



Moreland
City Council

Progressive City

Environmental Sustainability Achievement Report 2020/21



Executive Summary

This report outlines the key achievements in 2020/21 across key sustainability strategy areas (excluding transport) for which the City Change Branch is custodian:

- Zero Carbon Moreland (ZCM) Climate Emergency Action Plan
- Waste and Litter Strategy (W&LS)
- Integrated Water Management (IWM) Strategy / Action Plan
- Sustainable design in new developments through the planning process and Council's building projects team
- Urban Heat Island Effect (UHIE) Action Plan.

These plans contribute to achieving the Vision and Strategic Objectives of the Council Plan 2017 – 2021 and align with the Council Plan Strategic Objective 2 'Progressive City' under the following key priorities:

- Enhance liveability, affordability and sustainability by guiding growth, and excellence in urban design and development.
- Enhance the environmental outcomes of Council waste services and increase the communities' awareness/participation in environmental initiatives to reduce waste to landfill.

Moreland City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Moreland.



Moreland City Council Environmental Sustainability Achievements 2020-21

69% CO₂
Reduction in Council's carbon emissions since 2011. Smashing our target by 39%.

64,885
Community members engaged with the Zero Carbon Moreland website, facebook, events and eco e-news.

13,052
Tonnes (a 9% increase) of food and garden organic waste saved from landfill.

75
cubic metres
Compost delivered to local community gardens.

387
People using our energy advice, solar power and energy efficiency services.

62
Staff received climate risk training.

45 tonnes
E-waste collected for recycling from hard waste.

12
MEGALITRES
Drinking water saved by City Oval stormwater system, per year.

11,134
rubbish, recycling and organics bins inspected for contamination.

8MW
Solar installed in Moreland. Total 35MW.

85kW
Solar installed on Council buildings. Total 821kW.

47,000
Less pieces of single-use plastic thanks to 29 Plastic Free Sydney Road businesses.

1st Open Streets trial held in Australia
Two Ride & Stride pilots launched with Coburg North and Brunswick East Primary Schools.

6,641
Electric Vehicle charging sessions.
Busiest electric vehicle hub on the Chargefox Australian network.



Climate Emergency – Key Achievements

This is the first year for implementation of the Zero Carbon Moreland Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020 – 2025. It is also the first time Council has established dedicated in-house staffing, with five new staff delivering the ZCM 2040 Framework and 5-year Action Plan.

Community and Council mobilisation

During the year we developed the foundations for Zero Carbon Moreland communications with the launch of a new Zero Carbon Moreland website (morelandzerocarbon.org.au), Facebook and monthly e-newsletter.

We will use these channels to encourage community action and promote the activities of community groups, Council and partners.

We held a number of events to inspire and provide information on how our community can act on climate, including:

- Two youth climate workshops held in collaboration with CERES. At the workshops students gained a better understanding of climate solutions, gained confidence to create change, and discussed forming a student climate network.
- The [North West Communities for Climate Action conference](#) was held on 4 – 5 June as part of World Environment Day. The conference was a collaboration of seven councils and brought together community organisations, school groups, emergency service workers and traditional owners to share up-to-date strategies and actions for reducing emissions and keeping our communities safe in the face of climate change.



Members of the Brunswick Uniting Church ringing the bell on climate action as part of a global, multi-faith day of action. [Watch the video.](#)

We reached 64,885 community members through our new Zero Carbon Moreland website, Facebook ,eco-e-news and events.

Community Skills for Climate Action

In collaboration with Yarra and Darebin Councils, we developed the Community Skills for Climate Action program, aiming to grow a broader movement of diverse groups and individuals actively leading and engaged in climate action in our communities.

Over 10 sessions (finishing September 2021) we built the capacity of 75 people, including local climate action groups, to advocate for change and develop climate action projects.

As well as learning skills, the program connects individuals and develops a network of people working together and supporting each other's efforts across three municipalities.



We supported the capacity building of our community members through two new scholarships:

- The Women's Environmental Leadership Australia [Moreland Community Scholarship](#) was established to support women and gender diverse people in Moreland to develop environmental leadership skills. Long-term Moreland resident Denise Cauchi OAM from Doctors for the Environment Australia was the first recipient.
- The [Mike Hill Fellowship](#) was launched with the Australian Energy Foundation to build local champions for action on climate change. Created in tribute to former Mayor and prominent Moreland environmental figure, Mike Hill, Daisy Day was announced as the first recipient. She worked on two energy innovation pilot projects.



Supporting sustainability in schools and early learning centres

In partnership with CERES, Council has increased support for sustainability in schools and early learning centres this year. This includes the Early Years Sustainability Network, Teacher Environment Network, subsidies for eight Early Childhood Services to participate in Resource Smart and subsidies for nine schools to improve sustainability at their schools through the Student Environment Leadership Program.

Advocacy

To achieve a Zero Carbon Moreland, we advocated to the state and federal governments to transition to zero carbon at emergency speed. Our advocacy efforts were strengthened through collaboration with other local government organisations and strategic partnerships.

During the year Moreland hosted two advocacy workshops for Climate Emergency Australia (CEA) to develop a national advocacy strategy. We also contributed to CEA advocacy calling on the federal government to work with local governments to build jobs and resilience to climate change as part of the national recovery from Covid-19.

Submissions were made to:

- Victorian Government on the Proposed Road Usage Tax on Electric Vehicles.
- Victorian Government Infrastructure Victoria 30 Year Strategy.
- Victorian Government Environmentally Sustainable Design Reforms Roadmap.

Council Climate Integration

In 2020, we commenced integration of climate emergency into policies, plans and strategies across Council. A Climate Resilience Integration Board (CRIB) was established to govern development of Council's approach to climate risk, resilience and adaptation. Consisting of Council Directors, CRIB will oversee the effective integration of climate resilience leadership across Moreland City Council, enabling the organisation to actively govern its exposure and response to climate-related risks and opportunities.

Establishing an approach to monitoring and internally reporting on climate-related risk is vital to understanding the extent of the risk and developing strategic approaches to manage it. We commenced using *How Well Are We Adapting?* as a tool to monitor and report on the risk posed by climate change to the goods and services delivered by Council.

Online learning materials were developed and workshops on climate risks and opportunities were held with staff in high-priority Service Units. These workshops have formed the basis of specific climate emergency action in their Service Unit Plans.

We are working in collaboration with other Councils, the Northern Alliance of Greenhouse Action and the Victorian Government. This will leverage existing programs and enable consistent approaches to climate emergency integration across Councils.

Energy – Key Achievements

We are supporting our homes, businesses and community groups to transition to energy efficient and 100% renewable energy. The major sources of our community's carbon emissions are electricity (59%) and gas (21%). Council is powered by 100% renewable electricity, but 27% of our emissions are from gas.

Energy transition

We are supporting Moreland residents and businesses to reduce their energy bills and make their homes and businesses warmer in winter and cooler in summer. We are working with [four new partners](#) to deliver these services:



Australian Energy Foundation

Free over-the-phone energy advice for Moreland residents and businesses.



Solar Savers

Support for residents to identify and install quality solar systems and/or battery storage.



Draught Busters

Support for residents who want to improve the comfort and efficiency of their home.



EnviroGroup

Support for businesses and community groups for installing solar power and energy efficiency upgrades.

So far, 387 Morelanders have accessed the energy services.

In 2020-21, solar installations in Moreland increased by 8MW to a total of 35MW. This puts Moreland well on track to achieve our goal of 44MW by 2025.

A Just Transition

In response to Covid-19, Council is [offering extra financial support](#) to low income and culturally-diverse homeowners to assist them, at no or low out-of-pocket costs, to install solar panels or upgrade their homes to make them more energy efficient. So far 75 low income households received energy efficiency funding (\$2000 each) and 17 homes have solar installed funded. Installation has been impacted by lockdowns, but an increasing number of households are expressing interest.

In partnership with Jesuit Social Services Ecological Justice Hub, Council funded a pilot program to assist low income renters to make energy efficiency upgrades to their homes to be 'ready for winter'. Evaluation of the pilot will inform a decision about its scalability.

Reducing Council's energy emissions

During the year we continued to take action to reduce corporate carbon emissions by reducing our energy use and increasing the amount of renewable generation. Actions included:

- Maintaining and expanding Council's portfolio of solar photovoltaic installations consisting of 821 kW over 39 sites. A new installation was carried out at Hosken Reserve with the installation of a 20kW solar system. Work has commenced on a 60kW solar system at Coburg Basketball Arena and a 5kW solar system at Coburg Velodrome.

- Auditing 'watchman' lights – floodlights owned by electricity distributors and paid for by Council. By upgrading some 'watchman' lights and removing those no longer needed, the project has estimated savings of \$30,000 a year and 100 tonnes of carbon emissions.
- Investigating options for moving Moreland aquatic centres off gas – particularly for the redevelopment of Fawkner Leisure Centre.
- Identifying approaches to further improve energy efficiency at Brunswick Baths and Oak Park Aquatic and Leisure Centre, together responsible for 27% of Council's corporate carbon footprint.

We have reduced our Council's carbon emissions by 69% – well above our aim of 30% less emissions than the baseline year of 2011.

We also maintained our Carbon Neutral certification with Climate Active.



Supporting Businesses with Environmental Upgrade Finance

Council has continued to support and promote Environmental Upgrade Finance, a unique form of finance that offers commercial building owners a low-interest, long-term loan so they can upgrade their buildings to save energy, water and waste and operational costs.

Moreland works with Better Building Finance to facilitate finance for Moreland businesses wanting to access Environmental Upgrade Finance.

During the year Council entered into its seventh Environmental Upgrade Agreement with Terra Madre, an organic grocery store in Brunswick. Terra Madre have installed 99.9kW of solar on their new shop which is estimated to save 330 tonnes of carbon a year.

There are now seven agreements in Moreland, unlocking \$655,765 worth of investment and leading to the installation of 413kW of solar, a reduction of 12,128 tonnes of carbon emissions and saving businesses \$2.1 million in operational costs.

Waste & Litter – Key Achievements

We are transitioning to a zero-waste circular economy, ensuring material efficiency through repair, reuse and recycling.

Reducing Food Waste

Targeted promotion saw the community continue to take up options to reduce the amount of food waste being sent to landfill. This included opting-in to the Food and Garden Organics kerbside collection service, with 74% of households now accessing the service, up from 70% in 2019/20.

Council collected 13,052 tonnes of food and garden organics, a 9% increase from the previous year.

Council facilitated free compost deliveries from Veolia, our organics processor, to community gardens across Moreland. Over 75 cubic metres of compost was delivered to ten community gardens.

Council continued to partner with Compost Community to help households divert food waste from landfill with 283 orders being made for Council-subsidised composting equipment.



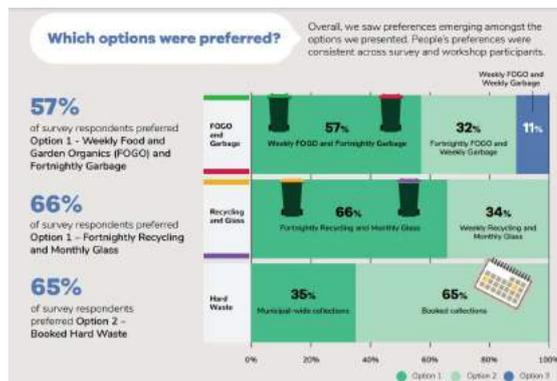
Free compost being delivered to Peppertree Place community garden. This compost was processed from household food and organic waste.

Kerbside Waste Reform

The Victorian Government announced that all councils must move to a 4-bin service, separating garbage, food and garden organics, recycling and glass. These changes will help reduce waste sent to landfill and improve the quality of our recycling.

In August 2020 and February-March 2021 we conducted Stage 1 and 2 of community consultation on the future of our kerbside service with over 1436 survey responses and quick polls, workshop discussions, phone drop-in sessions, six focused workshops and email. Social research to inform policy development was also completed.

We heard that our community like the food and garden organics bin and welcomes a better recycling system. We also heard that our waste service is reliable, easy to use and is appropriate for the amount of waste households currently generate. People also told us that they want more frequent collection of the food and garden organics bins.



Avoiding waste and increasing resource recovery

Since the addition of all e-waste (not just computers and TVs) to the hard waste collection in 2019, a total of 131 tonnes of e-waste has been collected for recycling.

In partnership with The Activ Group, we launched the EcoActiv Digital Platform. The online service is in addition to hard waste collections and provides a convenient service for the collection of unwanted household items. The service is predominately based on a user-pays basis. Due to Covid-19 restrictions the service was only able to operate sporadically. Despite this, a total of 84 bookings were made, the highest proportion for furniture (62%), followed by textiles/apparel (12.5%).

Recycling Stations at Council Customer Service Centres

The recycling stations at Council's three customer service centres were expanded to accept digital cameras, pens/highlighters and markers, and video and tape cassettes at Coburg. The stations were also rebranded to improve ease of use and educational benefits.

In the months when residents were able to access the recycling stations, 406kgs of household batteries, 248kgs of florescent tubes and globes and 371kgs of mobile phones and digital cameras have been collected and diverted from landfill.



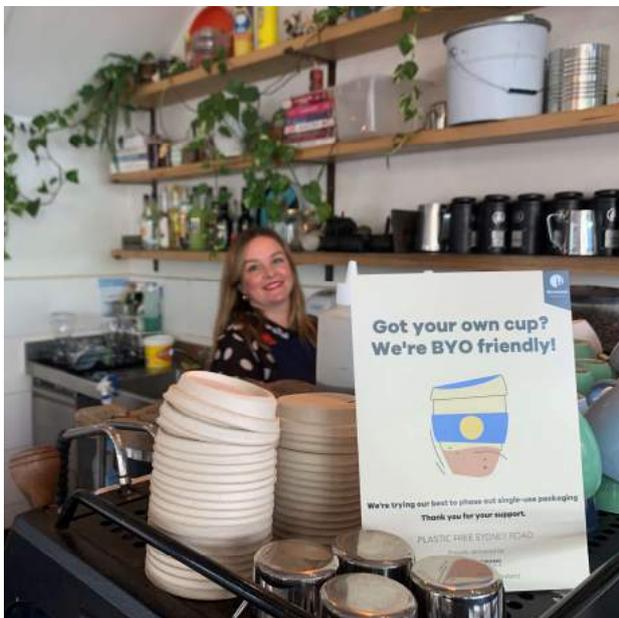
Reducing single-use plastic and litter

The Coburg Night Market, Brunswick Music Festival and Fawkner and Glenroy Festivals all complied with Council's Plastic Wise Policy. Policy exemptions were provided for single-use coffee cups due to the lack of plastic-free single-use alternative. Council partnered with Sports Environment Alliance to deliver four Plastic Wise Action Planning workshops for over 40 Moreland sports clubs. Clubs mapped out their plans to reduce single-use plastic by July 2022. To reduce reliance on bottled water five drinking fountains were installed at sports grounds in Brunswick, Coburg, Glenroy and Hadfield.

To get a better sense of litter impacts in the municipality, Working for Victoria staff developed methodology and undertook an extensive litter data project across multiple sites in Moreland. The report establishes baseline litter data across 225 sites in 10 site type categories (including waterways, recreation, activity centres, cigarette and voting bins, transport, residential, construction sites, apartments and schools). The total litter count was 8,540 with 53% of the litter plastic.

We continue to support the Merri Creek Management Committee's Community Litter Collection Program. While community litter events were put on hold due to Covid-19 restrictions, guidance to support individual and household litter collection – in line with physical distancing and exercise restrictions – was developed and shared online via Facebook groups and websites.

*74% of Moreland households now use the Food and Organic Waste Service.
131 tonnes of e-waste has been collected from hard rubbish for recycling.*



Plastic Free Sydney Road

There are 47,000 fewer pieces of plastic going to landfill, littering the streets, or in the storm water system due to 29 local cafes signing on to the Plastic Free Sydney Road initiative.

Delivered with Boomerang Alliance, the initiative has encouraged 29 businesses in Sydney Road, Brunswick and Sydney Road, Coburg, to reduce or eliminate nine key single-use plastic packaging items, include cutlery, water bottles, straws and coffee cup lids.

Participating venues are listed on our website and will receive ongoing promotion throughout the program.

Transport – Key Achievements

Transport is responsible for 29% of community's carbon emissions and 33% of Council's emissions. To achieve zero-emissions transport we are rolling out active travel behaviour change programs and continuing our transition to zero emissions vehicles.

Ride & Stride pilot program

Coburg North Primary School and Brunswick East Primary School have been selected to trial our new [Ride & Stride](#) pilot, an innovative behaviour change program designed to get more kids riding, striding and scooting to school. We have been working closely with each school to understand specific barriers to active travel in the local area and design a tailored suite of initiatives to activate more walking and cycling trips to and from the school gates.

The Ride & Stride pilot seeks to not only shift travel behaviours, but also attitudes, habits and social norms around how students and parents choose to travel to school, work and get around Moreland.

Supporting uptake of Electric Vehicles

We expanded Council's network of renewable-powered electric vehicle chargers, now consisting of 16 chargers with 10 accessible to the public. The public network saw over 6641 charging sessions in 2021/22. The Brunswick EV hub, at 13-15 Edward Street, is the busiest electric vehicle charging hub in Australia (on Chargefox, Australia's largest EV charging network).

One third of the current light vehicle fleet is electric making it the largest Electric Vehicle fleet throughout Victorian Councils.

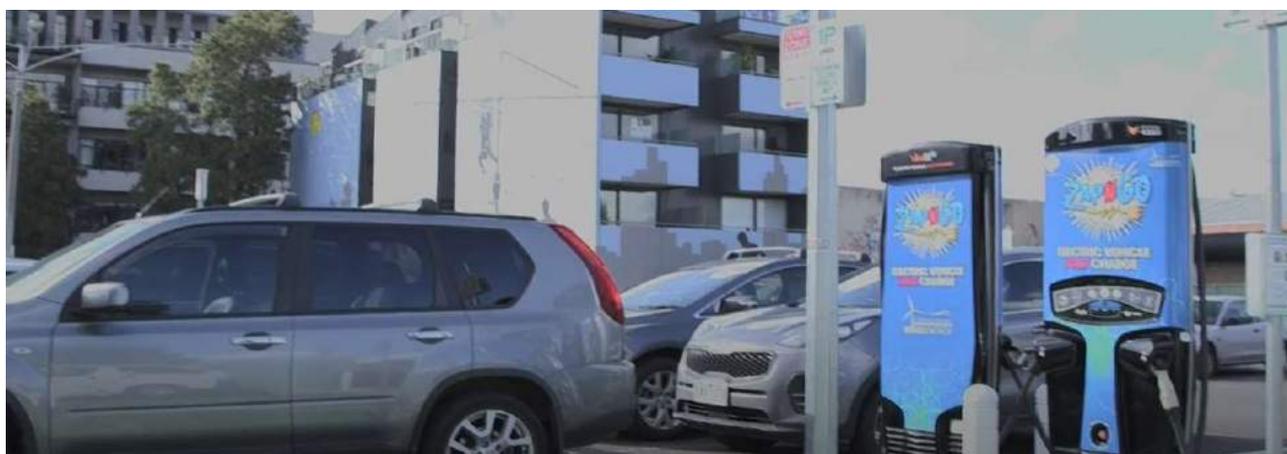


Australia's First Open Streets Trial

For three Fridays in March 2020, students at Brunswick East Primary School arrived by foot, bike, scooter or skateboard as part of an active travel trial organised by the school, Moreland City Council and Bicycle Network.

Each Friday throughout the trial, Open Streets closed off to cars a section of road in front of the school prioritising student safety and wellbeing.

Student Ziggy credits its success to student enjoyment: "It's lots of fun," he says. Fellow student Charlie says, "You're getting activity in the morning so it helps start your day and gives you energy." The local community embraced the trial and we are looking to roll it out across other schools.



The electric vehicle charging hub in Brunswick is the busiest in the Australia on the provider's network.

Water – Key Achievements

A new Integrated Water Management Strategy 2040 and a five-year action plan was adopted by Council in August 2020. These strategies invest in urban planning and design to harvest and reuse stormwater, stopping it from reaching our waterways.

During the year we undertook projects to make use of stormwater and reduce the pollutants it releases to our rivers, creeks and Port Phillip Bay. Projects included commencing the:

- Gavin Park Bio filtration and sedimentation ponds design and construction.
- Moomba Park Wetland design and community consultation.
- Brunswick Parklands Masterplan and Integrated Water Management Plan. These plans develop solutions to meet future needs and demands of the local community while striving to deliver higher than best practice sustainable and innovative landscape and urban design practices.
- Passive Irrigation Trial in partnership with Melbourne University and Melbourne Water to test the replacement of asphalt with recycled tyres.
- Continued work across Council to include integrated water management in capital projects, such as street upgrades and new buildings.

Council continued to support the Waterwatch Program, delivered by the Merri Creek Management Committee. Waterwatch is a community education and engagement program connecting local communities with river health and sustainable water management issues.

City Oval Stormwater System

Construction of the stormwater harvesting system integrated within the landscape of City Oval (Southern Bridges Reserve, Coburg) was completed. This system saves approximately 12 megalitres of potable water per annum (approximately 4 Olympic size swimming pools of drinking water), saving Council \$35,000 per year in irrigation costs.

The system also reduces stormwater pollution, with approximately 118 Kg of total nitrogen reduced from entering Merri Creek and Port Phillip Bay every year.



Sustainable Buildings – Key Achievements

Leading the way in creating sustainably designed buildings in Moreland.

We continued to play a leading role in shaping a positive and net zero development industry in Moreland.

Zero Carbon in the Planning Scheme Project

We are creating new standards for a revised and updated Environment Sustainable Design (ESD) planning policy called the Zero Carbon in the Planning Scheme Project amendment to continue Moreland's excellent ESD program and outcomes.

The amendment will establish pathways for zero carbon private developments through the Moreland Planning Scheme. This includes the creation of prescriptive requirements for solar photovoltaics and electric vehicle infrastructure, as well as other improvements to on-site waste management and green infrastructure.



Moreland Environment Sustainable Design

Assessment of ESD planning permits and engagement with developers leads to better buildings including:

- An average 6.4 stars NatHERS energy rating for class 1 detached dwellings (including townhouses) and 7.0 stars for class 2 apartments throughout Moreland (above the average of Moreland's minimum standard, 6.5 stars). The minimum in the National Construction Code is 6.0 stars.
- Non-residential development such as offices, shops, supermarkets and warehouses etc, have an energy performance improvement of 10% above the minimum National Construction Code.
- 865kW solar PV committed to being installed.
- An increasing trend for applications to be 'all-electric' and avoid the use of gas.
- Five developments have been successful in applying the Moreland Design Excellence Scorecard. Dwellings have had an average of 7.5 stars, with one development of 108 dwellings having an average of 7.8 stars. All dwellings will be gas free and many will have 100% green power. The developments will together contribute to a total of 120kW of solar power generation.
- 208kL of rainwater tanks approved in Moreland, collecting vast volumes of water and supporting the health of Merri and Moonee Ponds Creeks.
- On average, new developments achieve 34% drinking water savings compared with conventional buildings.
- Improved natural ventilation and shading of windows in developments to increase energy efficiency.
- 2306 new bicycle spaces.
- Increased electric vehicle infrastructure, including car spaces with chargers and plug-in chargers within shared spaces.

Moreland Design Excellence Scorecard

The Moreland Design Excellence Scorecard has been used across various scales of new developments. This has led to positive trends in many applications (not just Scorecard developments), such as all-electric buildings (no gas) and very high energy ratings in more developments across Moreland.

Urban Heat Island Effect

The urban heat island effect – heat trapped in built-up areas – is an issue we need to address as our aging population and climate change make us vulnerable to extreme heat. We continued to reduce the build-up of heat with new tree planting, passive irrigation, raingardens and lighter-coloured materials including:

- Stage 2 of the Wilson Avenue streetscape and improved tree planting, raingardens and pavement in the Gaffney Village (Gaffney Street), Pascoe Vale.
- Initial concept designs of a new wetland at Moomba Park, Fawkner, and integrated stormwater harvesting and integrated water management precincts in AG Gillon Reserve, Clifton Park, and Gilpin Park, Brunswick West.
- Bulleke-bek Park on West Street, Brunswick, has provided a noticeable green and cool space for respite during warm weather and has been greatly received by the local community.
- Final designs for new parks at Garrong Park, Brunswick (55-61 Tinning Street); 14 Frith Street, Brunswick; 132-134 Cardinal Road, Glenroy; and adjoining the Wheatsheaf hub, Glenroy.

Advocating for cooler suburbs

Council has advocated for initiatives to address the urban heat island effect through:

- State Government Infrastructure Projects, including the Level Crossing Removal Projects between Moreland and Coburg Stations and around the Glenroy Station corridor.
- Two in-depth consultations with Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) on impacts on the new ESD Planning Policy
- DELWP on new standards to increase new tree canopy planting standards through the State Planning Scheme. DELWP has since updated the draft standards and has commenced public consultation considering our feedback.



Sustainable Design in Council Buildings

We apply the Moreland Sustainable Building's Policy when new Council facilities are being built or existing facilities are renovated. Examples over the last year have included initial design work to refurbish the Fawkner Aquatic Centre and provide new facilities for various sports and community groups at Fleming Park, Brunswick, and the construction of Glenroy Community Hub. This has led to the installation of heat pumps, the removal of existing gas infrastructure as part of refurbishments, and the installation of on-site solar PV and electric vehicle charging.