETING  
14 MAY 2019**

**Responsible Officer:** Chief Executive Officer

**Author:** Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters Advisory  
Committee

<b>REPORT</b>
---------------

It is proposed that the following item be considered in closed session.

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
-----------------------

**THAT Council resolve to close the meeting to members of the public for the purpose of considering details relating to the following, in accordance with Section 89(2) of the Local Government Act 1989:**

- (a) personnel matters**
- (d) contractual matters**
- (h) any other matter which the Council or special committee considers would prejudice the Council or any person**



**11.5.2 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR 2019-2020**

**Responsible Officer:** Chief Executive Officer

**Author:** Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters Advisory Committee

**REPORT**

It is proposed that the following item be considered in closed session.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT Council resolve to close the meeting to members of the public for the purpose of considering details relating to the following, in accordance with Section 89(2) of the Local Government Act 1989:**

- (a) personnel matters**





**11.5.3 COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT MATTER**

**Responsible Officer:** Principal Conduct Officer

**Author:** Principal Conduct Officer

<b>REPORT</b>
---------------

It is proposed that the following item be considered in closed session.

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
-----------------------

**THAT Council resolve to close the meeting to members of the public for the purpose of considering details relating to the following, in accordance with Section 89(2) of the Local Government Act 1989:**

- (h) any other matter which the Council or special committee considers would prejudice the Council or any person**



#### 11.5.4 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

**Responsible Officer:** Manager Governance

**Author:** Manager Governance

#### REPORT

It is proposed that the following item be considered in closed session.

#### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT Council resolve to close the meeting to members of the public for the purpose of considering details relating to the following, in accordance with Section 89(2) of the Local Government Act 1989:**

- (a) personnel matters
- (f) legal advice
- (h) any other matter which the Council or special committee considers would prejudice the Council or any person



**11.6 NOTICES OF MOTION**

**NIL REPORTS**



**12. CLOSURE**