



Merri-bek
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday 13 August 2025

Commencing 6.30 pm

Bunjil (Council Chamber), Merri-bek Civic Centre, 90
Bell Street, Coburg

Language Link

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Acknowledgement of the traditional custodians of the City of Merri-bek

Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek, and pays respect to their elders past, present, and emerging, as well as to all First Nations communities who significantly contribute to the life of the area.

Information about Council Meetings

These notes have been developed to help people better understand Council meetings. All meetings are conducted in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

WELCOME The Mayor, who chairs the meeting, formally opens the meeting.

APOLOGIES Where a Councillor is not present, their absence is noted in the minutes of the meeting. Council may also approve leaves of absence in this part of the meeting.

DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS INTERESTS A Councillor has a duty to disclose any direct or indirect financial or other interests, they may have in any matter to be considered by Council that evening.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES The minutes of the previous meeting are put before Council to confirm the accuracy and completeness of the record.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS At each Council Meeting provision of 10 minutes will be made in the Agenda for the Mayor and Councillors to acknowledge and recognise achievements of local individuals and organisations; and raise matters considered important to Council.

PETITIONS Council receives petitions from citizens on various issues. Council formally accepts petitions at Council meetings.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME This is an opportunity (30 minutes), for citizens of Merri-bek to raise questions with Councillors.

COUNCIL REPORTS Council officers prepare detailed reports, which are considered by Councillors and a Council position is adopted on the matters considered. The Mayor can invite firstly Councillors, secondly Officers, and then citizens in attendance to identify Council reports which should be given priority by the meeting and considered in the early part of the meeting.

NOTICES OF MOTION A motion which has been submitted to the Chief Executive Officer no later than 12 pm (noon) 10 business days prior to the meeting which is intended to be included in the agenda. The motion should outline the policy, financial and resourcing implications.

NOTICE OF RESCISSION A Councillor may propose a motion to rescind a resolution of the Council, provided the previous resolution has not been acted on, and a notice is delivered to the CEO or delegate setting out the resolution to be rescinded and the meeting and date when the resolution was carried. If a motion for rescission is lost, a similar motion may not be put before the Council for at least one month from the date it was last lost, unless the Council resolves that the notice of motion be re-listed at a future meeting.

FORESHADOWED ITEMS This is an opportunity for Councillors to raise items proposed to be submitted as Notices of Motion at future meetings.

URGENT BUSINESS The Chief Executive Officer or Councillors, with the approval of the meeting, may submit items of Urgent Business (being a matter not listed on the agenda) but requiring a prompt decision by Council.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS Whilst all Council meetings of Council are open to the public, Council has the power under the *Local Government Act 2020* to close its meeting to the public in certain circumstances which are noted where appropriate on the Council Agenda. Where this occurs, members of the public leave the Council Chamber or Meeting room while the matter is being discussed.

CLOSE OF MEETING The Mayor will formally close the meeting and thank all present.

NEXT MEETING DATE The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 10 September 2025 commencing at 6.30 pm, in the Bunjil (Council Chamber), Merri-bek Civic Centre, 90 Bell Street, Coburg. The next Planning and Related Matters meeting will be held on Wednesday 27 August 2025 commencing at 6.30 pm.

WELCOME

1. APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cr Pulford has sought a leave of absence from 24 August to 20 September 2025 (inclusive).

2. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

3. MINUTE CONFIRMATION

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9 July 2025 be confirmed.

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS

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12. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

12.1 FUTURE CONTRACT EXTENSION FOR RFT 2021-203 MANAGEMENT OF COUNCIL'S AQUATIC AND LEISURE SERVICES 2026–2029

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this report has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7. COUNCIL REPORTS

7.1 STREETS FOR PEOPLE PLAN

Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade

City Design and Economy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the findings of the community engagement on the draft Streets for People Plan, and thanks the community for their feedback.
2. Adopts the Streets for People Plan (Attachment 1), including the Streets for People network, the high priority projects list, and the Streets for People process for design, community engagement, and delivery.
3. Advocates to the State Government to:
 - a) Make improvements to Elm Grove and Urquhart Street in the Coburg Civic and Pentridge area or negotiate changes in the responsible authority for roads in this area, with a goal of moving the state road designation from Elm and Urquhart Streets to Pentridge Boulevard.
 - b) Make improvements for people walking and riding along the length of Boundary Road, Pascoe Street, and Rhodes Parade, in Pascoe Vale.
 - c) Design and deliver the Craigieburn Line shared path project in collaboration with Council.
4. Notes the findings of the investigation into turning roads into parks.
5. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make minor changes to the policy document for publication, as required.

REPORT

Executive summary

The Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy introduced the Streets for People Framework as a new way for designing improvements to streets in Merri-bek. The Framework ensures a more holistic design in transport projects. The Streets for People Plan is the way to implement the framework, where a network of streets across the municipality have been identified for future improvements, and a process for designing and delivering improvements has been set out.

The draft Streets for People Plan was exhibited for community consultation from 28 March until 18 May 2025. Respondents were asked to provide feedback on the proposed network of streets, a list of high-priority projects that had been identified, and the proposed Streets for People process for design and delivery of projects.

Feedback from this community engagement period has been considered and incorporated into the Streets for People plan where suitable. Updates to the Plan include new streets added to the network, additional projects added to the high priority projects list, and some changes to the design considerations.

The high priority projects are:

- Barrow Street, Coburg – Bell Street to Stewart Street
- Stewart Street, Brunswick – Sydney Road to Merri Creek
- Clovelly Avenue, Glenroy West – Glenroy Station to Moonee Ponds Creek

- Union Street, Brunswick – Moonee Ponds Creek to Sydney Road
- John Street, Brunswick East – Albert Street to Capital City Trail
- Ewing Street, Brunswick – Glenlyon Road to Brunswick Road
- Glenroy Road, Glenroy – Glenroy Station to West Street
- Shaftsbury Street, Coburg – O’Hea Street to Tinning Street
- Roma Street, Fawkner – Sydney Road to Merri Creek

Previous Council decisions

Streets for People Plan – Consultation Approach – 12 March 2025

That Council:

1. *Amends the draft Streets for People Plan (Attachment 1) to include the words “Improve connection to Coburg High School” with respect to the rationale for corridor 2.”*
2. *Endorses the draft Streets for People Plan (Attachment 1) as amended for community engagement for five weeks from Friday 28 March until Sunday 4 May 2025, including pop-up sessions in Brunswick, Coburg North and Glenroy and specifically writes to principals of secondary schools and primary schools in Merri-bek inviting them to engage with Council on the Streets for People Plan.*
3. *Receives a further report at the July 2025 Council meeting with a final version of the Streets for People Plan and a community engagement report that outlines the feedback received and how this feedback influenced the final version of the Streets for People Plan.*

Turning Roads Into Parks – 11 December 2024

That Council receives a report in mid-2025 that:

1. *Outlines how Council could close certain sections of roads or narrow existing wide roads in our city to create new parks and open space to help reach our A Park Close to Home and safer streets targets.*
2. *Includes potential locations this may be possible in Merri-bek informed by the relevant Council teams and interested community groups and local residents.*
3. *Is informed by other Councils’ and agencies’ experiences of closing roads to turn into parks or open spaces.*

Moving Around Merri-bek – Final Transport Strategy For Adoption – 13 March 2024

That Council:

1. *Endorses the final Transport Strategy Moving Around Merri-bek (Attachment 1) and associated Action Plan (Attachment 2)*
2. *Refers to the 2024/25 Budget Process funding requests for the following two Action Plan items:*

...

- b) *\$130,000 for development of a Streets for People plan.*

...

1. Policy context

Moving Around Merri-bek Strategy (2024)

The Moving Around Merri-bek Strategy was adopted at the March 2024 Council Meeting. The Strategy seeks to ensure all actions impacting the council's transport network contribute to objectives aligned to the values of Safe, Accessible, Sustainable, Healthy, Liveable, and Inclusive. The Streets for People Framework is a key component of our transport strategy, guiding the way we make changes to our streets. The Streets for People Plan contributes to delivering on the following components of Moving Around Merri-bek (2024):

- Create streets where everyone feels safe.
- Reduce the frequency and severity of crashes on our roads.
- Create a transport system in Merri-bek that allows everyone to meet their daily needs and to fully participate in our community.
- Reduce air and noise pollution generated from vehicles.
- Create streets and public spaces that encourage physical activity and socialisation amongst local communities.
- Improve access to shops, services and employment for our local community.
- Work collaboratively with our community and stakeholders to improve our transport system.
- Work to make our streets and public spaces are safe for all people and inclusive of all genders, backgrounds, and abilities.

Council Plan 2021-2025

The Council plan sets out Council's and community's vision for the future. Key objectives and strategies related to this report include:

Strategic Objective 2: To contribute to the health, safety, and security of everyone living in our diverse community and to increase safe, accessible, physically active and enjoyable ways to get around Merri bek, especially via walking, cycling and public transport:

- 2.1 Build safe, accessible and high-quality bike and pedestrian infrastructure to create links between areas of high pedestrian and cycling demand
- 2.2 Scope and implement suburb based active transport (bike and pedestrian) improvements (prioritising Fawkner, Gowanbrae, Hadfield, Oak Park, Pascoe Vale and Glenroy)
- 2.5 Facilitate substantially increased use of active transport in the community through targeted programs which include a focus on children, young people, families and older people
- 2.6 Collaborate with the community to improve pedestrian and cycling infrastructure on a case-by-case basis

Zero Carbon Merri-bek

Council's Zero Carbon Merri bek 2040 Framework outlines the community vision and strategic directions for the transition to zero carbon in Merri-bek by 2040. In 2019/20, transport was recorded to contribute 17 per cent of all carbon emissions in the Merri-bek local government area and 13 per cent were from private motor vehicles. The 2040 vision for Sustainable Transport includes:

- Most people choose to walk or cycle to get around locally because its healthy, free, safe and convenient
- Merri-bek is known for its pedestrian and cycle-friendly streetscapes.

This overarching Framework informed 5-yearly action plans to drive the transition to zero emissions including:

- Investing in infrastructure to support active travel and public transport
- Reallocate space used for private vehicle travel and parking to support sustainable transport use and other purposes.

In addition, Council resolved in December 2021 to adopt an interim target towards the Zero Carbon by 2040 goal of a reduction of emissions by 75 per cent by 2030.

2. Background

The Streets for People Plan is Merri-bek's plan to create more safe, accessible, healthy, liveable and inclusive streets for everyone. While there are many great streets across Merri-bek, there are parts of the street network that can be stressful, uncomfortable and at times unsafe for people to use. As our city grows, more pressure will be put onto our streets, and it is critical that our streets are adapted in thoughtful and inclusive ways to improve the quality of life in Merri-bek.

Council's Moving Around Merri-bek strategy, adopted in March 2024, introduced the *Streets for People Framework* as a way to achieve more holistic and rigorous streetscape planning and design, and the create better streets for everyone. The associated Action Plan for the strategy included an item to develop a *Streets for People Plan* that identifies the role different streets play in our network and guides Council's future investment in our streets. Figure 1 below shows how the Framework (that is outlined in Moving Around Merri-bek) relates to the Streets for People Plan (presented as part of this report), and individual Streets for People corridor projects.

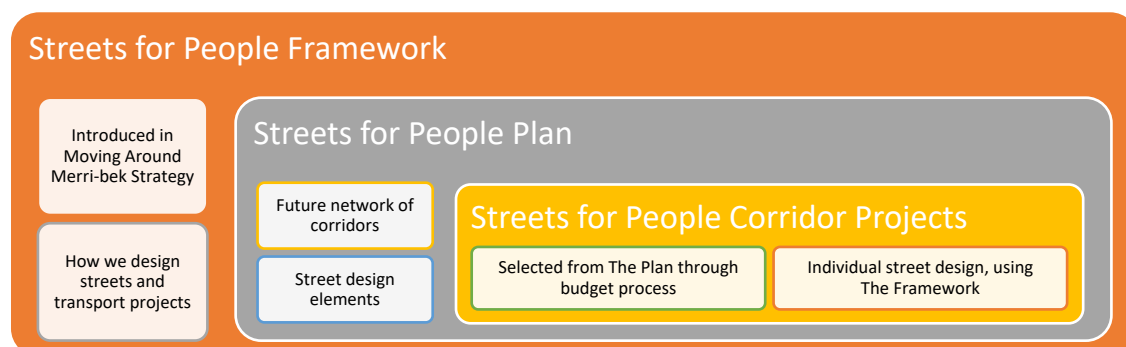


Figure 1 Relationship between Streets for People Framework, Plan, and Corridor Projects

The Streets for People Plan includes:

1. Identification of a network of Streets for People corridors that will be the focus of future improvements to the street network in Merri-bek
2. Identification of 'high priority' Streets for People projects, that will be the focus of improvements of the next 5 years
3. Examples of the types of design treatments that could be expected on Streets for People corridors
4. An outline of the process that officers will undertake to design and deliver improvements to the Streets for People corridors, including:
 - a. community engagement
 - b. use of Movement and Place and Healthy Streets frameworks in planning and design
 - c. monitoring and evaluation.

In March 2025, Council endorsed the draft Streets for People Plan for community engagement. Officers sought feedback on the draft plan for seven weeks between 28 March and 18 May 2025. A total of 165 people completed a survey, 4 submissions from community groups were received, three pop-up engagement events were held, and officers attended a variety of reference group meetings. The feedback received through the community engagement period has informed updates to the final Streets for People Plan. More details on the community engagement methodology, activities, and results can be found in Section 4 of this report, below.

3. Issues

Streets for People network

The primary feature of the Streets for People Plan is the introduction of a network of Streets for People corridors. This network will be a long-term strategic guide that helps to focus Council's investment in creating better streets for all people to meet their needs locally.

The network was developed using 3 criteria. They are:

1. **Connectivity:** Streets for People corridors need to help people connect with key local destinations in their areas.
2. **Amenity:** Streets for People corridors should help focus efforts to improve the amenity of local areas and make it safer and easier for residents meet their local needs by sustainable transport modes.
3. **Deliverability:** Streets for People corridors need to be on streets where changes are possible and take advantage of other project opportunities.

Additionally, feedback gathered through the community engagement period has been considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into the final Streets for People network. Figure 2 below shows a map of the final Streets for People network.

More details about the Streets for People network and criteria can be found at the final Streets for People Plan (Attachment 1). A summary of the changes made to the Streets for People network following community engagement can be found in Table 1 below.

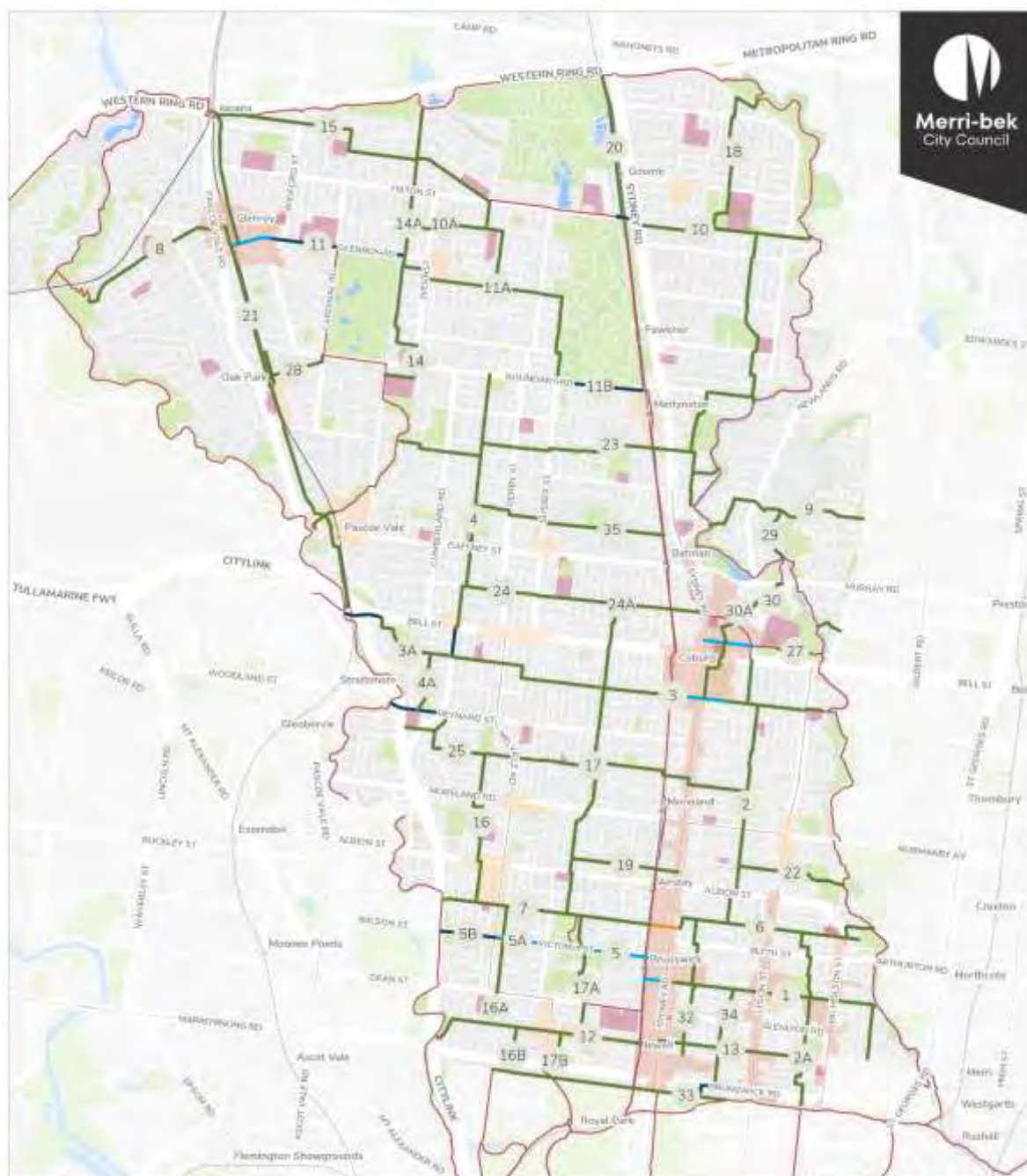


Figure 2 Streets for People network

Table 1 Summary of changes to Streets for People network

Street	Suburb	SfP#	Change and Rationale
Minnie Street	Brunswick	32A	Add Minnie Street and north section of Ewing Street, to support Ewing St as SfP corridor, and
North Street	Hadfield	10A	North St between Regent St and Valencia St as a more direct option between Fawkner and Glenroy, compared to Everard St. Provided as alternative option to Hilton St due to feasibility concerns.
Goff Street	Coburg	27	Forms part of a Strategic Cycling Corridor, and connection into Darebin. Improves connections from Preston to Coburg, and Coburg High School.
Elm Grove	Coburg	30	Updated to include as part of link between Murray Road and Coburg Activity Centre, including Russell St and Elm Grove. Noting Elm Grove is a DTP managed road.
Westbourne Street	Brunswick West	17	Recommend re-aligning the 'Brunswick West Shimmy Route' between Hope St and Albion St to Westbourne St to run along the primary school, with potential for better signal location at Albion St.
Tanderum Drive	Coburg	30	Updated to include as part of link between Murray Road and Coburg Activity Centre, including Russell St and Elm Grove.
Russell Street	Coburg	30	Updated to include as part of link between Murray Road and Coburg AC, including Russell St and Elm Grove.
O'Hea Street	Coburg North	24	Updated so that O'Hea St between York Ave and Pentridge Blvd all shown as SfP corridor, not just the proposed new section between Sussex St and Irvine St.
Charles Street	Coburg North	35	Additional east-west SfP corridor in Coburg North to address large distance between O'Hea St and Shorts Rd.
Parker Reserve	Fawkner	18	Include link through Parker Reserve between Keady St and Derby St (Route 18) – in line with Council resolution on Fawkner Transport Study implementation
Curie Avenue	Pascoe Vale South	28	Remove section on Rhodes Pde on DTP road and avoid large 5-leg roundabout by re-routing along Curie Ave to Oak Park Station

High priority projects

Table 2 below outlines the projects that have been identified as high priority, that are proposed to be designed and delivered over the next 5 years. Projects have been identified as high priority based on their alignment with time-sensitive projects, such as the level crossing removal project, or due to their strategic importance provided in the 'rationale' column of the table.

Table 2 High priority Streets for People projects

Corridor #	Project	Project rationale
2	Barrow Street, Coburg – Bell Street to Stewart Street	Improve connection to Coburg High School, Merri-bek Primary School, and St Bernards Primary School. Align with Yarra Valley Water M4 pipeline upgrade on Barrow Street.
6	Stewart Street, Brunswick – Sydney Road to Merri Creek	Sequence to align with Hope Street project (already in design) to deliver a 'Creek to creek' Streets for People corridor through Brunswick.
8	Clovelly Avenue, Glenroy West - Glenroy Station to Moonee Ponds Creek	Create a safe connection between Gowanbrae, Moonee Ponds Creek and Glenroy Activity Centre. Improve connection to Glenroy West Primary School (existing Ride and Stride School (Glenroy West Primary)
12	Union Street, Brunswick – Moonee Ponds Creek to Sydney Road	Align with Level Crossing Removal Project.
2A	John Street, Brunswick East – Albert Street to Capital City Trail	Improve connection to Capital City Trail and major active transport commuter routes, with existing strong demand.
34	Ewing Street, Brunswick – Glenlyon Road to Brunswick Road	Improve access to Barkly Square, Capital City Trail, Brunswick Primary School and Princes Hill Primary School.
11	Glenroy Road, Glenroy – Glenroy Station to West Street	Connect to Glenroy College and Glenroy Activity Centre
17	Shaftsbury Street, Coburg – O'Hea Street to Tinning Street	Improve connection between Streets for People Corridors
10	Roma Street, Fawkner – Sydney Road to Merri Creek	Identified in Fawkner Transport Study as high priority project

Table 3 below summarised the changes made to the high priority projects following community engagement.

Table 3 Summary of changes to high priority projects

Corridor #	Project	Change	Rationale
2A	John Street, Brunswick East – Albert Street to Capital City Trail	Added	Align with upcoming road renewal and roundabout reconstruction works
34	Ewing Street, Brunswick – Glenlyon Road to Brunswick Road	Added	Strong community support through community engagement
17	Shaftsbury Street, Coburg – O’Hea Street to Tinning Street	Added	Strong community support through community engagement
29	Edgars Creek Trail – Merri Creek to Ronal Street bridge	Moved to planned project	Project is in design in 2025/26 financial year for future years capital works budget
27	Urquhart Street – Sydney Road to Pentridge Boulevard	Moved to planned projects	Project is in design in 2025/26 financial year for future years capital works budget
30	Oriley Road, Coburg– Murray Road to Coburg High School	Moved to planned projects	Project is in design in 2025/26 financial year with Edgars Creek Trail project for future years capital works budget

The Streets for People process

The Streets for People Plan includes the recommended process for identifying, designing and delivering Streets for People projects in future. The process exhibited for community engagement has not been significantly altered in the final version of The Plan. The proposed Streets for People process is summarised below in Figure 3. The process was generally well supported through the community engagement phase, with feedback received about speeding up the process, and engagement methods.



Figure 3 The Streets for People process

It is recommended that the community engagement steps in the Streets for People process supersede previous community engagements on transport projects, such as the *Future Bike Lane Project Engagement Process (March 2022)*. It is important to ensure that we have a clear and consistent approach for community engagement on all Streets for People projects. The process outlined in the Streets for People plan is aligned with Council's Community Engagement Policy (2024), the community engagement principles of the Local Government Act 2020, and best practice community engagement, and will allow for meaningful engagement on projects in a timely manner. In the process summarised in Figure 3 above, Step 2 – 'aspirational community engagement' is only recommended for 'Corridor' projects, where the scope and impact of a project is expected to be more significant.

Other changes to the Plan following consultation

There are some other smaller changes to the Streets for People Plan following community and stakeholder consultation. These changes are predominantly about specifying elements to be considered through the design stages.

Access to community infrastructure

Important local destinations and community infrastructure, such as schools, kindergarten, childcare centres, and leisure centres, have been a key focus in identifying the Streets for People network, but not all facilities are located directly on the network. The Streets for People Plan has been updated to ensure that the design of Streets for People corridors considers access to nearby community infrastructure that is not directly on the corridor.

The Community Infrastructure Plan 2022-2032 has been included as a key reference document, and accessibility to community infrastructure by active and sustainable transport modes has been included as a measure for monitoring the Streets for People Plan.

Street lighting and wayfinding

The Streets for People Plan includes examples of the types of design treatments that would be expected on different types of streets. Street lighting is often included with other treatments but has been added as an important design element for healthy and safe streets. A lack of street lighting was identified as a concern by the youth committee in Fawkner, the Older Peoples Reference Group, general survey respondents, as well as through the Gender and Equity Impact Assessment. As such it has been included as a stand-alone typical design treatment for all street type in the Plan.

Wayfinding signage is important on active transport routes, and was included in the draft Streets for People Plan. The Plan has been updated to ensure that new wayfinding signage includes opportunities for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung knowledge sharing where appropriate.

Naming new assets

While the implementation of the Streets for People Plan is not expected to result in significant amounts of new streets or places that need naming, the Plan has been updated to ensure that new assets are named in accordance with the Naming Merri-bek Places Policy (2013), and takes into consideration Aboriginal names where appropriate, based on input from Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung elders.

Common suggestions that were not included in the final plan

All feedback about the project received through the community engagement activities and processes has been considered. However, not all suggestions for updates to the Streets for People Plan have been incorporated into the final plan. Table 4 below provides an overview of some of the most common suggestions received that have not resulted in changes to the plan, and the rationale for them not being incorporated.

Table 4 Summary of suggestions for updates not incorporated into the plan

Street	Suburb	Suggestion	Rationale
Albion Street	Brunswick, Brunswick West	Include as a SfP corridor and high priority	Significant feasibility concerns to appropriate improvements. Traffic cannot be reduced or rerouted, due to bus route. Officers will recommend other road safety improvements, such as speed limit reductions and more traffic management devices. Hope Street and Stewart Street therefore the preferred east-west option in this area, and should be made to be the primary active transport link.
Glenlyon Road	Brunswick	Include as a SfP corridor	Feasibility investigations into making Glenlyon Road a SfP corridor indicate that required improvements would be unviable. Albert Street is recommended as the preferred east-west SfP corridor and active transport link in this area.
Murray Road	Pascoe Vale, Coburg	Include as a SfP corridor	Managed by DTP. Council to advocate for improvements.
Sydney Road	Brunswick	Include as a SfP corridor	Managed by DTP. Council will continue to advocate for accessible tram stops along the corridor, which has potential for significant streetscape improvements to make the street more people focused.
Lygon Street	Brunswick East	Include as a SfP corridor	Significant constraints, including the need for accessible tram stops and multiple stakeholders, makes Lygon Street unviable as a SfP corridor currently. The required works to develop a masterplan and deliver streetscape improvements for Lygon Street goes beyond the scope of a SfP project.
Derby Street	Pascoe Vale	Include as a SfP corridor instead of Landells Road	Derby Street, along with Sussex St and Cumberland Road, plays an important north-south traffic function through Pascoe Vale. To deliver SfP improvements would cause significant impacts to traffic function, and residential on-street parking in the area. Landells Road is preferred as the north-south SfP corridor in the area, as improvements can be less cost-intensive, with minimal impact to parking in the area. It is noted that officers do not expect that protected bike lanes would form part of the design treatments for Landells Road.
De Carle Street	Brunswick, Coburg	Include as a SfP corridor	Council decision in April 2025 not to deliver protected bike lanes, and instead focus improvement efforts on Barrow Street as the preferred north-south SfP corridor in the area.
Grantham Street	Brunswick West	Include as a SfP corridor	Managed by DTP. Council to advocate for accessible tram stops which could potentially have significant streetscape improvement opportunities.

Street	Suburb	Suggestion	Rationale
Breese Street and Ovens Street	Brunswick	Include as a SfP corridor	Does not meet the 'connectivity' criteria in the SfP Plan. However, existing design project for Breese Street precinct is underway, utilising the SfP Framework.
Boundary Road	Coburg North	Include as a SfP corridor	Managed by DTP. Council to continue to advocate for improvements for people walking and riding.

Advocacy

The Streets for People Plan will impact some of Council's advocacy priorities to the state government in relation to transport. The main advocacy actions related to the Streets for People Plan are:

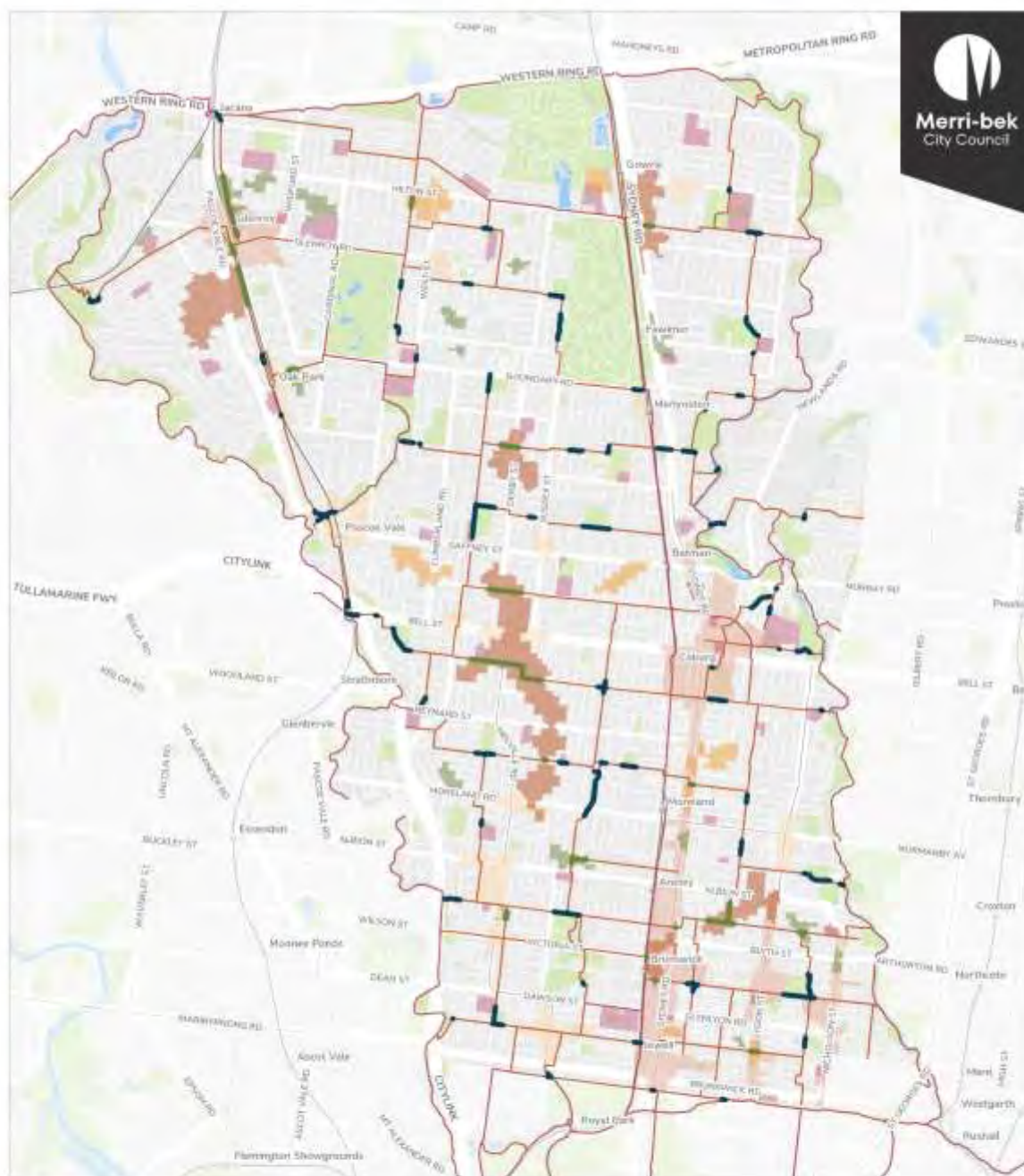
- **Elm Grove and Urquhart Street:** Identified as a Streets for People corridor but currently managed by DTP. Advocacy will be required to get DTP to make changes to these streets, or for Council to take control of managing them.
- **Boundary Road:** Small sections of Boundary Road are identified on the Streets for People network. Improving this section will require investment from DTP and collaboration with the Fawkner Cemetery. Council has previously advocated for safer bicycle infrastructure on Boundary Road, Pascoe Street, and Rhodes Parade, and these efforts should continue.
- **New or upgraded traffic signals:** Making improvements to crossings of busy roads will be a key focus of Streets for People projects. As many of the busier roads are managed by DTP, advocacy will be required to work with DTP to install and upgrade traffic signals. Officers are currently working with a consultant on a report that will make recommendations on how best to work with DTP to improve signalised intersections for people walking, and where new signals are needed on DTP managed roads, which was an action of the Moving Around Merri-bek Action Plan 2024-25. This report will help Council to have a consistent approach for advocacy for new and upgraded traffic signals, but advocacy will occur on a project-by-project basis.
- **Small scale bus network reforms:** Through thorough investigation of streets on the Streets for People network, some recommendations may arise for small scale reforms to the bus network. These reforms will complement Council's existing advocacy position on broader bus reform for Melbourne's northern region and will be done on a project-by-project basis.
- **Craigieburn Line Shared Path:** It is recommended that Council, together with Whittlesea City Council, advocate for state government support to deliver the Craigieburn Line shared path from the Moonee Valley Creek to Broadmeadows, rather than Council delivering the project in small, disconnected pieces.

Open space opportunities and road closures – “Turning Roads into Parks”

One of the typical design treatments identified in The Plan that would be suitable for Local Streets and City Places is road closures (or “modal filters”). These treatments seek to limit through vehicle traffic on local streets, whilst maintaining access for local residents and people walking and riding. They are a cost-effective way to significantly improve safety and amenity for all road users on local streets.

On 11 December 2024, Council resolved to receive a report outlining how road space could be reallocated to create new parks and open space to reach open space targets and support the *Park Close to Home* project. A key tenet of the Streets for People Plan is aiming for more holistic and integrated outcomes through transport projects. As such, officers, have looked at where there is overlap between the proposed Streets for People network and gaps in access to open space across the municipality.

Officers have undertaken some investigation and mapping to highlight potential opportunities where multiple Council objectives could be achieved through a strategic road closure to complement a *Park Close to Home* project. The mapping is shown in Figure 4 below. Whilst specific areas of the network were identified as higher priority opportunities, it is noted that interventions nearby to these areas would also see the co-benefits realised. This mapping is intended to help inform decision making, and not necessarily to be used as to suggest specific locations for road closures to accommodate new open spaces. It is also noted that the 'open space gap analysis' mapping is due to be updated, so the areas identified as priority areas may change.



Streets for People Network - Open space in roads opportunities

Legend

- Activity Centres
- Education centre
- Neighbourhood Centres
- Open Space Gap Areas priority
 - High
 - Medium
 - Low
- Shared Paths (existing)
- Streets for people network
- Park Close To Home - Opportunities
- Opportunities to extend existing parks

Date Exported: 23/07/2025 8:22 PM. Sources: DEECA, Merri-bek City Council.



Figure 4 Opportunities for new open spaces in road reserves on the Streets for People network.

Converting road space into parks is not uncommon. An example in Merri-bek is at Victoria Street and Bellevue Street Coburg, where road was closed to create a local park. Similarly, the State Government plans to convert the existing road closure at The Avenue and De Carle Street in Coburg into additional parkland as part of the old TAFE site redevelopment. Officers will continue to work together to identify appropriate opportunities, and to strategically locate them so that multiple benefits can be achieved.

Community impact

The Streets for People Plan proposes changes to the way some streets operate in Merri-bek to make walking and riding safer and more attractive. This may result in changes to the way people use a given street. The Plan shows the streets we will consider for changes in the future and our approach to working with the community on each street. The 'process' section of the Plan details the steps we will take to work with the community to develop plans for a given street. This is done to ensure that changes to the street make the street safer and more attractive for people who walk and ride along the street and that the amenity for businesses and residents on that street are improved as well.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

Transport emissions are the second largest source of emissions in Victoria and are set to become the largest source in the coming years.

Reducing transport emissions and the effects of climate change is a key focus of the transport strategy. Council aims to reduce transport emissions by providing infrastructure that enables people to use zero emission transport modes such as walking and cycling, by supporting our community to switch to electric vehicles, by advocating to the State Government for improvements to public transport infrastructure and services, and by supporting increased densities in activity centres and around transport hubs.

Delivering on a connected network of walking and cycling corridors, as outlined in the Streets for People Plan, will provide opportunities for more people to choose low and zero emission transport modes for their local trips and support community efforts to reduce their transport emissions.

Economic sustainability implications

The Streets for People Plan details Merri-bek's approach to enhancing the liveability and accessibility of activity centres and local destinations. This is reflected in the application of Movement and Place and the Healthy Streets approach to selecting projects and the strategic objectives that inform the design process. The Streets for People Plan will therefore improve accessibility and patronage of local businesses by enhancing the safety, comfort and amenity of local trips that support the local economy.

Human Rights consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, and the assessment has found that none of the 12 rights outlined in the Charter of Human Rights will be adversely impacted by the Streets for People Plan. The Plan will contribute toward the right to freedom of movement (section 12), by creating safer and more liveable streets for people to comfortably move around Merri-bek.

The Transport Team undertook thorough community engagement with a broad spectrum of the community, including older people, younger people, culturally and linguistically diverse people, and people with disabilities, to ensure that the Streets for People Plan would not infringe on any person's rights.

Gender and equity impact assessment

Under the Gender Equality Act 2020 Council has a duty to promote gender equality in new or revised policies/ programs and services with a direct and significant impact on the community. The tool that we are asked to use are gender impact assessments and the Act requires us to demonstrate how our recommendations and actions will:

- meet the needs of people of different genders
- address gender inequality, and
- promote gender equality.

A Gender and Equity Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Streets for People Plan. A gender lens has been applied to the development of the Plan and will be applied to all Streets for People projects, and the Assessment will be provided to the Human Rights Commission at the next submission date. The ways The Plan has been shaped by the Gender and Equity Impact Assessment were:

- applying a gender lens to the proposed typical street design elements for each street type, ensuring new infrastructure will meet the needs of people of all genders,
- including street lighting as a design element for all street types,
- and specifically ensuring that priority groups that may be underrepresented in general community engagement activities and are expected to be impacted by Streets for People projects are targeted for feedback through consultation on individual projects

4. Community consultation and engagement

Community and stakeholder engagement process

A seven week period of community engagement was held, where the draft Streets for People Plan was exhibited for public feedback from 28 March until 18 May 2025. The purpose of this round of community and stakeholder engagement was to understand community perceptions of the draft Streets for People Plan and to identify potential changes to be incorporated in the final plan. This was done to ensure the plan best meets the needs of the Merri-bek community.

Specifically feedback was sought on:

1. The proposed network of Streets for People corridors
2. The identified high-priority projects
3. The proposed design process for Streets for People projects

Feedback was primarily gathered through an online survey hosted on the Conversations Merri-bek Platform. General drop-in sessions were held in Glenroy, Coburg North, and Brunswick, to give people an opportunity to provide feedback face-to-face.

Officers also attended a number of community reference groups and advisory committees, including the Older Persons Reference Group, the Sustainable Transport Advisory Committee, a youth committee in Fawkner, and the Merri-bek Community Connectors group.

Key stakeholders such as the Department of Transport and Planning, all neighbouring councils, all schools in Merri-bek, and the Merri-bek Bicycle Users Group were notified and invited to provide feedback.

Who we heard from and what we heard

We received 165 survey responses, spoke to approximately 70 people at the pop-up engagement events, received four group submissions, and received nine feedback emails from individuals.

Of the survey respondents, 50 per cent reported to be a woman or a girl, two per cent stated they were non-binary, and 42 per cent reported to be a man or a boy. There was a relatively representative age distribution amongst survey respondents, however people under 25 were underrepresented. Brunswick (32 per cent), Coburg (19 per cent), and Brunswick West (13 per cent) were the most common suburbs where respondents lived, with feedback from people from all Merri-bek suburbs, except Gowanbrae.

A wide range of suggestions and feedback were received. Some of the highlights and most common suggestions were:

- Support for Union Street, Brunswick as a high priority project
- Support for Shaftsbury Street, Coburg as a corridor and suggestion that it be made a high priority
- Suggestion that Derby Street, Pascoe Vale South, be considered as a corridor instead of Landells Street
- Suggestion that Albion Street, Brunswick and Brunswick West be included as a Streets for People corridor
- General support for the proposed Streets for People design and engagement process
- Suggestion that project design and delivery should be done faster

More detailed analysis of the results can be found in the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report (Attachment 2).

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person's rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views.

The Streets for People Plan has an impact on the way people move around Merri-bek. As such, the draft Plan was publicly exhibited for community feedback for a period of 7 weeks, to allow all potential affected community members an opportunity to provide input. Demographic groups in the community who are often underrepresented in online surveys were targeted, such as older people, younger people, and culturally and linguistically diverse members of the community.

Communications

A communications plan was developed and delivered to notify community members of the Streets for People Plan and invite them to provide their feedback. The main communication methods were:

- Emails sent to 4,746 people who have registered interest in Merri-bek transport projects
- An article in Merri-bek Community News, which was delivered to all Merri-bek households
- An article in My Merri-bek e-newsletter
- English language posters and fliers displayed at key Council facilities, including Neighbourhood Houses
- Translated posters and fliers displayed at key Council facilities, including Neighbourhood Houses in Italian, Arabic, Greek, Turkish and Simplified Chinese

- Targeted social media advertising campaign on Facebook and Instagram to Merri-bek community members
- Targeted translated social media advertising campaign in Italian, Arabic, Greek, Turkish and Simplified Chinese
- Distribution of translated Streets for People Plan summary document and survey through Merri-bek Connectors program

5. Officer declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and resources implications

The recommendations of this report can be carried out with the existing budget and resourcing allocated in the 2025-26 Council Budget. However, the implementation of the Streets for People Plan will be an ongoing process including significant and varied capital works. Therefore, these recommendations will affect future council budgets in that the Streets for People Plan will guide where budget for transport infrastructure is allocated.

For 2025-26, there is currently \$80,000 allocated for design of 'Streets for People Priority Projects'. It is intended that this funding be used to undertake concept design and community engagement on one or two of the high priority projects.

Council funding decisions about individual projects will be made in the context of the Council Budget. Officers will seek external funding opportunities to supplement Council budgets.

Should Council wish to pursue a faster implementation of the Streets for People Plan and more significant change to Merri-bek streetscapes in future years, additional internal resourcing will be required, as well as additional funding for capital works delivery.

7. Implementation

Subject to Council's decision, implementation of the strategy can commence immediately. Implementing the strategy is a long-term and ongoing process. The implementation steps that will be taken in the 2025/26 financial year are as follows:

1. Officers to notify respondents to the survey of the Council decision and of any changes to the Plan following consultation via the Conversations Merri-bek website.
2. Finalised documents to be uploaded to Council's corporate website and Conversations Merri-bek webpage.
3. Officers will begin the design process for at least one of the high priority projects, beginning with Barrow Street, Coburg (Bell Street to Stewart Street).
4. Officers to work with relevant stakeholders on the recommended advocacy actions.

Attachment/s

- 1 [🔗](#) Streets for People Plan - Report D25/385912



Merri-bek
City Council

Streets for People Plan

August 2025



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Introduction

This is Merri-bek's plan to create more safe, accessible, healthy, liveable and inclusive streets for everyone. While there are many great streets in Merri-bek, using our streets can be stressful, uncomfortable and often dangerous. Pressure on our streets continues to increase as our city grows and becomes more attractive for people to visit. This means that adapting our streets in a thoughtful and inclusive way is critical to improving quality of life in our vibrant inner-city community.

Council's Moving Around Merri-bek Strategy has adopted a Streets for People Framework that has enabled a more holistic streetscape planning and design process to create better streets for everyone. This Plan has been developed to identify the role different streets play in our network and help guide council's future investment in our streets to make them better for everyone.

The plan has two key objectives;

1. **Identify which streets in Merri-bek council should target as Streets for People Projects by undertaking a holistic design process for streetscape improvements.**
2. **Detail the role these streets play in Merri-bek's transport network and what should be considered to help them adapt as safe, accessible, sustainable, healthy, liveable and inclusive transport connections.**

The Plan highlights the types of treatments that could be considered on each street depending on its typology and identifies how they will be prioritised. The plan also sets out Merri-bek's long-term network of sustainable transport routes and key transport connections.

Projects on Streets for People corridors will be designed in line with the Streets for People Framework, which was introduced in the Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy. This is summarised in Figure 1 below

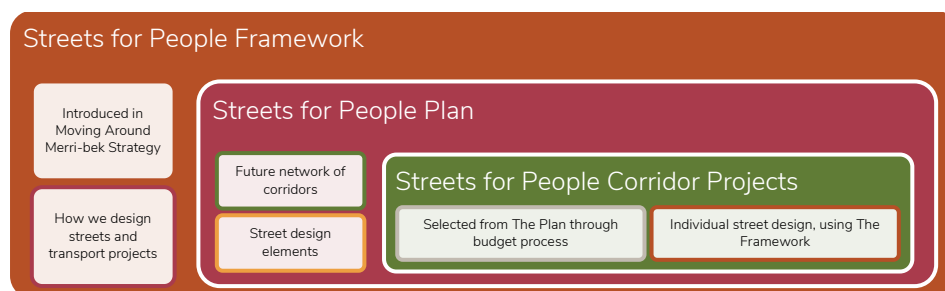


Figure 1. Relationship between the Streets for People Framework, The Plan, and Corridor Projects

For people walking in Merri-bek, the Streets for People Plan will make it easier, safer and more comfortable to make their daily local trips, such as to schools, shops and parks. For the most part, people walking will be prioritised along the corridors. The Plan will also create a network of streets where most people have the option to safely ride a bike or scooter for local trips if they want to. For people driving private vehicles in Merri-bek, the Streets for People Plan will create safer streets to minimise conflicts with other road users and target streets where a program of road safety interventions is necessary rather than individual projects.

The Plan will aim to make streets more pleasant for residents and visitors along the corridors, with more trees and calmer streets that are more comfortable, safe and attractive for everyone. Similarly, it will improve streetscapes connecting to activity centres and retail strips, making them more inviting for people to visit and spend time.

Whilst we can identify the types of improvements that could be expected on Streets for People corridors, each Streets for People project will be different. Proposed changes will be developed based on case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the local context, and input from the community.

The first section of this report provides more background information about The Plan, including its strategic context, the Movement and Place framework, and an overview of how Streets for People corridors have been identified. The second section is the Streets for People Plan, showing all the identified corridors, the proposed prioritisation, as well as an overview of different design elements that could be expected on the Streets for People corridors. The final section of the report talks about the processes for implementing The Plan.

Merri-bek Public Realm

The public realm is all the publicly owned space that is available for the community to rest, connect, and gather. Our public realm consists of our streets, our civic spaces, and our open spaces. There is overlap in the way these distinct aspects of our public realm are used and are considered, as shown in Figure 2.

This document, the Streets for People Plan, focuses on the improvement of our streets. Improvements to our civic spaces within our activity centres, will be covered under a forthcoming plan. Improvements to our open spaces is located in our Open Space Strategy and Action Plan.

In this context “Steets” refers to the entire area between the property lines in our road reserves. This includes footpaths, nature strips, laneways, road carriageway parking lanes, and all the infrastructure that resides in these areas.

People move around Merri-bek in different ways, and through these different areas of the public realm. This document focuses on Streets however there will be overlap with the other two documents and the purpose of these documents is to provide a complete picture of the Merri-bek public realm.

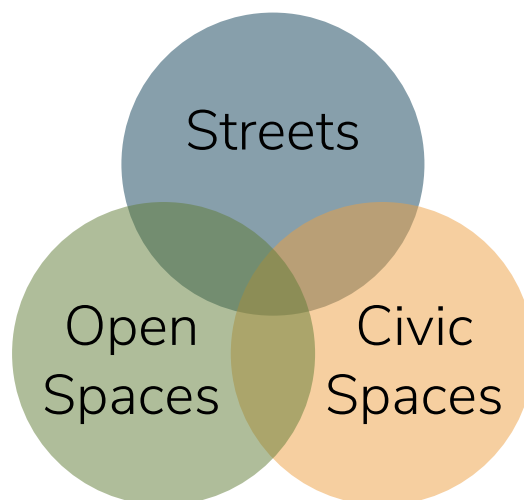


Figure 2 The public realm

Policy Context

Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy

In March 2024, Council adopted the Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy. The strategy is a long-term strategic document that guides how Council will make changes and manage the transport system of Merri-bek. Moving Around Merri-bek outlines the future vision and values of our transport system. These values are:

Safe, Accessible, Sustainable, Healthy, Liveable and Inclusive

The Merri-bek transport system comprises all the space and infrastructure that facilitates all of the trips made in Merri-bek. This includes the pedestrian network, cycling network, public transport networks, driving network and lane use.

The Moving Around Merri-bek strategy introduced the Streets for People Framework, which is our new approach for making changes to streets in Merri-bek. The Streets for People Framework takes a holistic approach to understanding and making changes to streets, ensuring that our values and vision are reflected in the projects making improvements to our transport system. The Moving Around Merri-bek Action Plan identified an action to develop a Streets for People Plan that outlines the network of Streets for People corridors. Figure 3 below shows the relationship between the values, the Merri-bek transport system, and Streets for People.



Figure 3: How Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy works

Other Council Strategies and Policies

The Streets for People Plan also has overlap with a number of other Council programs, policies and strategies. These include, but are not limited to:

Park Close to Home	Community Infrastructure Plan 2022-2032
Open Space Strategy	Nature Plan
Urban Forest Strategy 2017-2027	Parking Management Policy
Ride and Stride	Open Space Strategy

Background

Street types

All streets in Merri-bek have been classified based on the State Government's and Council's aspirations for their 'movement' and 'place' function. Using these classifications, we can group streets together into one of the 6 categories shown on Figure 4 below. This can help to identify similarities and to guide the types of improvements appropriate for different streets. All streets in Merri-bek have been categorised based on these street types in the Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy (p29).

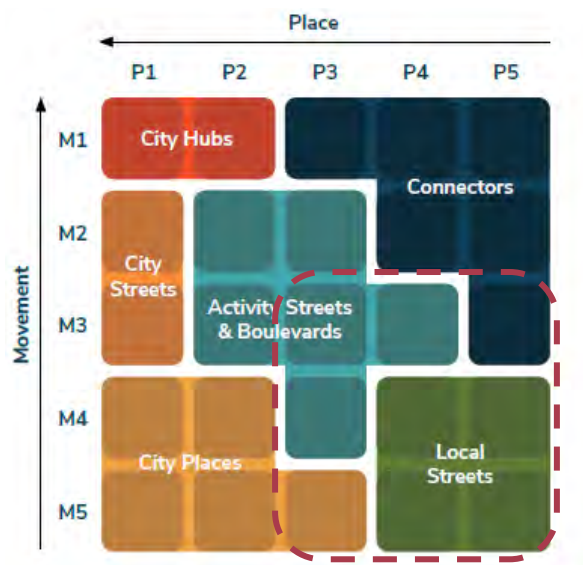


Figure 4 Movement and Place street types

The Streets for People corridors are mostly comprised of Local Streets, Activity Streets, and City Places, but there will also be small sections of corridors on Connector streets. City Hubs and City Streets typologies do not exist in Merri-bek and subsequently are not addressed in this document.

To better understand what types of changes could be proposed for streetscape improvements the following section outlines the different street types and what sort of design elements could be used to make improvements to our streets. Each project will be different depending on the type of street, the local contexts and specific needs of the area and the people who use the street.

The specific types of design elements used on each of the Streets for People corridors will be designed on a project-by-project basis, but the following examples are typical of what will be used. These examples have been shown with their most suitable street types, however there may be instances where they are used on a different street type to respond to the specific local context. This is also not an exhaustive list of design elements, as there may be other treatments used on individual projects.

Local Streets

Local Streets are the most common types of streets in Merri-bek. Local Streets should be quiet and safe and provide desirable residential access across transport modes for all ages and abilities.

Characteristics of Local Streets

Local Streets in Merri-bek are generally quieter, narrow streets with footpaths on both sides of the street. The land use is predominately residential and there is often a mix of parking on and off-street.

In the movement and place classification Local Streets have both a low place and movement function, as their function is to only move a smaller section of the community, as well as providing a place function for locals.

Streets for People Projects in Local Streets

Streets for People projects on Local Streets will typically aim for environments that are suitable for road users to share the space safely. For these types of projects, we would be proposing a mix of treatments outlined on pages 12-13. Due to their quiet nature and lower vehicle speeds separated bicycle lanes are unlikely to form part of the infrastructure improvements on projects on Local Streets, however they may still be used in small sections if appropriate

A local street is a residential street that should be predominantly used by residents of the area and not serve as a through route for vehicles. Local streets are often used as “rat runs” for people in vehicles which can be unsafe. The Streets for People projects would likely aim to reduce rat running and improve the area for residents.

Another key improvement Council would like to see as part of the Streets for People Projects is to improve the pedestrian access on our network. This involves prioritising pedestrians as well as trying to increase our Tree Canopy cover to make it more enjoyable to walk on our local streets. This is consistent with our Urban Forest Strategy which seeks to double public realm canopy cover in Merri-bek by 2030.



Source: Bicycle Network

Figure 5 - Canning Street, Fitzroy North



Figure 6 Harris Street, North Melbourne



Figure 7 Stewart Street, Brunswick East

Activity Streets and Boulevards

Activity Streets tend to have many competing movement functions as well as significantly more place functions than Local Streets. These streets serve as important movement functions for several transport modes, including larger vehicles.

Characteristics of Activity Streets and Boulevards

While they form an important movement function, these streets also serve an important place function for Merri-bek. These streets often have businesses, schools or other important trip generators that cause these streets to be busier than Local Streets.

A typical Activity Street is a higher traffic street that provides an important opportunity for movement of vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles into an activity centre in Merri-bek. These streets while busy will often have businesses on both sides of the street which means they generate more traffic.

Examples of high performing Activity Streets and Boulevards are displayed in figures 8-10. Different activity streets perform different functions and the types of infrastructure proposed reflects the needs of that street.

Streets for People projects in Activity Streets and Boulevards

To increase the safety of people, Streets for People corridors on Activity Streets and Boulevards will focus on separating road users where appropriate and improving the vibrancy of the streetscapes, making these locations more enjoyable to visit, but retaining the ability for movement through the area.

Similar to Local Streets, additional tree planting and pedestrian improvements will be a priority for these projects.



Figure 8 Malop Street, Geelong



Figure 9 High Street, Northcote



Figure 10 Grattan Street, Parkville

City Places

City Places in Merri-bek fall within our Activity Centres of Brunswick, Coburg, Fawkner and Glenroy. These are streets that people travel to and which perform an important place function.

Characteristics of City Places

In City Places, efficient movement along the Street is less of a priority. Successful City Places are streets where people want to visit, stop, rest and shop. These streetscapes make up the fabric and vibrancy of Merri-bek, with speciality shops, cafés and other places of importance.

Unlike Activity Streets and Boulevards, City Places are streets that serve the community primarily as place to visit and linger.

Streets for People projects in City Places

The Streets for People projects in City Places will seek to make the areas a more enjoyable place for people by prioritising pedestrian movement and making them more enjoyable places to reside.

Due to lower vehicle speeds and higher pedestrian activity the changes likely to be proposed in City Places do not require separation, but rather these projects will aim to enhance the local character and make them a more desirable place to be, strengthening the Merri-bek community. If vehicles movements are required in these streets the Streets for People projects will seek to improve safety by lowering speed and volumes of vehicles.

The types of infrastructure that could be proposed for city places are outlined on Pages 12-13.



Figure 11 Greville Street, St. Kilda



Source: City of Greater Geelong

Figure 12 Little Malop Street, Geelong



Figure 13 Guilford Lane, Melbourne CBD

Connectors

Connectors perform a more significant movement function than other street type in Merri-bek.

Characteristics of Connectors

Connectors are primarily movement corridors that allow people to travel safely around Merri-bek. These streets often have higher speeds, and higher traffic volumes than the other Street Types.

A successful connector should provide reliable and efficient movement and should mitigate the impact of vehicles on surrounding local streets, by providing the most appropriate street for vehicle movements.

Streets for People projects in Connectors

This street type is less appropriate for Streets for People projects however there will be small sections of the Network that are proposed to be on Connector Streets.

In these situations, it is important to separate road users from each other, and to limit the impact of the movement function on the surrounding environments.

While connectors perform an important movement function for vehicles, people walking and riding still use these streets for both movement and to visit. Subsequently there are improvements that can be made as part of any Streets for People project than can benefit people walking.



Figure 14 Wellington Street, Collingwood



Figure 15 Royal Parade, Parkville

Typical Design Elements

There are a number of design elements or infrastructure pieces that can be used to make improvements to our streets. Each project is different and the design elements that could be considered are dependent on the type of street, the local contexts and specific needs of the area and the people who use the street. Figure 16 shows the summary of typical design elements that could be used on Streets for People Projects and the street types most suitable for each treatment.

Pages 13 and 14 provides image examples of each of the design elements. Each design element would be proposed to address a specific transport or place challenge or issue and is site dependent. The design elements range from large interventions such as road closures and separated bicycle lanes to smaller holistic improvements including seating or improvements to the footpath width.

The specific types of design elements used on each of the Streets for People Corridor projects and targeted projects will be designed on a project-by-project basis, but the examples provided are typical of what could be used. Community consultation would occur for each project which would involve a discussion on potential infrastructure and design elements.

These examples have been coded to show their most suitable street types, however there may be instances where they are used on a different street type to respond to the specific local context. This is also not an exhaustive list of design elements, as there may be other treatments used on individual projects that may be more suitable.



Figure 16 Streets for People Design Elements

Examples of Design Elements

Local Streets

Low Movement and Low Place Function
Changes would be to improve make these streets quiet and safer for residents and people walking and riding.

City Places

Low Movement and High Place Function.
Improvements would improve amenity and make these places nicer to visit.

Activity Streets and Boulevards

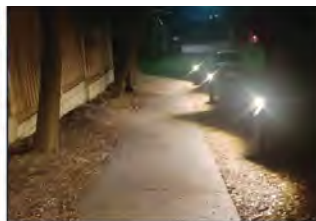
High Movement and High Place Function
Improvements would balance the competing needs of these Streets.

Connectors

High Movement and Low Place Function.
Improvements would seek to separate transport modes and improve safety.



Street trees



Street lighting



Street furniture



Speed reduction



Wombat crossing



Pedestrian signals



Wayfinding



Seating



Rain gardens



Shared Path Crossing



Footpath widening



Build Outs



Advisory bike lanes



Coloured asphalt



Road Closures



Shared zones



Slow points



One-way filter



Outdoor Dining



Protected bike lanes



Shared paths

Streets for People Plan

How corridors were identified

The network of Streets for People Corridors have been identified using the 3 criteria shown on Figure 17 below.

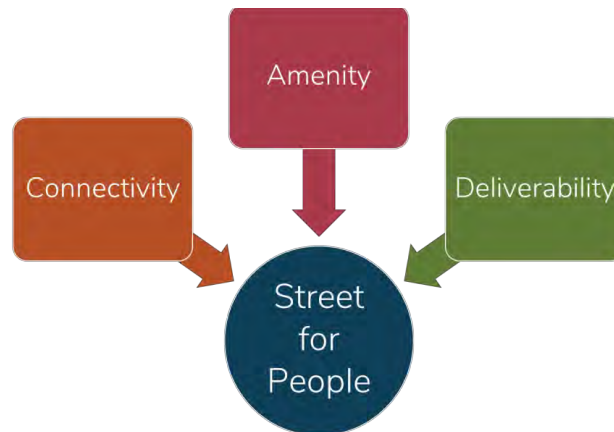


Figure 17 Corridor selection criteria

Criteria 1 – Connectivity

Streets for People corridors need to help people connect with key local destinations in their area. In particular:

- Schools, kindergartens, and childcare centres
- Activity centres and local shopping strips
- Train stations and public transport stops
- Parks, leisure centres, and other key destinations
- Existing walking and riding infrastructure

Criteria 2 – Amenity

Streets for People corridors should help focus efforts to improve the amenity of local areas and make it safer and easier for residents meet their local needs by sustainable transport modes. This includes:

- Improving local places and existing walking and riding routes
- Facilitating local economic activity
- Addressing heat vulnerability
- Addressing road safety concerns

Criteria 3 – Deliverability

Streets for People corridors need to be on streets where changes are possible, and take advantage of other project opportunities. This includes:

- Local contexts such as topography, street classifications, flooding, and road width
- Consideration for total lifecycle costs, including maintenance of infrastructure
- Responding to external opportunities, such as level crossing removals and major projects
- Coordinating with other Council projects and strategic objectives
- Community support

Streets for People Network

The map in Figure 18 below shows our long-term Streets for People network for corridor and streetscape improvements. Each street segment along the corridors is coloured according to its street type category.

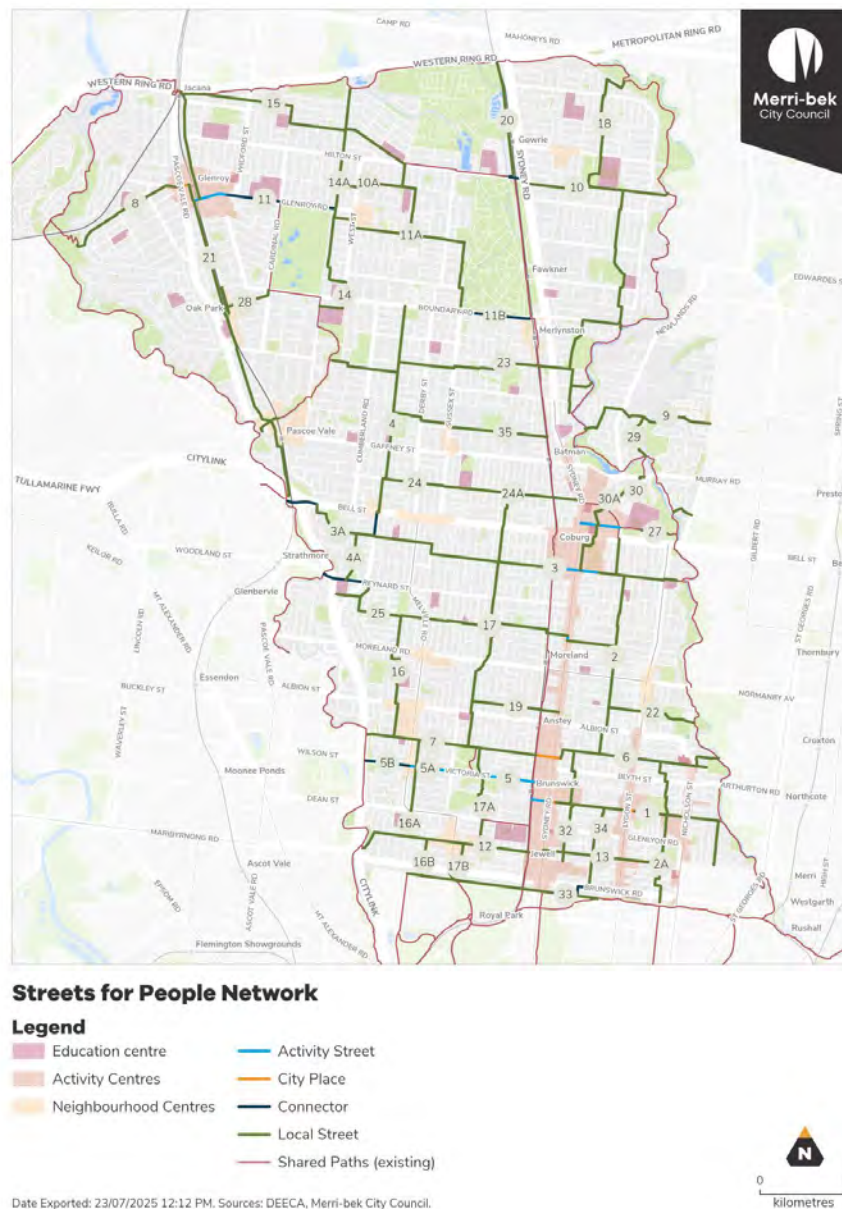


Figure 18 Street for People Network – Street Type

Network Status

To achieve the long-term Streets for People Network, Council has outlined the network status of the Street for People projects. The status for new Streets for People projects is outlined in Figure 19 Streets for People Network - Status, and list of all projects can be found in the Appendix on Page 23-24.

Existing Network

The existing network includes existing infrastructure that makes it easier to move safely around Merri-bek, including our shared user paths in open spaces such as the Merri creek trail or existing on road infrastructure such as existing bicycle lanes on Dawson Street, Brunswick. The Streets for People Network uses these existing pieces of infrastructure to form the building blocks of the final long-term Streets for People Network.

Planned Network

The Planned network refers to projects that are already in design process. These projects have been identified through previous capital works programs and Council budgets. These projects are already subject to the streets for people project process for engagement and delivery.

The planned projects can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Planned Network

Corridor No	Project	Type	Project Status
5	Victoria St, Brunswick – Pearson Street to Sydney Road	Corridor Project	Preferred Design Endorsed by Council. Undergoing detailed design
3	Harding and Munro St, Coburg – Rose St to Nicholson St	Corridor Project	Concept Design Stage
1	Albert St, Brunswick – Upfield Line to Merri Creek	Corridor Project	Concept Design Stage
7	Hope St, Brunswick – Moonee Ponds Creek to Sydney Rd	Corridor Project	Concept Design Stage
21	Craigieburn Line Active Transport Link, Oak Park – Glenroy Rd to Oak Park Station	Targeted Project	Background Analysis and advocacy
24	O’hea Street – Irvine Street to Sussex Street	Targeted Project	Preferred Design Endorsed by Council. Undergoing detailed design
20	Upfield Extension, Boundary Road to M80 Ring Road Trail	Targeted Project	Being delivered by the Department of Transport and Planning
27	Urquhart Street – Sydney Road to Pentridge Boulevard	Targeted	Background Analysis
29	Edgars Creek Trail – Merri Creek to Ronald Street bridge	Targeted	Background Analysis
30	Oriley Road – Murray Road to Coburg High School	Targeted	Improve connection to Coburg High School

Proposed Network – Corridor and Targeted Network

New projects are identified on the proposed network. These projects are split into corridor projects and targeted projects. The difference between a corridor project and a targeted project is the scope of changes proposed, in that a corridor project would see significant changes to how the street functions while a targeted project is smaller in size.

Subsequently, corridor projects would involve additional community consultation, and additional capital works investment. Outlining the project type at this stage allows for more projects to be delivered using existing Council resources.

The process for delivering both corridor projects and targeted projects is outlined on Page 19.

The map below in Figure 19 shows the network status of the identified street improvement corridors. The status has been assessed based on current projects already underway and proposed projects. It also shows whether the proposed projects are a full corridor project or a smaller targeted project.

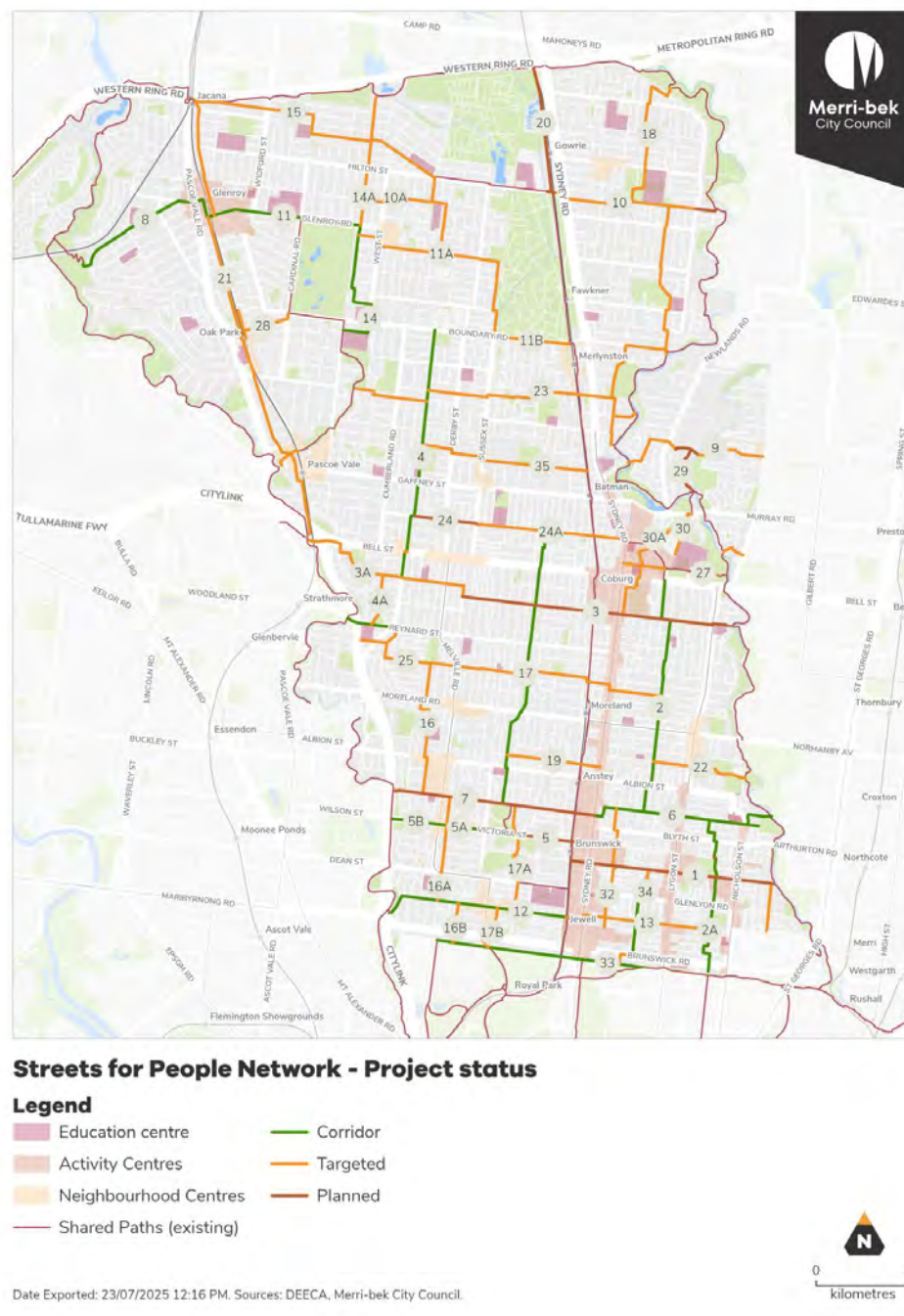


Figure 19 Streets for People Network - Status

High Priority Projects

Table 2 below outlines the projects that have been identified as high priority. Projects have been identified as high priority based on their alignment with time-sensitive projects, such as the level crossing removal project, or due to their strategic importance provided in the 'rationale' column of the table.

This table will be reviewed and updated prior to 2030 to reflect progress on delivering Streets for People projects and the highest priority projects at the time of publication.

Table 2 High Priority Projects

Corridor #	Project	Type	Rationale
2	Barrow Street, Coburg – Bell Street to Stewart Street	Corridor	Improve connection to Coburg High School, Merri-bek Primary School, and St Bernards Primary School. Align with Yarra Valley Water M4 pipeline upgrade on Barrow Street.
6	Stewart Street, Brunswick – Sydney Road to Merri Creek	Corridor	Sequence to align with Hope Street project (already in design) to deliver a 'Creek to creek' Streets for People corridor through Brunswick.
8	Clovelly Avenue, Glenroy West - Glenroy Station to Moonee Ponds Creek	Corridor	Create a safe connection between Gowanbrae, Moonee Ponds Creek and Glenroy Activity Centre. Improve connection to Glenroy West Primary School (existing Ride and Stride School (Glenroy West Primary))
12	Union Street, Brunswick – Moonee Ponds Creek to Sydney Road	Corridor	Align with Level Crossing Removal Project
2A	John Street, Brunswick East – Albert Street to Capital City Trail	Corridor	Improve connection to Capital City Trail and major active transport commuter routes, with existing strong demand.
34	Ewing Street, Brunswick – Glenlyon Road to Brunswick Road	Corridor	Improve access to Barkly Square, Capital City Trail, Brunswick Primary School and Princes Hill Primary School.
11	Glenroy Road, Glenroy – Glenroy Station to West Street	Corridor	Connect to Glenroy College and Glenroy Activity Centre
17	Shaftsbury Street, Coburg – O'Hea Street Tinning Street	Corridor	Improve connection between Streets for People Corridors
10	Roma Street, Fawkner – Sydney Road to Merri Creek	Targeted	Identified in Fawkner Transport Study as high priority project

Process

Table 3 shows the process that we undertake from inception of the Streets for People Plan, selecting corridors for design, community engagement, a Council decision on the preferred design, and post-construction evaluation. This process provides a general overview of the steps we will take for each project. However, steps in this process may be altered as we tailor our approach to each individual project and its unique needs.

Table 3 Streets for People Process

Stage	Step	Purpose	Corridor project	Targeted project
Streets for People Plan	Transport System	How does the transport system, and the different network layers, work together?	X	X
	Movement and Place	What role does this street play in the wider transport network?	X	X
	Identify streets	Identify streets to comprise the Streets for People network based on the criteria shown above.	X	X
	Community engagement	Ensure the identified Streets for People network meets the community expectations and needs. This stage of community engagement will be 'Consult' on the IAP2 spectrum.	X	X
Funding secured	Corridor design	Corridors selected based on priority identified within the Streets for People Plan. Council budget or grant funding secured for design.	X	X
Corridor project	Background analysis	Confirm Movement and Place Role. Healthy Streets design check on existing conditions. Site investigations and technical assessments	X	X
	Aspirations Community engagement	Understand from the community what is important for them on that corridor and what they want to see change. Effort should be made to target priority groups that may be impacted by the project and may not typically get involved in consultation. This stage of community engagement will typically be 'Consult' on the IAP2 spectrum, but may differ from project to project to accommodate different needs.	X	
	Concept design	Develop concept designs that address issues identified through background analysis and first stage of community engagement.	X	X
	Community engagement on design options	Take one or multiple design options to confirm with the community that the proposed designs align with their aspirations. Effort should be made to target priority groups that may be impacted by the project and may not typically get involved in consultation. This stage of community engagement will typically be 'Consult' on the IAP2 spectrum, but may differ from project to project to accommodate different needs.	X	X
	Implementation	Council decision (where required) on preferred design. Detailed design and technical assessments undertaken on endorsed design. Inform letter to affected residents. Update Conversations Merri-bek page Construction funding secured and commenced.	X	X
	Evaluation	Post-construction evaluation to determine if final design aligns with intentions of the project. Healthy Streets design check. Pedestrian and riding counts.	X	X

Design considerations

While every Streets for People project will be different, the design process for each project will generally involve similar elements. These include:

- **Consideration of local context:** Improvements need to be designed for the specific context of each individual street. Pages 11-12 of this report detail typical design treatments that will be used for different street types. However, there may be circumstances where different design treatments are more appropriate to meet the local needs.
- **Access to nearby destinations and community infrastructure:** Not all key destinations will be located directly on a Streets for People corridor. As such, the design on a corridor project should also take into consideration how people will access destinations that are nearby. This may result in smaller infrastructure interventions being proposed just off the Streets for People corridors.
- **Best practice design guidelines:** All design for Streets for People projects should be informed by appropriate best practice design guidelines. Examples include Austroads Guide to Road Design, and Road Design Notes from DTP.
- **Healthy Streets framework:** The Healthy Streets framework (summarised in Figure 20 below) will be used for each Streets for People project, to ensure that designs are focused on improving streets for the use by all people.
- **Naming new assets:** If a Streets for People project results in a new asset that requires naming, such as a new pocket park or open space, the asset is to be named in accordance with the Naming Merri-bek Places Policy (2013), encouraging the use of traditional Aboriginal names, subject to involvement and agreement with relevant Aboriginal communities.
- **Incorporating Aboriginal knowledge and information:** Streets for People projects will typically involve some wayfinding, and where appropriate, opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal knowledge and information into wayfinding should be taken.



Figure 20 Healthy Streets framework

Supporting the delivery of projects

Streets for People projects will focus on infrastructure interventions that help to ensure the needs of people are catered for in the design of the corridors. However, it is also important that programs and activities that support these infrastructure interventions are run simultaneously that help local residents get the most out of the proposed changes.

As every Streets for People project will be different, the timing, design, and specific objectives of supportive programs and activities will differ on a project-by-project basis. Generally, programs and activities will aim to:

- Address barriers that prevent people from walking and riding for transport purposes, such as societal norms, perceived safety, skills, confidence and knowledge
- Encourage safe behaviour for all road users
- Encourage more people to walk and ride along the Streets for People corridor, or to visit and spend time at activity areas along the corridors

Programs and activities may be one-off or bespoke for the particular project. Or they may be existing programs run by Council, such as Ride and Stride and Open Streets (Figure 21 below), targeted to areas where Streets for People projects are forecast.



Figure 21 Open Streets

To ensure that the supportive programs match the scale of the Streets for People projects, **2.5% of the capital expenditure** allocated to each project will be dedicated to the design and delivery of the programs and activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Plan

Regular monitoring of the progress of the Streets for People Plan will be undertaken as part of our regular reporting on transport in Merri-bek, which is done every 2 years. Some of the measures we will report on are:

- Number of Streets for People corridor improvements designed
- Number of kilometres of Streets for People corridor improvements delivered
- Proportion of residents within proximity of safe active transport infrastructure
- Proportion of key community infrastructure facilities (schools, childcare centres, kindergartens, leisure centres, etc) accessible via safe active transport infrastructure
- Amount of external funding received for Streets for People corridors
- Crash statistics on projects delivered

The Streets for People Plan and the prioritisation of future projects is to **be reviewed every 4 years**.

Individual Streets for People Projects

We will also evaluate every Streets for People project that is delivered. There may be specific measures for individual projects, but generally we will monitor projects by:

- Undertaking before and after Healthy Streets design checks
- Collecting qualitative data to understand how people feel about the project
- Ongoing quantitative data collection to understand how the corridors are being used
- Road Safety Audits
- Reviewing crash statistics

This will be funded by dedicating **2.5% of the capital expenditure budget** allocated to the project to monitoring and evaluating the impacts of the project.

Appendix

Project list

SfP #	Streets for People Corridor Name	Segment #	Route Extent	Project Type
1	ALBERT STREET	1	Upfield Line to Merri Creek	Corridor Project
		1a	Albert Street to May Street (King Street)	Targeted Project
2	BRUNSWICK EAST SHIMMY	2	Bell Street to Stewart Street	Corridor Project
		2a	Stewart Street to Capital City Trail	Corridor Project
3	HARDING AND MUNRO STREET	3	Rose Street to Merri Creek	Corridor Project
		3a	Moonee Ponds Creek to Rose Street	Targeted Project
4	LANDELLS ROAD AND GALIPOLLI STREET	4	Boundary Road to O'Hea Street	Corridor Project
		4b	Gallipoli Street	Corridor Project
5	VICTORIA STREET	5	Pearson Street to Sydney Road	Corridor Project
		5	Moonee Ponds Creek to Melville Road	Corridor Project
		5	Melville Road to Pearson Street	Corridor Project
6	STEWART STREET	6	Sydney Road to Merri Creek	Corridor Project
7	HOPE STREET	7	Moonee Ponds Creek to Sydney Road	Corridor Project
8	CLOVELLY AVENUE	8	Moonee Ponds Creek to Glenroy Station	Corridor Project
9	KODAK	9	Merri Creek to Elizabeth Street	Targeted Project
10	ROMA STREET – HILTON STREET – NORTH STREET	10	Sydney Road to Merri Creek	Targeted Project
		10a	Regent Street to Valencia Street	Targeted Project
11	GLENROY ROAD - MIDDLE STREET	11	Glenroy Station to West Street	Corridor Project
		11a	West Street to Boundary	Targeted Project
		11b	Boundary to Upfield	Targeted Project
12	UNION STREET	12	Moonee Ponds Creek to Sydney Road	Corridor Project
13	EDWARD STREET	13	Sydney Road to John Street	Targeted Project
14	FARVIEW STREET - VALENCIA STREET	14	Northumberland Road to Glenroy Rd	Corridor Project
		14a	Glenroy Road to M80 Trail	Targeted Project
15	JACANA STATION CONNECTION	15	Middle Street to Jacana Station	Targeted Project
16	DALY STREET - WALHALLA STREET	16	Woodlands Street to Hope Street	Targeted Project
		16a	Hope Street to Union Street	Targeted Project
		16b	Union Street to Park Street	Targeted Project
17	BRUNSWICK WEST SHIMMY	17	O'hea Street to Hope Street	Corridor Project
		17a	Hope Street to Union Street	Targeted Project
		17b	Union Street to Park Street	Targeted Project
18	FAWKNER SHIMMY	18	Keady Street to Moomba Park	Targeted Project
19	TINNING STREET	19	Thistle Street to Sydney Road	Targeted Project
20	UPFIELD SUP EXTENSION	20	Box Forest Road to M80 Trail	Targeted I Project
21	CRAIGIEBURN LINE LINK	21	Oak Park Station to Glenroy Road	Targeted Project
		21	Oak Park Station to Gaffney Street	Targeted Project

		21	Glenroy Station to Jacana Station	Targeted Project
22	MITCHELL STREET	22	Sydney Road to Merri Creek	Targeted Project
23	SHORTS ROAD	23	Westbreen Creek to Merri Creek	Targeted Project
24	OHEA STREET	24	Irvine to Sussex	Targeted Project
25	WOODLANDS AVENUE	25	Coonans Road to Barrow Street	Targeted Project
26	REYNARD STREET	26	Moonee Ponds Creek to Winfred Street	Corridor Project
27	URQUHART STREET – DE CHENE RESERVE – GOFF STREET	27	Sydney Road to Pentridge Blvd	Corridor Project
		27a	Armstead Avenue to Elizabeth Street	Targeted Project
28	CHARLOTTE STREET	28	Waterloo Street to Cardinal Road	Targeted Project
29	EDGARS CREEK LINK	29	Edgars Creek Bridge to Merri Creek	Targeted Project
30	COBURG HIGH LINK	30	Murray Road to Coburg High	Targeted Project
		30a	Urquhart Street to Harding Street	Targeted Project
31	WESTBREEN CREEK LINK	31	Railway Parade to Moonee Ponds Creek	Targeted Project
32	CENTRAL BRUNSWICK SHIMMY	32	Glenlyon Road to Brunswick Street	Targeted Project
		32a	Brunswick Street to Park Street	Targeted Project
33	PARK STREET	33	Oak Street to Capital City Rail Trail	Corridor Project
34	MINNIE STREET – EWING STREET – STRANGER STREET	34	Glenlyon Road to Brunswick Road	Corridor Project
		34a	Brunswick Road to Park Street	Targeted Project
		34b	Albert Street to Glenlyon Road	Targeted Project
35	CHARLES STREET – ATTERCLIFFE AVENUE – RAE BURN STREET	35	Landells Road to Upfield Line	Targeted Project

Glossary of terms

Build Outs – Also known as a kerb extension, a build out reduces the crossing distance on the road for pedestrians, and also narrows the roadway which can reduce traffic speeds, and tighten up intersections which reduces cornering vehicle speeds which improves safety.

Healthy Streets – Is an approach to planning public places and transport improvements that incorporates public health, with an aim of creating better places for human activity on streets. The Healthy Streets approach is based on 10 indicators that are considered essential for streets to create fair, sustainable and attractive urban spaces for people to be.

Movement and Place – Movement and Place is a Victorian Government developed framework for analysing streets. It recognises that streets allow us to move from A to B, but that they also are places for people to visit, live and enjoy.

Open Streets – Is Merri-bek led program that opens streets for use by people by blocking car traffic temporarily which allows for people to use the street for enjoyment or economic activity. This is primarily done around primary schools to make it safer for children to get to school.

One-Way Filter – Is a piece of infrastructure that prevents movement into or out of a street. It is different to a one way, as two way traffic is still allowed into a street, just not at the entry or exit point.

The Plan – The plan refers to the "Streets for People Plan" which is this document

Protected Bicycle Lanes – refer to bicycle lanes that have physical separation from traffic or parked cars. This type of protection could be concrete kerbs or nature strips, trees etc.

Rain Gardens – Are garden beds that capture rain or water runoff and filter the water before it enters the ground or pipes. They also slow down the speed in which water enters the system subsequently reducing flooding intensity. Rain gardens are often categorised under Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)

Streetscape – Refers to the appearance and design of our streets in a town or city.

Streets for People – Streets for People is our new framework for making improvements to Merri-bek's transport network. It takes a holistic approach to understanding how our streets function, guiding how we make changes to streets to benefit all users, and ensure we are working towards long-term goals for building a better Merri-bek transport system.

Street furniture – Refers to infrastructure that is installed on footpaths and in the public realm. This includes benches, light posts, street signs, bicycle hoops or water fountains.

Thresholds – A threshold refers to a raised section of the road which connects two footpaths at grade. It is designed to make it easier to cross the road for people walking, and slow vehicle traffic turning.

Traffic Filter – A traffic filter is infrastructure that blocks a type of transport for using a street, usually a vehicle but allows other forms of transport to continue using the street.

Transport System – Is the network of infrastructure, different transport types including walking and riding that move people, goods between locations.

Wombat Crossing – Is a raised pedestrian crossing, that give priority to pedestrians crossing the road. It is an improved version of a zebra crossing as it allows for pedestrians to cross at grade and slows vehicles as they have to drive over a raised section of the road.

7.2 SHARED E-BIKE SCHEME FOR MERRI-BEK (UPDATE)

Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade

City Design and Economy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the results of community engagement related to a shared e-bike scheme.
2. Delegates authority to the CEO to finalise and sign a multi-council Memorandum of Understanding for selecting shared e-bike operator(s).
3. Receives a report for a decision to allow a shared scheme in Merri-bek once the outcome of the joint procurement proceedings is known.

REPORT

Executive summary

Shared mobility schemes in Melbourne have continued to develop since commencing in December 2020. Recent developments have seen e-scooter operations exit the City of Yarra. Since the removal of scooters in City of Melbourne, and now Yarra, the City of Port Phillip is the only Melbourne council with e-scooters remaining in their municipality. Shared e-bikes continue to operate in the Cities of Melbourne, Yarra, Port Phillip, and Stonnington.

Officers undertook five weeks of community consultation (including six weekends) on the proposed approach to bringing shared e-bikes to Merri-bek. Community engagement included a Conversations Merri-bek webpage, an online survey and pin point map, social media campaign, stakeholder discussions, and two face-to-face sessions. The page received 3,382 views and there were 135 survey responses received during the engagement period. Overall, respondents supported the introduction of a shared e-bike scheme and were overwhelmingly supportive of a designated parking zone approach.

In June 2024, a Shared Mobility Stakeholder Panel was established with members made up from community groups, Trader's Associations, Council's existing reference groups and advisory committees. The panel has met monthly or bi-monthly to provide officers feedback on the proposed approach and design for shared mobility in Merri-bek.

Officers have continued to participate in a joint council working group with representatives from Cities of Port Phillip, Melbourne, Yarra, Darebin, Stonnington, and Merri-bek. This will continue through the remainder of the year, led by Port Phillip staff who will draft the joint procurement and contract documents.

The joint procurement process will need to broadly align each council's governance and procurement timelines. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being developed that will seek to align procurement processes without binding Council to enter into any contractual agreement with the selected operator(s). It is hoped that a new agreement between one or more of the prospective councils and a selected operator(s) will be in place before the end of 2025. Once this is in place, officers will return to Council with a recommended proposal for endorsement.

Previous Council decisions

Shared E-Bike and E-Scooter Community Engagement Approach – 12 February 2025

That Council:

1. *Notes current trends in shared mobility (e-bikes and e-scooters) and the changing policy landscape in neighbouring local government areas.*
2. *Endorses wider community consultation including options for "other comments" to enable broad observations to be conveyed as well as the parking approach and proposed staged rollout of shared mobility to occur in May 2025 with the following amendments:*
 - a) *A drop-in session to be held in Coburg as well as Brunswick, with flexibility for additional sessions if the weather restricts attendance.*
 - b) *The consultation to extend for 5 weeks and 6 weekends (from 25 April to 1 June).*
 - c) *Should the project progress to stage 2 or 3, that consultation and drop in sessions be held in Glenroy and Fawkner.*
3. *Extends the period for a further report to Council to August 2025 instead of April 2025 for a decision on enabling a shared mobility scheme that considers the feedback obtained during the community consultation and with specific other stakeholder groups.*

Shared e-bike and e-scooter (e-scooters) Update - June 2024

That Council:

1. *Approves in principle Merri-bek's participation in the development of an inter-council shared e-bike and e-scooter procurement process, in order to influence the form of future Agreements, but noting that participation does not tie Merri-bek to signing any Agreement.*
2. *Expresses its strong preference for any further e-scooter scheme in Merri-bek to adopt a designated parking approach, that restricts shared e-bike and e-scooter parking to specific locations and considers options for compliance and enforcement*
3. *Establishes a Stakeholder Reference Group on Shared e-bike and e-scooter made up of suitable representatives from the community including community groups, Council's current reference groups and Advisory Committees to first meet within 3 months and continue until any operator has been in place for 12 months or a Council decision is made not to participate*
4. *Seeks a report to Council in February 2025 seeking endorsement to consult on a draft Framework for shared e-bike and e-scooter in Merri-bek that benefits from Stakeholder Reference Group input as well as inviting expert advice from Vision Australia, formal advocacy groups for aged and disability access and risk experts, to come back for final adoption*
5. *Seeks a report to Council in April 2025 for a decision on enabling a shared e-bike and e-scooter trial, with a designated parking approach that restricts parking to specific locations so that shared e-bike and e-scooter devices do not impact pedestrian accessibility consistent with the intent of the Framework for shared e-bike and e-scooter in Merri-bek.*
6. *Notes that there are both expenditure and revenue implications from pursuing shared e-bike and e-scooter schemes, with required staffing resources expected to be offset through the collection of fees from operators, and*
7. *Refers the initial resource need of \$78,397 to the final 2024/25 Budget.*

Electric Scooter Trial in Moreland – 12 May 2021

That Council:

1. *Notes its former resolution (NOM66/19) to request the State Government facilitate the safe and legal use of electric scooters on roads and bike lanes, and to receive a report on the merits of a Council-led trial of e-scooters in Moreland following the conclusion of a trial that was to occur in the City of Port Phillip.*
2. *Notes that no trial of e-scooters has occurred in the City of Port Phillip to date, and that the State Government has invited Council to submit an expression of interest to participate in a trial of e-scooters to occur in two metropolitan and one regional local government areas.*
3. *Approves an expression of interest to be made for Council seeking to participate in the State Government trial of e-scooters.*
4. *Subject to Moreland being selected as trial area by the State Government, receives a further report prior to commencing a trial and partnering with an e-scooter provider, including the considerations for a further report as detailed in NOM66/19.*
5. *Notes that if Council is not successful in being selected for the trial, that the report required in NOM66/19 will be expanded to include the results for this broader trial (when available) noting the trial is anticipated to be in place for 12 months commencing in the Spring of 2021.*

Notice of Motion - Electric Scooters - Updating the Regulatory Framework – 11 December 2019

That Council:

1. *Writes to the Secretary of the Department of Transport Paul Younis and the Minister for Roads and Road Safety Hon. Jaala Pulford MP seeking a review of the regulatory framework for electric scooters to ensure the public can travel on electric scooters on roads and bike lanes legally.*
2. *Receives a report assessing the merits of conducting a Council-led trial of electric scooters in the City of Moreland with particular reference to:*
 - a) *Geographically defined areas of the City of Moreland to conduct any such trial where the benefits of micro-mobility are best able to be assessed;*
 - b) *Parameters of an open and competitive Expression of Interest process to award a permit to electric scooter operators for any such trial;*
 - c) *Numbers of permits to issue to operators for any such trial, with reference to comparable trials proposed or underway;*
 - d) *The duration of any such trial;*
 - e) *A sufficient number of electric scooters to be deployed in the City of Moreland to allow for Council officers to sufficiently assess the potential benefits of micro-mobility across the totality of the municipality; and*
 - f) *Consideration to the trial of electric scooters in the City of Port Phillip.*
 - g) *safety aspects and impacts e-scooters have for all users on footpaths, particularly more vulnerable users such as older people, people living with disabilities and children.*
 - h) *speed limits for electric scooters on shared paths*
3. *Council receives the report work once the City of Port Phillip trial of electric scooters is completed and available to utilise and build upon.*

1. Policy context

Moving Around Merri-bek 2024

The *Moving Around Merri-bek Strategy* was adopted in March 2024. The Strategy seeks to ensure all actions impacting the councils transport network contribute to objectives aligned to the values of Safe, Accessible, Sustainable, Healthy, Liveable, and Inclusive.

Moving Around Merri-bek supports the future provision of shared e-bike and e-scooter services, stating that “We will undertake a feasibility study to determine whether shared e-bike and e-scooter is suitable for Merri-bek, and what policies may be needed to reduce footpath parking and riding by users.”

The *Moving Around Merri-bek Action Plan* states that potentially by August 2024, Council will have “determined its position on allowing e scooter hire schemes in Merri-bek, following the completion of the State Government trial in April 2024” and “as applicable, progressed implementation of e scooter hire schemes in Merri-bek.”

Zero Carbon Merri-bek

Zero Carbon Merri-bek outlines Council’s framework for reducing our emissions. It has three pillars:

- Efficient and 100% renewably powered energy
- Active and zero emissions transport
- Circular economy with zero waste

Shared e-bike and e-scooter services align with the second pillar of Zero Carbon Merri-bek. Surveys conducted by operators have found that around 28 per cent of e-scooter trips in metropolitan areas and up to 40 per cent of trips in Ballarat replaced a vehicle trip on the riders’ most recent e-scooter ride.

Council Plan 2021-2025

The Council Plan sets out Council’s and community’s vision for the future. Key objectives and strategies related to this report include:

2. To contribute to the health, safety, and security of everyone living in our diverse community and to increase safe, accessible, physically active and enjoyable ways to get around Merri-bek, especially via walking, cycling and public transport.
 - 2.1. Build safe, accessible, and high-quality bike and pedestrian infrastructure to create links between areas of high pedestrian and cycling demand, especially the Coburg to Glenroy bike path.
 - 2.5. Facilitate substantially increased use of active transport in the community through targeted programs which include a focus on children, young people, families and older people.
 - 2.6. Collaborate with the community to improve pedestrian and cycling infrastructure on a case-by-case basis.

2. Background

In February Council endorsed the development of a framework to enable a shared mobility scheme in Merri-bek, and a five week community engagement. Previous Council decisions in June 2024 approved Merri-bek’s participation in the development of an inter-council shared mobility (e-bike and e-scooter) procurement process, however noting that participation does not tie Merri-bek to signing any agreement. The inter-council working group is comprised of representatives from the Cities of Melbourne, Yarra, Darebin, Port Phillip, Stonnington, and Merri-bek.

Discussions with officers from other councils on a potential joint procurement are ongoing and advice on the structure of a multi-council contract has been provided to all councils by Maddocks. The proposed arrangement would see all the prospective councils signing an MOU before agreeing on an operator (or operators) and entering into the agreement with bespoke schedules relevant to their own municipalities.

The February 2025 decision sought an update report at the August 2025 meeting. Some further time is needed to confirm the position of neighbouring councils, most notably the Cities of Melbourne and Yarra. Currently, it is anticipated that one or more of the prospective councils will have an agreement in place by December 2025.

Officers will continue working with other prospective councils to provide further detail of what fees and costs can be expected for a shared e-bike scheme in Merri-bek, once the new agreement with operators is known.

Stakeholder panel

In June 2024 Council resolved to establish a shared e-bike and e-scooter Stakeholder Panel made up of suitable representatives from the community including community groups, Council's current reference groups and advisory committees.

Panel meetings have occurred on a monthly or bi-monthly basis as required. Should shared e-bike services be endorsed, panel meetings would continue for up to twelve months following commencement of operations, to work through emergent issues.

The Panel includes:

- A walking advocate
- A representative from Merri-bek BUG
- A representative from Walk-on Merri-bek
- Sydney Road Trader Association representatives
- A representative from the Age Friendly Reference Group
- A representative from the Disability Reference Group (who is vision-impaired)
- A representative from the Human Rights Advisory Committee (who also lives with disability)

3. Issues

Key concern: parking

There is significant concern within the Shared Mobility Stakeholder Panel that the introduction of shared e-bikes could reduce footpath accessibility and safety, via errant parking. There is strong support within the group for shared e-bike parking to use on-street parking bays exclusively, to mitigate this risk.

Other council areas initially used a 'free-floating' strategy where shared e-bikes and e-scooters can generally park on any footpath, within the street furniture zone. This approach does not prevent errant parking and may also lead to illegal footpath riding incidents, as shared e-bike users start and finish their trip by transitioning from the road to the footpath to find a suitable parking location.

As shared scheme operations have evolved, Councils and operators have begun deploying shared e-bike and e-scooter parking bays (see [Figure 1](#)) on footpaths with sufficient space by using geo-fencing, line marking and Bluetooth beacons to delineate shared e-bike and e-scooter parking areas. This has reduced parking issues with reports of increased compliance with parking controls.



Figure 1 Footpath parking bay in the City of Yarra (Source: Yarra City Council)

Figure 2 is a digital mock-up of a potential footpath parking bay in Merri-bek, using space that is clear of the footpath and road.



Figure 2 A digital illustration of a prospective footpath parking bay on Edward St, Brunswick East using high-visibility line marking and Bluetooth beacons

The approach largely favoured by the panel is the conversion of road space for shared e-bike parking (Figure 3).

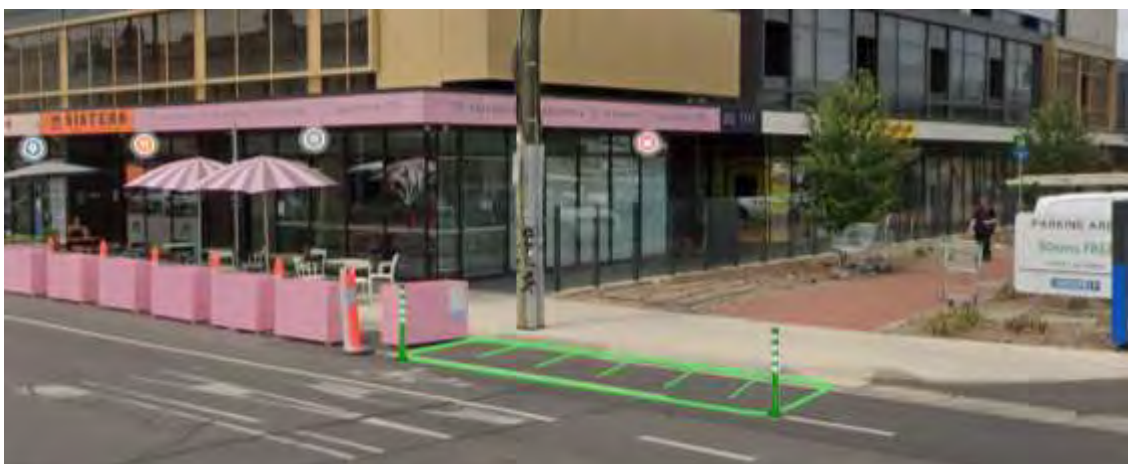


Figure 3 Digital illustration of on-street parking bay with line marking and flexible bollards

The proposed designated parking approach for Merri-bek would predominantly focus on providing dedicated on-street parking bays, particularly in activity centres. These bays would use a combination of line marking, bike hoops, bluetooth beacons, and signage in addition to geo-fencing to restrict bike parking to the provided bays.

Virtual parking pins (Figure 4) are the third type of dedicated parking that will be utilised in addition to physically marked parking bays installed both within the roadway and on footpaths. Virtual parking pins have zero cost to implement and allows Council to quickly respond to changing demand, such as when an event may be taking place.

Virtual parking bays are recommended in quieter parts of the municipality in off-street locations such as nature strips or open space areas where parked bikes will not impact on footpath access.

A summary of the parking options is shown in Table 1.

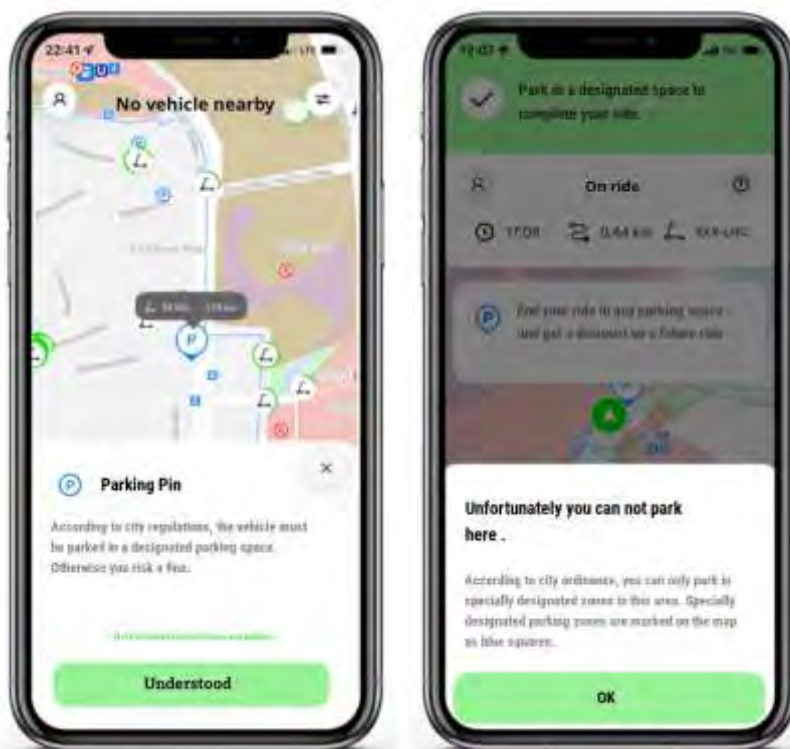


Figure 4 Virtual Parking Pin on Lime's platform (Source: Lime Micromobility)

Table 1 Shared e-bike parking typology

Parking type	Benefits	Where it is appropriate
On-footpath parking bay (Figure 2)	Provides dedicated space without reallocating on-street car parking	Where sufficient footpath width is available Adjacent to key civic destinations (leisure centres, libraries, railway stations)
On-street parking bay (Figure 3)	Keeps bikes and scooters from cluttering the footpath Encourages riders to ride on the road or bike path.	Streets with limited footpath space Activity centres
Parking pin (Figure 4)	Allows council and operators to quickly respond to changing parking demand Zero cost to implement	Nature strip, open space, Where sufficient footpath width is available In quieter parts of the municipality During events

Operation zones (staged rollout)

Operational zones are the boundaries where shared e-bike and e-scooter devices can operate. Devices stop working when they pass a boundary and riders are notified to return the device back within the operating zone.

A staged rollout is proposed. It allows council and operators to mitigate issues or concerns whilst the scheme is at a smaller scale before expanding the available service area. User demand and movement patterns will emerge over time and provide council with insights that will inform the rollout of future operating areas, parking bays and fleet size.

The proposed approach to a shared mobility scheme in Merri-bek, shown in *Figure 5*, is to begin in Brunswick South where it is expected the majority of trips will be generated. The Phase 1 operating area effectively extends the existing boundary for e-bike trips to and from the City of Melbourne and City of Yarra municipalities and aligns with the proposed City of Darebin shared mobility trial operating area.



Figure 5 Map indicating potential phased operating zones

The Phase 1 trial operating area would be in place for a minimum of twelve months to allow for evaluation of the scheme in its early stage. After evaluating the outcomes of Phase 1, it is proposed to roll out Phases 2 and 3 within 24 months to increase the scheme's usability for residents in those areas. It is recommended that a full review of the scheme and contract terms are undertaken at this point before any further potential expansion into the Phase 4 and Phase 5 operating areas.

Economic sustainability implications

A future shared mobility scheme will include a fee structure for shared mobility providers to operate in Merri-bek. Over time, it is expected revenue from these fees will exceed staff resources and material costs to implement the scheme.

Human rights consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and improving access to transport options is seen to improve the *Right to the freedom of movement*.

Council has sought input from Council's disability and social cohesion staff, and consulted with Merri-bek's Disability Reference Group and the broader disability and pedestrian community to ensure that a prospective shared mobility scheme does not infringe on others ability to freely move and access premises.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Community consultation was provided via a Conversations Merri-bek webpage which opened for submissions on 9 May and ran for 5 weeks and 6 weekends until 16 June. Two pop-up sessions were held in-person, one at Coburg Farmers Market on Saturday 10 May and one at Michelle Guglielmo Park in Brunswick on Saturday 17 May.

A social media advertising campaign was run and posters on community noticeboards promoted The Conversations Merri-bek page. The page received 3,382 views and there were 135 survey responses received during the engagement period.

Community members were invited to respond to a short survey about the proposal and were able to use an interactive drop-pin map for location specific comments. Hard copies of maps detailing the proposed operating zones and parking bay locations along with information pamphlets were distributed at pop-up events.

Community members consulted on and able to influence the following aspects of the project:

- Locations of bike parking bays
- Slow and no-go zone locations
- Council's approach to shared mobility

Community members were advised about (but not able to influence):

- The selection of an e-bike operator
- The need for dedicated parking bays
- The inclusion of e-scooters in the scheme

Survey results

This section details community feedback from the survey which was completed by 135 people.

Survey Question 1: “To what extent do you support the introduction of shared e-bikes into Merri-bek?”

There was largely positive sentiment towards the introduction of shared e-bikes into Merri-bek with approximately 46 per cent of respondents strongly supporting and thirteen per cent supporting the introduction (see *Figure 6*). Approximately twelve per cent of respondents opposed to a shared e-bike scheme and nineteen per cent strongly opposed. Less than ten per cent responded that they neither supported nor opposed a shared e-bike scheme in Merri-bek.



Figure 6: To what extent do you support the introduction of shared e-bikes into Merri-bek?

Survey Question 2: “What are your thoughts on the proposed phased operating zones for Merri-bek’s shared e-bike trial?”

This open-ended question sought insight on sentiment about the proposed phasing of the scheme.

Responses to this free text question were assigned a sentiment value (Positive, Negative, Mixed, Neutral or Unclassified). Unclassified responses provided feedback which did not relate to phased operating areas.

As shown in Figure 7 most respondents answered positively towards the proposed phased rollout of operating zones. Negative sentiment responses mostly raised concerns about shared mobility generally or were disappointed with the limited size of the Phase 1 operating area.

The desire to see a rapid expansion of the operating areas was a common theme that emerged when reviewing the responses to this question (25 responses total). Many respondents were supportive of the phased approach but commented that the Phase 1 operating area was too small and could extend further north. Another issue frequently raised was the desire for continuity between council boundaries so residents can make trips into other municipalities.

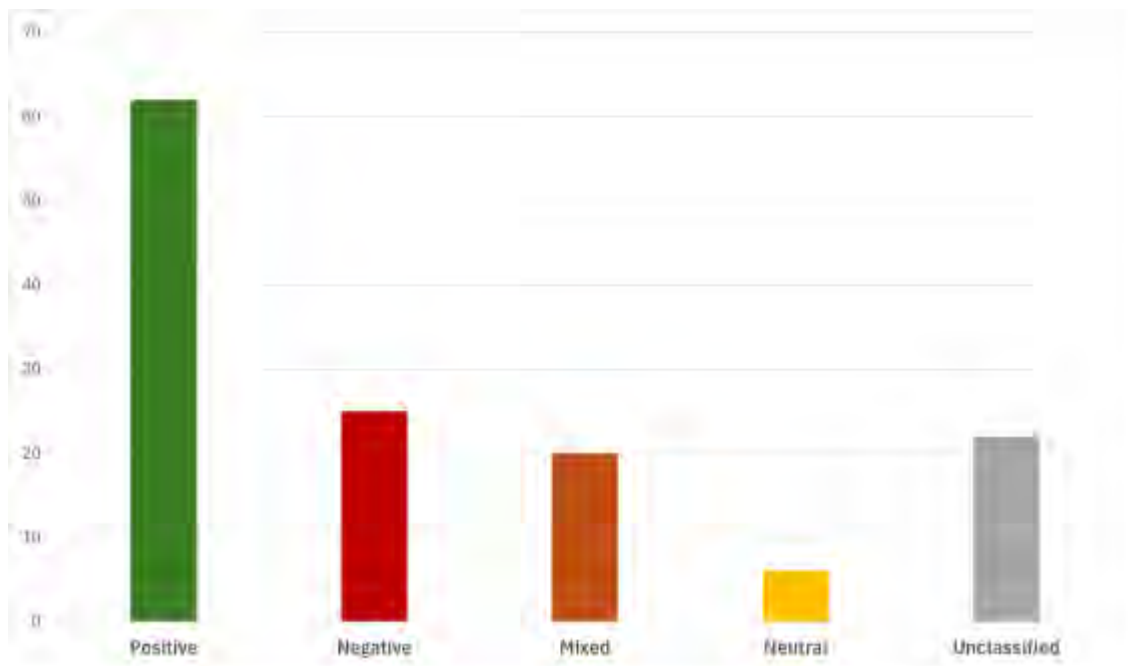


Figure 7: Respondents' sentiment for the proposed phased operating areas

Survey Question 3: "To what extent do you support mandatory parking requirements for e-bikes?"

There was majority support for any shared e-bike scheme to use mandatory parking arrangements, shown in Figure 8. Approximately 62 per cent of respondents were strongly supportive with a further eighteen per cent supportive.

Approximately eleven per cent of responses indicated they "neither support or oppose" mandated parking and less than ten per cent indicating opposition.



Figure 8: To what extent do you support mandatory parking requirements for e-bikes?

Survey Question 4: drop pin map analysis

In the online survey, community members were able to provide location-based feedback via an interactive drop-pin map of the Merri-bek municipal area (Figure 9). There were 215 individual pins placed on the map during the engagement period, the in the Phase 1 operating area. Community members provided feedback on locations where they believed there should be a designated parking bay, a slow zone, a no-go zone or general shared scheme feedback.



Figure 9 Results of interactive drop-pin map from the Conversations Merri-bek webpage

The location-based feedback has been valuable to understand where community members would find it convenient to travel to or highlight areas where they would like additional parking bays or control measures such as slow zones and no-go zones. Many respondents placed pins close by to bus stops, tram stops and train stations. Many also commented that a shared scheme with parking hubs near public transport would suit their regular travel patterns around Merri-bek and their work commutes.

Survey Question 5: “To what extent would you support the introduction of shared e-scooters into Merri-bek?”

The response to shared e-scooters was very different from e-bikes, with a majority of respondents opposing e-scooters. Figure 10 shows that 36 per cent of respondents “Strongly oppose” e-scooters, and fifteen per cent “oppose”. Fifteen per cent of respondents “neither supported or opposed” this idea, 22 per cent “strongly supported” it, and ten per cent said they “Support” e-scooters.

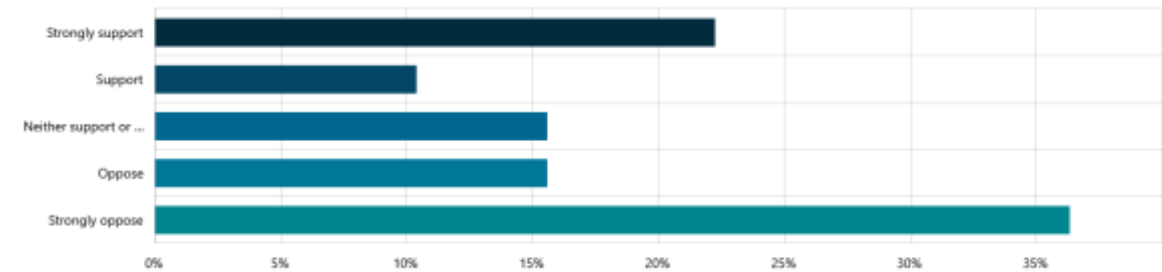


Figure 10: To what extent would you support the introduction of shared e-scooters into Merri-bek?

Survey Question 6: “If Merri-bek introduced a shared e-bike AND e-scooter scheme, which device would you be more likely to use?”

Approximately 42 per cent of all respondents indicated they would prefer to ride an e-bike, as shown in Figure 11. Just over five per cent of respondents indicated they would be more likely to ride an e-scooter and approximately thirteen per cent indicated they would be likely to use both e-bikes and e-scooters equally. Approximately 37 per cent of respondents indicated they would be unlikely to use either bikes or scooters.

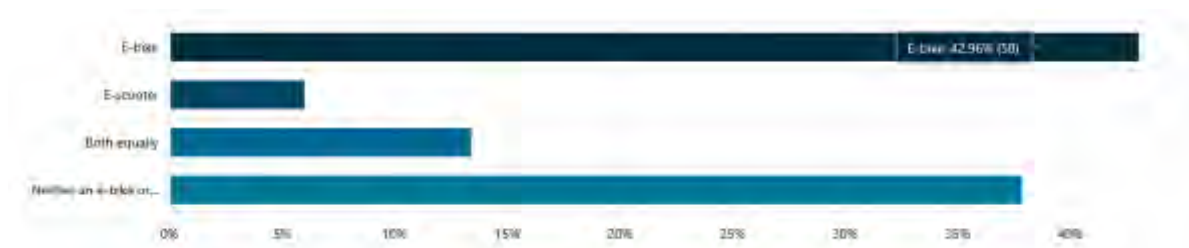


Figure 11: If Merri-bek introduced a shared e-bike AND e-scooter scheme, which device would you be more likely to use?

Respondent demographics

Data about survey respondents is based on demographic information respondents were happy to provide. However it is not mandatory to provide demographic information.

The majority of respondents to this survey filled out personal information about their gender, age and postcode locations and a summary of this information is shared in this report. Demographics for which only a small sample of respondents provided information (such as language spoken at home or disability status), analysis has not been included, though the importance of their feedback is acknowledged and staff have carefully considered their individual responses to each question in the survey.

High level demographic information on the survey respondents is provided in [Figure 12](#), [Figure 13](#) and [Figure 14](#).

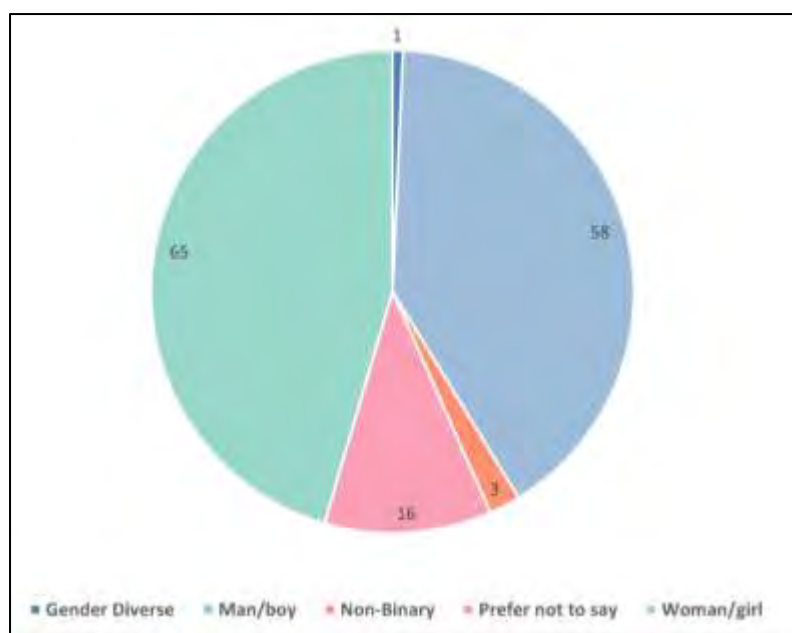


Figure 12: survey respondents' gender profile data

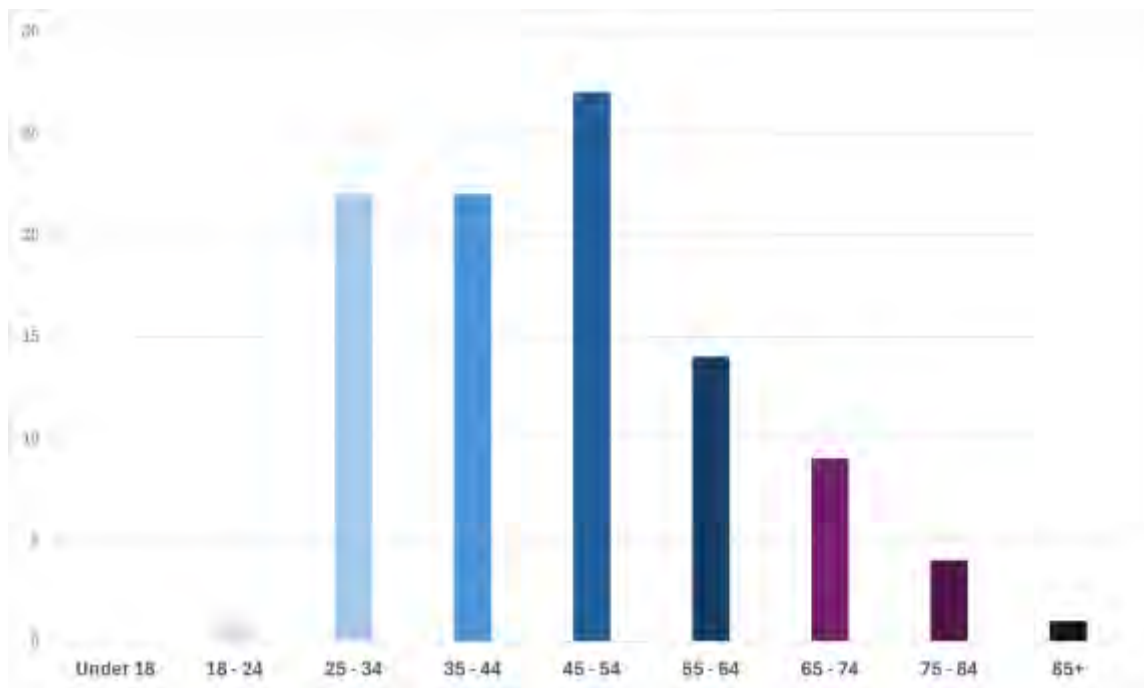


Figure 13 Chart displaying survey respondents age data

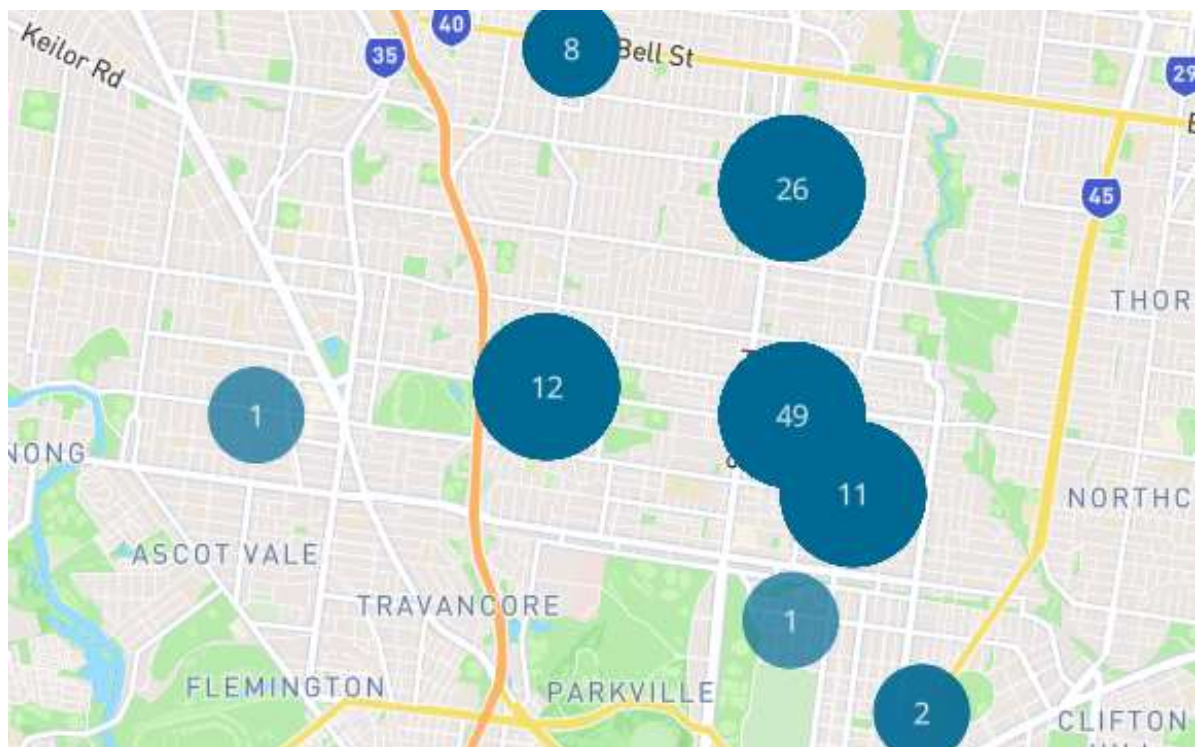


Figure 14: Heatmap data displaying survey respondents' postcode information

5. Officer declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and resources implications

A future shared e-bike scheme will include a fee structure for shared e-bike providers to operate in Merri-bek. Over time, it is predicted that revenue from the fees will offset staff resources and material costs to implement the scheme and generate surplus revenue for Council.

The financial implications of implementing and managing a shared e-bike scheme will be further explored and reported back to Council in a future report.

7. Implementation

Subject to Council's decision, staff will continue working with the other prospective councils on a multi-council MOU and procurement of operator(s) for a new shared e-bike scheme.

The Shared Mobility Stakeholder Panel meetings will continue on a monthly or bi-monthly basis until a Council decision (estimated December 2025). Should shared e-bike services be endorsed, meetings would continue for approximately 12 months following commencement of operations to support implementation.

Officers will continue to develop operational procedures for the management of shared e-bikes ahead of a future decision to begin operations in Merri-bek.

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

7.3 ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow

Capital Works Planning and Delivery

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses the proposed amendments to the Road Management Plan as outlined in Attachment 1, in accordance with Section 41 of the *Road Management Act 2004*.
2. Publishes a notice of the proposed amendments to the Road Management Plan in the Victoria Government Gazette and a local newspaper in accordance with the provisions of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 stating
 - a) The purpose and general purport of the proposed amendments to the Road Management Plan.
 - b) What road infrastructure or road related infrastructure or classes of roads or pathways will be affected by the proposed amendments.
 - c) Where the written report can be obtained or inspected that summaries the proposed amendment.
 - d) That any person can make a submission in respect of the proposed amendments within 28 days of the public notice being published.
 - e) Those submissions can be made through Conversations Merri-bek webpage or in hard copy.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The Road Management Plan 2021 was reviewed in accordance with the provisions of the *Road Management Act 2004* and *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016*. This involved stakeholder engagement supported by consultation on specific user group needs.

A summary report on the findings and proposed amendments to the Road Management Plan has been prepared (**Attachment 1**) for public notice and provided for Council consideration.

Previous Council Decisions

Footpath Capital Works and Maintenance Plan – 12 March 2025

That Council:

1. *Refers to the 2025/26 budget process the reinstatement of an allocation of \$2 million for renewal of footpaths and bike paths each year, escalated by the rate cap each year after 2025/26.*
2. *Notes that the Council's Road Management Plan will be reviewed by 31 October 2025 in accordance with the requirement of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 which includes review of intervention levels and response time to address the identified hazards.*
3. *Requests officers to ensure the review of the Road Management Plan refers to trip hazard guidelines in schools and aged care sites, and that the community consultation is broad enough to capture submissions from members of the community with mobility issues*

1. Policy Context

Where a Council has adopted a Road Management Plan, the *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016* require a review of the plan within the period referred to in section 90(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. As such, a review of the current Plan is required by 31 October 2025.

The Road Management Plan defines a minimum level of service for Council's maintenance of the local road and pathway network.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) circulated a template identifying benchmark intervention standards and response times. This serves as a general guide to all councils.

2. Background

The purpose of the Road Management Plan is to demonstrate that Council, as the road authority, is responsibly managing the road and pathways assets under its control to a reasonable standard. In doing so, Council must specify reasonable, achievable and affordable intervention standards and inspection regimes.

The review of the Road Management Plan has identified several defect types where amendments may be appropriate to intervention levels and/or inspection regimes and some adjustments to the defect types. As such, a public notice in accordance with the Road Management (General) Regulation 2016 is required.

3. Issues

In reviewing the plan, amendments have been proposed that aligned with the MAV recommendations and in some cases, have higher levels of service than what MAV recommends.

Officers propose the following **more frequent proactive inspections** in the Road Management Plan (See Table 1 of **Attachment 1**):

- addition of night-time inspections to check visibility in the dark of road signs and linemarking
- more frequent daytime inspections so that all roads paths and retaining walls over 1.0 metre are inspected at least once every 24 months, down from 37 months for several categories
- improvements in the frequency of inspections for link roads (for road defects) and High Use 1 paths (for path defects) from 13 months to 6 months
- reduction in the time between inspections for access roads with shimmies

The following **earlier intervention levels** (hazard definitions) have been proposed in the review of the Road Management Plan (See 'Change in intervention level' column of Tables 2 to 6 of **Attachment 1**):

- Potholes in roads are defined as a hazard when the diameter is 300mm (reduced from 400mm)
- Depressions and deformations in roads are defined as a hazard when the repression is 50mm deep (reduced from 100mm)

Officers propose the following **quicker response times** after a hazard is identified in the Road Management Plan (See 'Change in response time' column of Tables 2 to 6 of **Attachment 1**):

- Pothole and depression hazards on Link and Collector Roads to be responded to in 2 weeks and 3 weeks respectively down from 30 days
- Missing pieces of pathway / potholes responded to on High Use 1 paths in 2 weeks down from 30 days

- A significant improvement in response time across all road and path categories for missing pit lids (1, 5 or 10 days down from 30 days for roads and 1 or 4 days down from 30 days for paths)
- Missing pieces of pathway / potholes responded to on High Use 1 paths in 2 weeks down from 30 days

Through the review, the following **new items** are proposed to be introduced into the Road Management Plan (Blue shaded items in Tables 3, 5 and 6 of **Attachment 1**):

- overhanging vegetation (canopy clearance) for both roads and paths
- vegetation clearance that obstructs sight distance for both roads and shared paths
- cracking perpendicular to path of travel on pathways
- loose and unstable pavers on pathways
- missing tactile tiles on pathways

In addition to these new items, there is also proposed a new intervention for **vertical displacement within pathways** (generally referred to as trip hazards) in High Use footpaths. Trip hazards for these H1 and H2 path categories are now proposed in two tiers – those over 30mm, warranting response within 4 weeks (the current service level), and those between 25mm and 30mm, to be marked for response within 6 months. The latter is a proposed new inclusion in the Road Management Plan.

In aligning to the MAV template Road Management Plan and for other practical reasons, a small number of additional changes are proposed, representing a **lower level of service**. These are shaded in the Tables of **Attachment 1** peach (for reduced level of service) and pink (items removed from the Road Management Plan):

- the inspection frequency for level 2 bridge inspections alter to ‘as needed’ given there was a mismatch between a 3-yearly cycle for review in the Plan and a 4-yearly cycle for review in our Asset Management condition assessments (Table 1)
- increased response time for signage issues in Constructed Lanes, noting that this is in the context of reduced response times for the higher order roads (Table 4)
- increased response time for damaged or missing guard rail for lower-order roads (Table 4)
- removal of kerb and channel and water pooling (not in the MAV benchmark template) (Table 4)
- altered definition of undulations on footpaths from 30mm over a 1.2m straight edge to 75mm over a 1.5m straight edge to align with the MAV definition (Table 5)
- increased response time for undulations in standard footpaths and for dislodged / missing pieces of footpath from 30 days to 8 weeks, noting that this is in the context of reduced response times for the High Use H1 paths (Table 5)

Road and footpath categories

It is noted that in addition to changes in the inspection frequencies, response times and intervention levels, there have been changes made to the descriptions of categories and allocation roads and pathways to these categories.

The category of a road or pathway often influences the inspection regimes and response times applicable. The higher the priority, the more frequent the inspections and quicker the response times.

The road and footpath hierarchies have been adjusted to align with the Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy.

The road classifications are Link, Collector, Access and Right of Way (Constructed Laneways), which also maps to the MAV template.

The footpath classifications designate all activity centres and shopping strips as High Use 1 category. High Use 2 category will include the Streets for People network and this will be progressively updated in Council's asset management system. The remaining pathway network is in the Standard category.

These adjustments to the categories see an overall upward movement in the length of path defined as High Use 2, which is a further increase in level of service from the Road Management Plan.

Community impact

The Road Management Plan has a significant impact on the movement of people, regardless of the mode of movement. The proposed amendments to the Road Management Plan have identified several areas where the intervention level needs to be introduced and/or improved and at the same time the response time and inspection regime needs to be strengthened.

The proposed addition of a defect definition of 25mm to 30mm vertical displacement (trip hazard) on a path with its own response regime will mean that if a hazard doesn't quite meet the 30mm intervention level for a more urgent response, it will still be addressed within 6 months. In practice, we will program responding to these lesser level defects on High Use (H1 and H2) paths together, meaning many of these will be addressed in less than 6 months. This will result in an improved, more consistent approach with fewer sites that continue to be reported but fall just under the intervention level.

The Road Management Plan has also identified some defects, where Council could reasonably reduce the level of service, without having a significant impact on people's mobility.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

The proposed amendment to the Road Management Plan is proposed after careful consideration of the environmental impacts. One of the notable amendments is the introduction of overhanging vegetation clearance on trafficable portion of the road. The intervention level for the overhanging vegetation is set to make sure that mature trees are protected whilst ensuring safe passage of majority of vehicles.

Legal and risk considerations

The Road Management Plan identifies the responsibilities, maintenance standards and inspection regimes required to manage civil liability and must demonstrate that Council, as the road authority, is managing the road and pathway assets under its control in a reasonable manner. The review has considered input from stakeholders and MAV. Furthermore, benchmarking across similar Councils was undertaken as a part of the review.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and more specifically to the right to freedom of movement. Having considered the scope of the amendments proposed to the Road Management Plan, the rights of freedom of movement is not considered to be negatively impacted.

4. Community consultation and engagement

The review has been done following consultation with both internal and external stakeholders. The proposed amendment will be publicly advertised for feedback and will be promoted through Council's social media channels.

A page dedicated to Road Management Plan amendments will be launched through Conversations Merri-bek seeking feedback on the proposed amendments. The statutory public exhibition period is for 4 weeks and is planned to commence as soon as possible.

Engagement will remain open for 4 weeks following statutory notification through publication in Victoria Government Gazette, local newspaper, Council website and social media platforms.

Communications

The public exhibition will be promoted through Council's social media platform, local newspaper and through email communication with reference groups and advocacy groups.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

A key part of the consideration of changes to the inspection regime, intervention levels, response times and the addition and removal of items into the Road Management Plan has been Council's ability to meet these requirements within existing budgets. In some cases where better levels of service are identified (for example missing pit lids), our regime is already at the levels we are now proposing, so it made sense to align the Road Management Plan with our current risk-based practice.

Council has dedicated three staff to the road inspections function, this was set at two for most of the period of the current Road Management Plan and so the more frequent inspections can be addressed without a further increase in resources. The inspection regime will focus on a wider range of items during inspections, covering those 'new' items identified.

The introduction of night time inspections will require internal allocation within the relevant budgets, as a focused activity usually conducted over winter months.

The proposed Road Management Plan amendments are expected to be within existing budget and resource allocations. Opportunities for improving efficiency in the inspections and response regime will continue to be identified and harnessed.

7. Implementation

Subject to Council endorsement of the proposed amendment and the review report, the public notice will be published through Victoria Government Gazette, local newspaper, Council website and an engagement page will be launched through Conversations Merri-bek. This will be communicated through Council's social media platforms.

The final plan will be presented to Council at October Council meeting for adoption.

Attachment/s

- 1  Road Management Plan Review Report July 2025 D25/397795



Purpose

This document outlines the proposed updates to Merri-bek City Council's Road Management Plan for public exhibition and subsequent adoption, pending any further changes made.

This document contains details of the process of review and details proposed amendments resulting from the review.

Approach

An internal Project Control Board (PCB) was established across several branches.

To capture the road and footpath user perspective a meeting was held with internal and external stakeholders.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) has circulated templates and benchmarks for Road Management Plans. It is proposed to adopt the MAV format in Merri-bek's updated Road Management Plan.

Officers considered the input from the Project Control Board, user perspectives and the MAV in the review of Council's current intervention levels, response times and inspection frequency. This has resulted in a large number of changes proposed in the Road Management Plan.

The following pages contain tables that show the proposed changes to Inspection Frequencies (Table 1) and Intervention Levels and Response Times (Tables 2 to 6).

Road and Footpath Hierarchies

The road and footpath hierarchies have also been adjusted to align with the Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy.

The road classifications are Link, Collector, Access and Right of Way (Constructed Laneways).

The footpath classifications designate all activity centres and shopping strips as High Use 1 category. High Use 2 category will include the Streets for People network and this will be progressively updated in Council's asset management system.

Next Steps

The following key dates are proposed:

1. 13 August 2025 - Council endorsement of the review report and proposed amendment.
2. Mid-August to Mid-September 2025 – Public exhibition and engagement through Conversations Merri-bek
3. 8 October 202 – Council adoption of the amended plan.

Table 1 – Proactive Inspection Frequencies

Asset	Description	Proposed	Current	Change in frequency
Sealed Road	Link Road	6 Months	13 Months	More frequent
	Collector Road	12 Months	13 Months	Essentially unchanged
	Access Roads with Shimmies	12 Months	37 Months	More frequent
	Access Roads	24 Months	37 Months	More frequent
	Constructed Laneways	24 Months	37 Months	More frequent
Footpath, Shared Path and Bikepaths	High Use 1 - H1 - Activity Centres/Shopping Strips	6 Months	13 Months	More frequent
	High Use 2 - H2 - Access Routes	12 Months	13 Months	Essentially unchanged
	Standard	24 Months	37 Months	More frequent
Bridges & Culverts	Level 1	6 Months	7 Months	Essentially unchanged
	Level 2	As part of condition inspections	37 Months	Less frequent
	Level 3	As needed	As needed	No change
Retaining Walls	Height >1.5m	6 Months	7 Months	Essentially Unchanged
	Height 1.0m to 1.5m	24 Months	37 Months	More frequent
	Height <1m	As needed	As needed	No change
Night Inspection for regulatory signs, warning signs, hazard signs and pavement marking	Link Road	12 Months	na	New
	Collector Road	24 Months	na	New
	Access Road	24 Months	na	New
	Constructed Laneways	48 Months	na	New

Table 2 – Intervention Levels and Response Times – Road Surface Hazards

Defect	Change in intervention level	Description	Proposed	Current	Change in response time
Pothole - Trafficable Lane (40mm depth and 300mm diameter)	Diameter reduced from 400mm	Link Road	2 Weeks	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Collector Road	3 Weeks	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Access Road	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		Constructed Lane	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
Pothole - On Road Bike lane (40mm depth and 300mm diameter)	Diameter reduced from 400mm	Link Road	2 Weeks	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Collector Road	3 Weeks	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Access Road	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		Constructed Lane	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
Depression/Deformation - Trafficable Lane (50mm deep over 3m long straight edge)	Depression reduced from 100mm	Link Road	2 Weeks	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Collector Road	3 Weeks	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Access Road	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		Constructed Lane	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
Missing and Damaged Pit Lids	No change	Link Road	1 Day	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Collector Road	1 Day	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Access Road	5 Days	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Laneways	10 Days	30 Days	Reduced Response Time

Table 3 – Intervention Levels and Response Times – Roadside Vegetation

Defect	Change in intervention level	Description	Proposed	Current	Change in response time
Canopy Clearance 4.3m	New	Link Road	2 Weeks	na	New
		Collector Road	2 Weeks	na	New
Canopy Clearance 3.5m	New	Access Road	3 Months	na	New
		Constructed Lane	3 Months	na	New
Sightline obstruction on intersections and signs for Speed 60km/h road	New	Link Road	2 Weeks	na	New
		Collector Road	2 Weeks	na	New
		Access Road	4 Weeks	na	New
		Constructed Lane	8 Weeks	na	New
Sightline obstruction on intersections and signs for Speed 50km/h an under road	New	Link Road	2 Weeks	na	New
		Collector Road	2 Weeks	na	New
		Access Road	4 Weeks	na	New
		Constructed Lane	8 Weeks	na	New

Table 4 – Intervention Levels and Response Times – Other Road Hazards

Defect	Change in intervention level	Description	Proposed	Current	Change in response time
Missing and Damaged Signage (Regulatory, Warning and Hazard Signs making them ineffective) - for speed 60km/h roads	No change	Link Road	1 Week	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Collector Road	2 weeks	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Access Road	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		Constructed Lane	12 Weeks	30 Days	Increased Response Time
Missing and Damaged Signage (Regulatory, Warning and Hazard Signs making them ineffective) - for speed 50km/h and under roads	No change	Link Road	2 Week	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Collector Road	2 weeks	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Access Road	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		Constructed Lane	12 Weeks	30 Days	Increased Response Time
Damaged or missing guard rail and fence making them ineffective	No change	Link Road	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		Collector Road	8 Weeks	30 Days	Increased Response Time
		Access Road	4 Months	30 Days	Increased Response Time
		Constructed Lane	12 Months	30 Days	Increased Response Time
Missing or faded (ineffective) linemarking resulting in safety risk	No change	Link Road	4 Weeks	Program	Reduced Response Time
		Collector Road	8 Weeks	Program	Reduced Response Time
		Access Road	4 Months	Program	Reduced Response Time
		Constructed Lane	12 Months	Program	na

Defect	Change in intervention level	Description	Proposed	Current	Change in response time
Kerb and channel – 75mm uplift and 75mm horizontal displacement	Remove	Link Road	na	90 Days	Remove
		Collector Road	na	90 Days	Remove
		Access Road	na	90 Days	Remove
		Constructed Lane	na	90 Days	Remove
Water pooling - localised flooding	Remove	All roads	na	90 Days	Remove

Table 5 – Intervention Levels and Response Times – Pathway Surface Hazards

Definitions:

High Use 1 - H1 - Activity Centres/Shopping Strips

High Use 2 - H2 - Access Routes

Defect	Change in intervention level	Description	Proposed	Current	Change in response time
Vertical displacement 30 mm	No change	High Use 1 - H1	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		High Use 2 - H2	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		Standard	8 Weeks	30 Days	Increased Response Time
Vertical displacement 25mm-30 mm	New	High Use 1 - H1	6 Months	na	New
		High Use 2 - H2	6 Months	na	New
Undulations (75mm up/down over 1.5m straight edge)	Undulations increased from 30mm length increased from 1.2m	High Use 1 - H1	2 Weeks	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		High Use 2 - H2	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		Standard	8 Weeks	30 Days	Increased Response Time
Cracking along path of travel (20 mm wide)	No change	High Use 1 - H1	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		High Use 2 - H2	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		Standard	8 Weeks	30 Days	Increased Response Time
Cracking perpendicular to path of travel (30mm wide)	New	High Use 1 - H1	4 Weeks	na	New
		High Use 2 - H2	4 Weeks	na	New
		Standard	8 Weeks	na	New

Defect	Change in intervention level	Description	Proposed	Current	Change in response time
Loose and unstable pavers	New	High Use 1 - H1	4 Weeks	na	New
		High Use 2 - H2	4 Weeks	na	New
		Standard	8 Weeks	na	New
Dislodged / missing pieces / potholes (150mm wide 20mm deep)	Width and depth decreased from 300mm and 30mm	High Use 1 - H1	2 Weeks	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		High Use 2 - H2	4 Weeks	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
		Standard	8 Weeks	30 Days	Increased Response Time
Missing / damaged pit lids	No change	High Use 1 - H1	1 Day	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		High Use 2 - H2	1 Day	30 Days	Reduced Response Time
		Standard	4 Days	30 Days	Essentially Unchanged
Dislodged / missing tactile paver	New	High Use 1 - H1	4 Weeks	na	New
		High Use 2 - H2	4 Weeks	na	New
		Standard	3 Months	na	New

Table 6 – Intervention Levels and Response Times –Pathway Vegetation

Definitions:

High Use 1 - H1 - Activity Centres/Shopping Strips

High Use 2 - H2 - Access Routes

Defect	Change in intervention level	Description	Proposed	Current	Change in response time
Overhanging vegetation clearance 2.5m	New	High Use 1 - H1	2 Weeks	na	New
		High Use 2 - H2	4 Weeks	na	New
		Standard	8 Weeks	na	New
Vegetation obstructing intersections or regulatory, warning and hazard signs for bikepaths and shared paths from 20m distance	New	High Use 1 - H1	4 Weeks	na	New
		High Use 2 - H2	4 Weeks	na	New
		Standard	8 Weeks	na	New

7.4 AMENDMENT C196MORE - INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL BUILDING OVERLAY SCHEDULE 2 - DECISION GATEWAY 3 - CONSIDERATION OF PANEL REPORT AND DECISION ON THE AMENDMENT

Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade

City Design and Economy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Considers the publicly released Planning Panel Report for Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196more – Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 (Amendment) under section 26 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic) (Act).
2. Adopts the Amendment in accordance with section 29(1) of the Act, as exhibited with the changes recommended by the Planning Panel and discussed at Section 3 of this report and shown in Attachments 4 to 7.
3. Authorises the Director Place and Environment, following adoption of the Amendment, to finalise the Amendment documentation in accordance with Council's resolution, including any administrative or formatting changes to the amendment documentation and mapping required to give effect to Council's resolution.
4. Submit the adopted Amendment together with the prescribed information to the Minister for Planning for approval, in accordance with section 31(1) of the Act.
5. Write to all submitters to the Amendment, the Building and Plumbing Commission, local building surveyors and Melbourne Water, to advise of this Council resolution.
6. Designates the Amendment Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 (SBO2) map in Attachment 5, under Regulation 5(2) of the *Building Regulations 2018*, to replace the previously designated map.

REPORT

Executive Summary

Amendment C196more (Amendment) proposes to apply a Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 (SBO2) to properties identified within areas where Council is the local drainage authority. This is separate from the existing Special Building Overlay Schedule 1 (SBO1) map in the Merri-bek Planning Scheme, which applies to areas where Melbourne Water is the main drainage authority.

The Amendment will support more informed decision-making by identifying land in Merri-bek subject to overland flows and guiding the assessment of planning permit applications. It will also assist licensed building surveyors, who must consider the mapped area when assessing building permit applications.

In December 2023, Council resolved to seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare the Amendment, following detailed technical work by specialist engineering firm Engeny (now part of the Egis group). Authorisation was granted in March 2024. The Amendment was publicly exhibited in May and June 2024, with information sent to approximately 10,000 landowners. A follow-up letter was mailed to affected properties in October 2024.

A proactive and comprehensive approach was taken during the exhibition of the Amendment, including direct engagement with submitters to resolve concerns where possible. A total of 94 submissions were received, with six later withdrawn, and three expressing support.

An independent Planning Panel Hearing was held over two days on 12 and 13 June 2025, with only two submitters requesting to be heard. A copy of the Panel report is provided at **Attachment 1**. The report has also been shared with all submitters and is available on Council's website under [Amendment C196](#).

The Panel concluded in their report that *"the Amendment has strong policy support, will deliver a net community benefit, and should be progressed."* It also supported the recommended changes to the SBO2 map, as proposed by Engeny's expert witness. These recommendations align with those outlined in the Council Report dated 12 February 2025.

In line with the Panel's report, officers recommend that Council adopt the Amendment as exhibited, subject to the changes outlined in the Panel's report. Further details on these changes are provided in Section 3 of this report. Once adopted, the Amendment will be submitted to the Minister for Planning for approval.

Previous Council Decisions

Amendment C196more - Introduction of Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 - Decision Gateway 2 - consideration of submissions and request for a Planning Panel – 14 August 2024

That Council:

- 1. Defers Council's consideration of referring Amendment C196more to the Planning Panel to consider the introduction of Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 until February 2025 to allow consideration of late submissions.*
- 2. Sends a further letter to owners whose properties are proposed to be added to the Stormwater Flood Map, which advises property owners they can request a site inspection if they are concerned there is a reason their property should not have been added to the map.*
- 3. Ensures that the letter indicates how people can access this information in other languages, including interpreter and accessibility options for people who have learning difficulties, cognitive disabilities, literacy or other issues that impede their ability to understand the communication from council.*
- 4. Notes that additional funding may need to be sought through the Quarterly Budget Review, to cover the costs of a further mailout and any further site inspections.*

Stormwater mapping – consultation response and Amendment C196 – 6 December 2023

That Council:

- 1. Notes the 2023 Amended Stormwater Map in Attachment 1 that has been designated under the Building Regulations 2018.*
- 2. Endorses the Merri-bek City Council Creating the Local Drainage Authority's Stormwater Map Technical Report as shown in Attachment 1. This report outlines the rationale and evidence which underpins the proposed planning scheme changes.*
- 3. Using its powers as a Planning Authority under ss 8A and 8B of the Planning and Environment 1987, seeks authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196 as shown in Attachments 4, 5, and 6 to this report.*
- 4. Following receipt of the Minister's authorisation, exhibits the Amendment in accordance with Section 19 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and as outlined in the Consultation section of this report.*
- 5. Using its powers as a Planning Authority under s 23(1) of the Planning and Environment 1987, requests that the Minister for Planning appoint an independent Panel to consider submissions to Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196.*

6. *Authorises the Director Place and Environment to:*
 - a) *Make changes to the Amendment based on conditions imposed in any authorisation granted by the Minister for Planning and make minor changes.*
 - b) *Refer any late submissions to the Independent Panel.*
 - c) *Give direction on issues that arise during the Panel hearing in response to expert evidence and submissions if required, so long as any further changes are generally in accordance with Merri-bek City Council Creating the Local Drainage Authority's Stormwater Map Technical Report.*

Amendment C196more – introduction of Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 – Decision Gateway 2 – consideration of submissions and request for a Planning Panel – 12 February 2025

That Council:

1. *Using its powers as a Planning Authority under s23(1) of the Planning and Environment 1987, requests that the Minister for Planning appoint an Independent Planning Panel to consider submissions to Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196more.*
2. *Endorses the responses to submissions as set out in Attachment 1 to this report to form the basis of Council's submission to an Independent Planning Panel.*
3. *Refers any late submission to the Independent Planning Panel.*
4. *Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make minor changes to Amendment C196more and to give direction on issues that arise during the Panel hearing in response to expert evidence and submissions, if required, so long as any further changes are generally in accordance with Merri-bek City Council Creating the Local Drainage Authority's Stormwater Map Technical Report.*

1. Policy Context

The Council Plan 2021-2025 recognises the importance of responding to the climate emergency and supporting the community to adapt and build climate resilience. This includes severe storms.

The *Council Action Plan 2023-2024* has Action 148 to complete stormwater modelling. Council's endorsed 2022 Planning Scheme Review indicates this modelling will be used to prepare a stormwater map for only Council's drainage areas, where it is the local drainage authority.

The Merri-bek Planning Scheme has strategies in Clause 13.03-1S to identify land affected by the 1 in 100-year (100-year) storm event, so appropriate land development in mapped areas can happen.

The 100-year storm event is the engineering, planning and environmental standard for producing stormwater flood maps and is technically referred to as the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) storm event. Such storms are expected to occur at least once in 100 years.

The Victorian Government's *Planning Practice Note 12: Applying the flood provisions in planning schemes* (PPN12) advises that the Special Building Overlay (SBO) is the appropriate planning tool for including a map for urban stormwater overland flows in planning schemes.

Regulation 5(2) of the *Building Regulations 2018* enables Council to designate land where water collects or where surface water normally or occasionally flows. This includes urban areas impacted by severe storm events. Designating land allows reference to stormwater mapping information on property information certificates and prompts licensed building surveyors to consider this information before they issue a building permit.

2. Background

In 2018, Council began work to model and map its local drainage catchments for a 100-year storm event. These catchments are separate from the regional drainage catchment in Merri-bek, where Melbourne Water is the main drainage authority. Melbourne Water is also the regional Floodplain Management Authority.

All technical work for Council's modelling and mapping was done by a specialist engineering firm, Engeny and has involved Melbourne Water. This specialist firm has delivered similar maps for other councils and Melbourne Water and has provided expert evidence at Special Building Overlay (SBO) Planning Panel hearings.

Council's initial 100-year stormwater map (initial map) was prepared in 2021 and then shared and discussed with affected landowners. It was then designated for use by building surveyors under the *Building Regulations 2018*. After this designation, the initial map was used by Council to inform building surveyors of building floor level requirements.

An amended map was released in September 2023, when a second round of consultation was done. This consultation responded to questions and included another map review process before the amended map was designated for use under the *Building Regulations 2018* in November 2023.

Amendment C196more

In December 2023, Council resolved to seek authorisation to prepare Amendment C196more, which proposes to apply Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 (SBO2) to properties near local stormwater drains within Council-managed catchments. The Amendment is underpinned by technical work undertaken by Engeny.

Following authorisation by the Minister for Planning in March 2024, Amendment C196more was publicly exhibited from 16 May to 17 June 2024. Arising from a Council resolution on 14 August 2024, an additional letter was sent to affected landowners on 28 October 2024. This letter gave a further opportunity for affected landowners to respond to the Amendment.

In total, 94 submissions were received. Six were withdrawn, and three were supportive.

In February 2025, Council resolved to refer the Amendment and the 85 submissions to an independent Planning Panel (Planning Panels Victoria). The key matters raised in submissions were:

- Administrative matters
- Drainage infrastructure upgrade
- Drainage infrastructure maintenance
- Land development
- Insurance
- Land values
- Mapping
- SBO provisions

In response to submissions questioning the proposed SBO2 map, Council engaged Engeny to undertake a targeted review of the mapping for the affected and surrounding properties. This involved site visits and additional technical assessment to verify the accuracy of the mapping in these areas.

The locations reviewed are shown in **Attachment 2**, and a list of properties with their review outcomes is provided in **Attachment 3**. Based on this review, recommendations were made to either revise, retain, or remove the SBO2 mapping for each property.

All stormwater modelling and mapping was prepared and reviewed by Engeny in accordance with relevant guidelines and specifications.

Planning Panel Hearing

An independent Planning Panel Hearing to consider the Amendment and submissions received was held over two days, on 12 and 13 June 2025. Only two submitters requested to be heard.

At the hearing, Council was represented by Maddocks Lawyers. Engeny appeared as Council’s expert witness and presented evidence on the technical work undertaken to prepare and review the SBO2 map. This included recommendations to revise or remove the overlay for specific properties, where justified by the assessment.

3. Issues

The Panel recommended that the Amendment be adopted as exhibited, subject to the changes described in the Panel’s report. These changes align with the mapping review recommendations prepared by Engeny, as detailed in **Attachment 3**.

The Panel found that the Amendment is well-founded and strategically justified. It supported the expert witness recommendations made by Engeny regarding final changes to the SBO2 map. These changes were previously referenced in the Council Report dated 12 February 2025.

The following table gives a summary of the Panel’s recommendations, with a response. A copy of the Panel report is in **Attachment 1**.

Officer recommendation

In line with the Panel’s report, officers recommend that Council adopt the Amendment as exhibited, subject to the changes outlined in the Panel’s report (refer to Table 1).

Table 1: Panel recommendations and Officer response

Recommendation (summary)	Officer Response
That Council adopt Amendment C196more with the map review changes recommended by the Engeny expert witness (see Attachment 3).	The updated SBO2 map in Attachment 5 is aligned with this Panel recommendation.

The Panel’s recommendations have informed the preparation of the final version of Amendment C196more, as detailed in the following attachments:

- **Attachment 4** for the updated 2025 Engeny Technical Report. This report underpins the technical merits of the SBO2 map. The exhibited version has been updated to include commentary and results from the Engeny map review process. The report’s appendices are available from the Council’s website at [Amendment C196](#).
- **Attachment 5** for the final SBO2 map. Any changes to the exhibited map, to produce the final map, are aligned with the map review results listed in **Attachment 3**.
- **Attachment 6** for the final SBO2 Schedule’s written provisions for Clause 44.05 in the Planning Scheme. There is no change to the exhibited SBO2 Schedule’s provisions.

- **Attachment 7** for the updated list of Planning Scheme maps at Clause 72.02, and an updated list of Planning Scheme Background Documents at Clause 72.08. The only change between the exhibited and final versions is an updated reference in the list of Background Documents to reflect the final 2025 Engeny Technical Report.

Legal and risk considerations

Merri-bek City Council

Council must produce, share, and use stormwater maps for its local drainage catchments, where it is the local drainage authority. This includes updating the Merri-bek Planning Scheme to include the final map for the SBO2 planning tool.

Council's exhibited SBO2 stormwater map was designated under the Building Regulations in 2023. Arising from public exhibition and a further map review process that was discussed at the C196more Panel Hearing, Council can now redesignate its post-exhibition map under the Building Regulations 2018. Doing this ensures that building permit decision-making can consider the "best available" map.

Melbourne Water

Melbourne Water has responsibility for:

- **Regional urban (main) drainage catchments:** These are covered by the Special Building Overlay Schedule 1 (SBO1) in the Planning Scheme. Council officers understand that Melbourne Water is currently preparing updates to its SBO1 map and intends to undertake separate consultation, followed by a future planning scheme amendment.
- **Rivers and creeks:** Areas subject to riverine flooding are covered by the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) in the Planning Scheme. The timing of Melbourne Water's review and update of the LSIO is currently unknown.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed by the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

The Amendment has a positive impact by:

- Reducing uncertainty for land affected by 100-year stormwater overland flows in Council's local drainage areas where it is the local drainage authority.
- Enabling affected people to be aware of the mapping and give input on several occasions, before the final SBO2 was prepared.
- The future introduction of an SBO2 does not deprive any party of any legal or proprietary interest in land, or the ability to use and develop that land following the planning regulatory framework. Rather, the SBO2 enables safer land development for 100-year storm impacts within the city's local drainage areas.

4. Community consultation and engagement

A proactive approach was taken during the exhibition of the Amendment by liaising with submitters and resolving their concerns, where possible. This approach was triggered by sending letters to all affected owners and occupiers. This included a language translation brochure. Then, upon receipt of submissions:

- Sending an acknowledgment email, with contact details, to each submitter.
- Providing a further email to give preliminary feedback. This enabled further explanation of the SBO2 proposal, and to answer submitter questions.
- Responding to telephone enquiries to explain the purpose of the proposed amendment. This included the use of interpreter services when needed.

- Face-to-face meetings with landowners. This included the use of interpreter services when needed.
- Site inspections with Engeny for those submitters requesting an SBO2 map review. These inspections gave another opportunity for discussions with submitters. An online language translator was used to help convey information when needed.
- Sharing the outcome of mapping reviews with submitters.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resource Implications

Costs associated with managing this Amendment and its planning panel process are being met within available budgets.

Council has had resources in place since 2021 to operate the report and consent process for building permits, triggered when the initial stormwater map was designated for use.

When the SBO2 is introduced into the Planning Scheme, landowners wishing to develop their land will either need a planning permit or a report and consent under the building regulations, depending on the works proposed.

The resources required to handle applications under the SBO2 can be met within the resources of the City Development Branch.

7. Implementation

A council resolution that supports the officer recommendations will enable:

- The final C196more Amendment to be packaged and sent to the Minister for Planning for approval, to inform the issuing of planning permits.
- The final SBO2 map to be designated under the Building Regulations, to inform the issuing of building permits.
- Submitters, local building surveyors, Building and Plumbing Commission (previously known as the Victorian Building Authority) and Melbourne Water to be informed of Council's decision.
- Ongoing contact with the Department of Transport and Planning will encourage a timely outcome for C196more's gazettal and inclusion in the Planning Scheme by the Victorian Government.

Attachment/s

<u>1</u>	C196 Panel Report	D25/364746
<u>2</u>	Map showing the location of map reviews for properties	D25/348548
<u>3</u>	List of map reviews for properties	D25/348546
<u>4</u>	Engeny Technical Report (changes highlighted)	D25/345202
<u>5</u>	Final SBO2 maps	D25/348547
<u>6</u>	Schedule 2 to Clause 44.05 (new schedule)	D25/348552
<u>7</u>	Schedules to Clause 72.02 and 72.08 (changes highlighted)	D25/348553

**Planning
Panels
Victoria**

**Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196more
Stormwater mapping – Council drainage network**

Panel Report

Planning and Environment Act 1987

16 July 2025



How will this report be used?

This is a brief description of how this report will be used for the benefit of people unfamiliar with the planning system. If you have concerns about a specific issue you should seek independent advice.

The planning authority must consider this report before deciding whether to adopt the Amendment.

[section 27(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the PE Act)]

For the Amendment to proceed, it must be adopted by the planning authority and then sent to the Minister for Planning for approval.

The planning authority is not obliged to follow the recommendations of the Panel, but it must give its reasons if it does not follow the recommendations. [section 31 (1) of the PE Act, and section 9 of the *Planning and Environment Regulations 2015*]

If approved by the Minister for Planning a formal change will be made to the planning scheme. Notice of approval of the Amendment will be published in the Government Gazette. [section 37 of the PE Act]

Planning Panels Victoria acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People as the traditional custodians of the land on which our office is located. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Panel Report pursuant to section 25 of the PE Act

Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196more

Stormwater mapping – Council drainage network

16 July 2025



Sarah Carlisle, Chair



John Hartigan, Member

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Glossary and abbreviations

AEP	annual exceedance probability
AHD	Australian Height Datum
ARR Guidelines	<i>Australian Rainfall and Runoff Guidelines</i> , Australian Government, 2019
Builtmore	Builtmore Investments Pty Ltd
Council	Merri-bek City Council
D[number]	tabled document [number] (refer to Appendix A)
LiDAR	Light Detection and Ranging
PE Act	<i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>
Planning Scheme	Merri-bek Planning Scheme
S[number]	Submission [number] (submissions to the exhibited Amendment referred to the Panel by Council)
SSPs	shared socioeconomic pathways
Technical Report	<i>Merri-bek City Council – Creating the Local Drainage Stormwater Map</i> , Engeny, 2 November 2023

Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196more | Panel Report | 16 July 2025

Overview

Amendment summary

The Amendment	Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196more
Common name	Stormwater mapping – Council drainage network
Brief description	Insert a new Schedule 2 to the Special Building Overlay into the Planning Scheme
Land affected	Land affected by overland flow of stormwater from the local drainage network in a 1 percent annual exceedance probability (AEP) storm event
Planning Authority	Merri-bek City Council
Authorisation	7 March 2024, with conditions
Exhibition	The initial exhibition period was between 16 May and 17 June 2024. On 14 August 2024 Council resolved to extend exhibition to 13 December 2024
Submissions	Number of Submissions: 94 Opposed: 85

Panel process

The Panel	Sarah Carlisle (Chair), John Hartigan
Supported by	Sarah Vojinovic, Project Support Officer, Planning Panels Victoria
Directions Hearing	First Directions Hearing: by video, 22 April 2025 Second Directions Hearing: by video 2 June 2025
Panel Hearing	Planning Panels Victoria and by video, 12 and 13 June 2025
Site inspection	Not required
Parties to the Hearing	Merri-bek City Council represented by Briana Eastaugh of Maddocks, who called expert evidence on drainage engineering from Glenn Ottrey of Egis (formally Engeny) Builtmore Investments Pty Ltd represented by Peter Farah who called expert evidence on hydraulics engineering from David Moret of DPM Consulting Group Noel Allenby Anne Whitfield (did not appear) Euan Adams and Bronwyn White (did not appear)
Citation	Merri-bek PSA C196more [2025] PPV
Date of this report	16 July 2025

Executive summary

Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196more (the Amendment) proposes to apply a new Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 (Council drains) (SBO2) to land in Merri-bek that is predicted (by modelling) to be inundated by overland stormwater flows from the local drainage network in a 1 percent annual exceedance probability (AEP) storm event.

Council engaged Engeny to undertake modelling of overland flows from the local drainage network, to inform the mapping of the SBO2 extent across the municipality. The modelling was robust and thorough, and followed applicable standards, guidelines and industry practices.

Engeny undertook site specific reviews of every property in relation to which a submission was made seeking removal of the SBO2. Engeny compared on ground conditions to the modelling inputs, and made adjustments where required. This resulted in several properties being removed from the proposed SBO2 extent. In many other cases, on ground observations and investigations revealed a high degree of correlation between on ground conditions and the modelling inputs, and no changes to the SBO2 mapping were made.

It is inevitable that with a catchment wide modelling exercise, there will be localised discrepancies and inaccuracies in the modelling. It is also likely that some of those localised discrepancies have not been brought to the attention of Council and Engeny through the submissions process. This does not undermine the fundamental suitability of the catchment wide modelling for informing the SBO2 extent. Any remaining localised inaccuracies that have not been identified through the submission review process can be dealt with at the permit application stage.

The proposed SBO2 has an important role to play in identifying the potential flood risk for current property owners and future purchasers of affected properties, so they can make informed decisions about the property and about planning for their own safety during storm events. The SBO2 will ensure that future development of the affected land is designed to be resilient to the impacts of potential flooding, and does not exacerbate existing flood conditions in the area.

The Amendment has strong policy support, will deliver a net community benefit, and should be progressed.

Consolidated recommendation

Based on the reasons set out in this Report, the Panel recommends that Council:

1. **Adopt Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196more with the following change:**
 - a) **adjust the mapping of the Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 to reflect the 'Day 1' version revised following the review of the mapping in response to submissions (part of Document 10).**

1 Introduction

1.1 The Amendment

Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196more (the Amendment) proposes to apply a new Schedule 2 (Council drains) to the Special Building Overlay (SBO2) to land that is predicted (by modelling) to be inundated by overland flows from the local drainage network in a 1 percent annual exceedance probability (AEP) storm event.

A 1 percent AEP event is a major storm event where there is a 1 percent probability the event will happen in any given year (which generally equates to a once every 100 year event). This is sometimes referred to as the '1 in 100 year storm'.

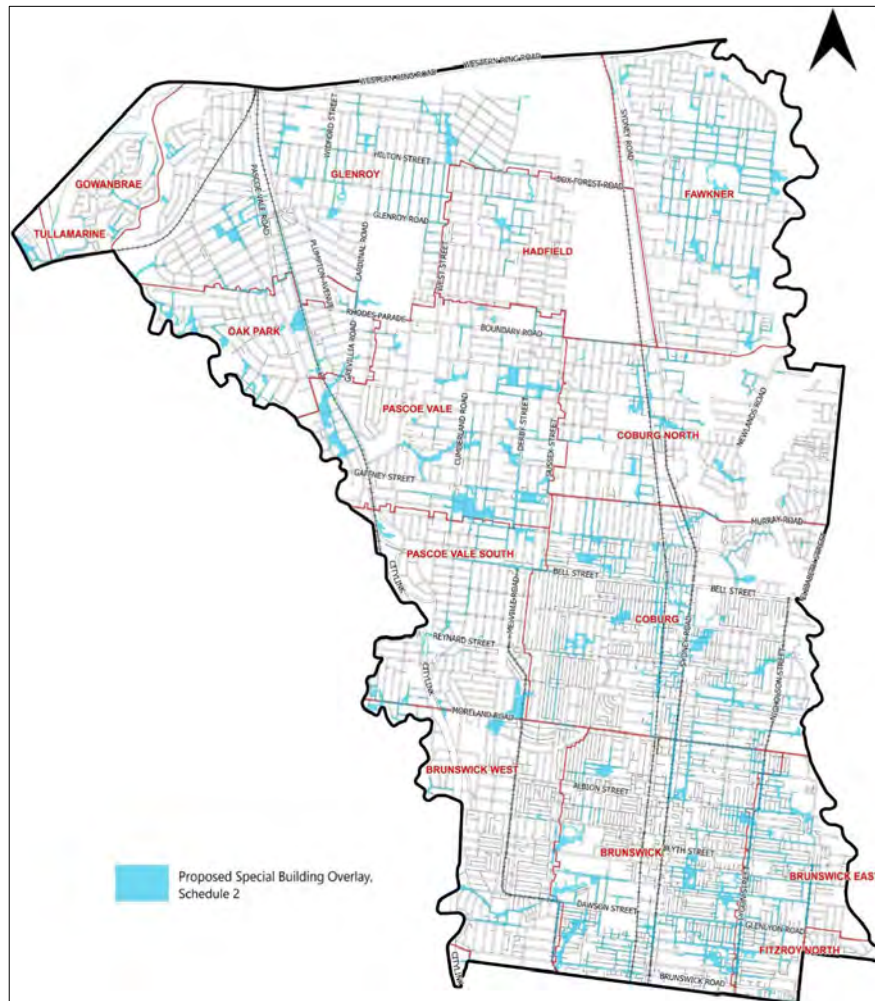
The local drainage network consists of stormwater drains for which Merri-bek City Council (Council) is the responsible drainage authority. An existing SBO (to be renamed SBO1) already applies to land in the municipality predicted to be inundated in a 1 percent AEP event from overland flows from the regional stormwater drainage network (for which Melbourne Water is the responsible drainage authority).

Council's Part A submission (D9) provides a comprehensive account of the purpose and effect of the SBO2, the properties affected, and the background to the preparation of the Amendment. This assisted the Panel in its consideration of the submissions, but is not repeated in this Report.

The land to which the SBO2 is proposed to be applied is shown in Figure 1 below. Figure 1 is the exhibited version – Council produced a revised 'Day 1' version following Engeny's review of the mapping in response to submissions (discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.1).¹

¹ The Day 1 SBO2 map is attached to a memo prepared by Engeny which explains the process and outcomes of the reviews in response to submissions. It is part of D10.

Figure 1 Map showing the proposed extent of the Special Building Overlay Schedule 2



Source: Explanatory Report

1.2 Procedural issues

Builtmore Investments Pty Ltd (Builtmore) advised the Panel at the Directions Hearing that it had been seeking information to enable its hydraulic engineer Mr Moret to test the modelling. Council indicated that some of the data that Mr Moret had requested was not owned by Council (rather, it was Melbourne Water data).

The Panel requested Builtmore to detail its request with a specific list of information requested (D3), and encouraged Council to see if it could obtain Melbourne Water's consent to the release of

the data on the basis that Mr Moret entered into an agreement with Council and Melbourne Water about the use and distribution of the data (which he agreed to do).

Council was not able to secure Melbourne Water's consent to the release of the data. The parties requested the Panel to make a direction that the data be provided, which the Panel did (D4). The Panel's direction was to provide the information listed in Builtmore's request (D3). Council provided the information to Mr Moret on 7 and 9 May 2025 (D5).

On 23 May 2025, Builtmore wrote to the Panel with a request for a 7 day extension to the filing date for Mr Moret's evidence (which was due on the day the request was made). The request attached an email from Mr Moret to Builtmore dated 21 May requesting additional information in relation to the modelling. Builtmore did not pass that request on to Council or to the Panel until circulating it with the extension request.

Council responded on 23 May 2025 (D17) opposing the extension request. Council:

- confirmed it has provided all information included in the Panel's Direction
- advised it had not received any further request for information from Builtmore or Mr Moret
- submitted that:
 - the additional information should have been included in the initial request
 - it is entirely unreasonable to request further information on the day the evidence is due
 - the extension, if granted, would be entirely prejudicial to Council's case as it would mean Mr Moret's evidence would be due on the same day as Council's Part B submission, and only one business day before the Hearing was due to commence (on 2 June 2025). This would mean Council would have very limited opportunity to properly consider and respond to the evidence.

On 26 May 2025, Builtmore wrote again to the Panel (D18) raising concerns about procedural fairness (among other things) associated with Council allegedly withholding information, and advising that neither its representative who it had engaged to appear at the Hearing (Ms Wilson) nor Mr Moret were available to appear at the Hearing on 2 June, as Ms Wilson was interstate and Mr Moret was overseas.

The Panel wrote to the parties on 26 May 2025 (D19) indicating the Hearing day on 2 June would be converted into another Directions Hearing to reschedule the Hearing so Mr Moret could attend. The Panel and parties eventually received Mr Moret's evidence on 4 June 2025, and the Hearing was rescheduled to commence on 12 June 2025.

It is unclear why Builtmore retained a representative and expert who were not available on the originally scheduled Hearing dates. Builtmore's second request for information from Council was unreasonably late, and the resultant delays caused considerable inconvenience to the Panel, Council and the other parties. Builtmore should have been better organised.

At the Hearing, the Panel asked Mr Moret whether he received all the information he had requested and needed to understand the modelling. He confirmed that he had.

Mr Allenby also raised concerns in relation to the provision of information from Council (D23). He wrote to the Panel on 28 May 2025 indicating that some of his information requests going back as far as 2021 had not been responded to. Mr Allenby did not describe the information he had requested which had not been provided. Nor did he seek a direction from the Panel that the

information be provided. Accordingly, it is not clear to the Panel whether (or how) the information requested by Mr Allenby may have assisted the Panel.

Historical information requests and the consultation engaged in by Council and Engeny in preparing the Amendment are not matters that are before the Panel. That said, the consultation process (which was outlined in detail in Council's Part A submission) appeared to be comprehensive and went significantly beyond the statutory requirements for notice and consultation. There is no evidence before the Panel that Council withheld information, or was anything other than diligent and comprehensive in its response to submitter concerns about the Amendment.

1.3 Key issues

Key relevant issues raised in submissions were:

- technical issues in the modelling and mapping, including:
 - methodology and suitability of the modelling to predict land likely to be inundated in the 1 percent AEP event
 - whether climate change was appropriately factored in to the modelling
 - the accuracy of the topographic data inputted into the model
- the modelling had not taken account of site specific issues which may impact overland flows on individual properties, such as ground levels and the impacts of fences and buildings.

1.4 Issues that are not relevant

Submissions raised several issues that are not relevant to the question of whether the Amendment should be supported. These included:

- developers of upstream land should be responsible for reducing or eliminating any stormwater runoff
- flooding issues have been exacerbated by urban development in the municipality
- Council should be undertaking other action to mitigate flooding, such as maintaining or upgrading its drainage network, rather than applying the SBO2 and shifting the burden onto private landowners
- the SBO2 impacts development opportunities on the affected properties
- the SBO2 has financial implications including reducing the value of affected properties and increasing insurance premiums
- consultation and transparency in preparing the Amendment.

Council's Part B submission provided a comprehensive response to these issues, including demonstrating why these issues are not relevant to the Amendment. The Panel accepts those submissions and notes that there is a long standing and well accepted line of Panel reports establishing why these issues are not relevant at the Amendment stage.

The Panel has not attempted to summarise these previous reports or Council's submission in any detail, but highlights the following key well established principles:

- It is well accepted that many inner urban drainage networks were designed decades ago, for much lower capacity than that required for the 1 percent AEP event. There is no legal obligation on councils (as local drainage authorities) to ensure no overland flows in a 1 percent AEP event. Designing a system that results in no overland flows in such an event (or upgrading existing systems to meet this standard) would be practically impossible without

huge disruption to urban streets and private property. It would also be hugely costly, and well beyond the budgets of local councils.

- It is well accepted that modelling and mapping of overland stormwater flows should be based on current development and infrastructure, not hypothetical or potential future upgrades of infrastructure.
- Several previous panels have accepted, based on evidence, that while increased urban development inevitably results in increased runoff, this is unlikely to cause or significantly impact on overland stormwater flows in a 1 percent AEP event.
- The SBO does not prevent future development of the affected land. Rather, it applies a permit trigger to ensure that future development is designed to be resilient to the impacts of future flood events, and does not exacerbate existing flood conditions in the area.
- There is no evidence that an SBO impacts the value of a particular property. Property values are impacted by a complex range of matters related to the broader economy and property markets. In any event, private financial impacts such as impacts on property values and increased insurance premiums are not relevant considerations for strategic planning projects.

1.5 The Panel's approach

The Panel considered all written submissions made in response to the exhibition of the Amendment, submissions, evidence and other material presented to it during the Hearing. All submissions and materials have been considered by the Panel in reaching its conclusions, regardless of whether they are specifically mentioned in the Report.

This Report deals with the issues under the following headings:

- Strategic issues
- Technical issues
- Site specific issues.

2 Strategic issues

2.1 Planning context

This chapter identifies the key parts of the strategic planning context relevant to the Amendment.

Table 1 Planning context

	Relevant references
Victorian planning objectives	Section 4 of the PE Act
Planning Policy Framework	Clause 11.02-1S (Supply of urban land) Clause 13.01-1S (Natural hazards and climate change) Clause 13.03-1S (Floodplain management) Clause 15.01-1S (Urban design) Clause 15.01-2S (Building design) Clause 19.03-3S (Integrated water management)
Other planning strategies and policies	Plan for Victoria 2025 and its four pillars: - housing for all Victorians - accessible jobs and services - great places, suburbs and towns - sustainable environments
Planning scheme provisions	Special Building Overlay
Planning scheme amendments	Amendments VC267, VC276 and VC280
Ministerial directions	Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes Ministerial Direction 9 (Metropolitan Planning Strategy) Ministerial Direction 11 (Strategic Assessment of Amendments)
Planning practice notes	Planning Practice Note 12: Applying the Flood Provisions in Planning Schemes Planning Practice Note 46: Strategic Assessment Guidelines

2.2 Strategic justification

There was no dispute among the parties that the Amendment is strategically justified.

The Panel has assessed the Amendment against the key parts of the strategic planning context and the principles of net community benefit and sustainable development, as set out in Clause 71.02-3 (Integrated decision making) of the Merri-bek Planning Scheme (the Planning Scheme). The Panel was assisted in this task by Council's submissions, particularly its Part A submission.

The Amendment is consistent with:

- the Victorian planning objective in section 4(1)(c) to "*secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living, and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria*"
- the ability in section 6(2)(e) for a planning scheme to "*regulate or prohibit any use or development in hazardous areas or in areas which are likely to become hazardous areas*".

The Amendment is consistent with key principles of State policy, in particular to:

- ensure planning for growth considers land capability and natural hazards
- identify land affected by flooding, including land inundated by the 1 percent AEP flood event
- minimise the impacts of natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning
- assist in protecting life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard
- create safe urban environments by requiring development to respond to its context and climate.

The Amendment is consistent with key Ministerial Directions, including the need to:

- promote urban design excellence in every aspect of the built environment
- reduce the likelihood and consequences of natural hazard events and adapt to climate change
- mitigate exposure to natural hazards and adapt to climate change impacts
- protect water, drainage, and sewerage assets
- protect stormwater quality and ensure flash-flood impacts are minimised to protect life, property, assets, and the environment.

The Amendment is consistent with key pillars and principles in Plan for Victoria including:

- ensuring Victoria's suburbs, towns and neighbourhoods are vibrant, resilient and inclusive to support strong communities
- recognising that the quality of the places we live affects all aspects of our lives, from our health and wellbeing to our impact on nature
- ensuring our cities and towns are resilient to climate change impacts because buildings and developments are designed and built in environmentally sustainable ways.

The Amendment will have positive social and economic effects by ensuring the community is aware of areas liable to inundation in a 1 percent AEP event, and ensuring future development in those areas is resilient to the impacts of potential flooding, and is designed to avoid exacerbating flooding.

Amendments VC267, VC276 and VC280 seek to increase housing supply and are likely to result in increased intensification of residential development in Melbourne's suburbs. The Panel accepts Council's submission that this reinforces the importance of ensuring that suitable frameworks are put in place to require development in flood risk areas to respond to flooding risks.

Planning Practice Note 12: Applying the Flood Provisions in Planning Schemes (PPN12) provides guidance about applying the flood provisions in planning schemes including identifying land affected by flooding and the application and operation of the flood provisions. The Amendment is consistent with PPN12 in mapping land liable to inundation in a 1 percent AEP event, and selecting the SBO to apply to that land. The SBO is the appropriate planning tool as it specifically relates to urban stormwater overland flow paths and managing development in urbanised locations that may be affected by overland stormwater flows.

Council's approach in engaging Engeny to prepare the flood modelling and mapping and applying the SBO2 to land affected by the 1 percent AEP storm event is consistent with a range of other important government policies and reports, including the:

- *Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy 2016*, which emphasises the need to adapt to climate change and ensure strategic planning considers flooding and its impacts

- role of local government outlined in *Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport 2021*, which includes:
 - managing local drainage systems
 - doing flood modelling and mapping for catchments less than 60 hectares
 - applying planning scheme controls to land affected by a 1 percent AEP storm event
- *Guidelines for Development in Flood Affected Areas 2019*, which states the 1 percent AEP event is the appropriate event to be used in flood mapping, and acknowledges the SBO as the preferred tool for mapping 1 percent AEP urban stormwater overland flows
- Victorian Auditor General's 2005 Report *Managing Stormwater Flooding Risks in Melbourne*, which refers to the need for agencies to apply strategies that provide a higher level of flood protection and educate the community to prevent inappropriate development that exacerbates flooding risks
- report of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the 2022 Victorian Floods, which states that:
 - land use planning can mitigate flood risk through appropriate planning and building controls
 - Victoria's strategic land use planning needs to limit inappropriate new housing and business developments inside 1 percent AEP floodplains.

The proposed SBO2 has an important role to play in identifying the potential flood risk for current property owners and future purchasers of affected properties, so they may make informed decisions about the property and about planning for their own safety during storm events. It will ensure that future development of the affected land is designed to be resilient to the impacts of potential flooding, and does not exacerbate existing flood conditions in the area.

The Panel considers the Amendment strikes the appropriate balance between competing objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development, while providing improved transparency of overland flow considerations during severe storm events.

The Panel acknowledges that the Amendment is part of an integrated approach being taken by Council to manage flood risk in its municipality, including:

- pursuing structural improvements to its local drainage network
- accurately mapping the 1 percent AEP event in the planning scheme
- raising landowner awareness to urban stormwater flooding.

2.3 Conclusion and recommendation

The Panel concludes:

- The Amendment:
 - implements the Planning Policy Framework and is consistent with the relevant Ministerial Directions and Planning Practice Notes
 - is well founded and strategically justified
 - should proceed, with the adjustments to the SBO2 mapping resulting from Council and Engeny's review of the modelling and mapping in response to submissions (discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.1).

The Panel recommends Council:

Adopt Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C196more with the change recommended in this Report.

3 Technical issues

3.1 Suitability of the modelling

(i) The issue

The issue is whether the modelling used is suitable for the purpose of determining the flood mapping used to inform the application of the SBO2.

(ii) Background

The Amendment is supported by a Technical Report entitled *Merri-bek City Council – Creating the Local Drainage Stormwater Map*, Engeny, 2 November 2023 (the Technical Report).

(iii) Evidence and submissions

Some 71 submissions raised concerns with the methodology behind the preparation of the SBO2 map, including the modelling that underpins the mapping. This included submissions that the modelling was not sufficiently fine grained and did not take account of site specific features such as the effect of existing on-site structures and drainage infrastructure on the movement of overland flows across a site. Site specific issues are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Council submitted the approach taken to the catchment wide modelling and mapping was particularly thorough, robust and verified which gives a high degree of confidence in the proposed SBO2 extent. It noted Melbourne Water had given strong written support for the Amendment, and submitted the modelling used to inform the SBO2 mapping provides a sound and strategically justified basis for the Amendment.

Council submitted the modelling was completed in accordance with accepted criteria, published guidelines and in consultation with the Floodplain Management Authority (Melbourne Water). It submitted the modelling was based on best practice flood mapping principles and used appropriate key data inputs.

Council explained that the modelling was part of a five step process described in detail in the Technical Report and the evidence of Mr Ottrey. It observed that the only other hydraulic expert who gave evidence (Mr Moret, for Builtmore) agreed the modelling had generally been approached correctly. Where Mr Moret's opinion differed on the approach used, Council submitted these were site specific issues and do not undermine the modelling more broadly or the general methodology applied to the modelling and mapping.

Council explained that the modelling and mapping was reviewed in response to submissions, resulting in refinements to the mapping as reflected in the Day 1 SBO2 map. It submitted the review process added a degree of thoroughness and robustness, ensuring the mapping was more responsive to local conditions.

The review process included on-site observations which resulted in:

- refining the mapping to remove the SBO2 from properties only marginally affected
- validating the mapping to account for recently completed civil drainage works and the effects of recently constructed major projects (such as level crossing removals) on stormwater flows.

Reviews were undertaken of the specific properties in relation to which submissions were received, as well as surrounding properties (whether or not submissions were received). Council tabled a memo prepared by Engeny which included information about the number of reviews done and changes made to the SBO2 map in response to submissions. The key information is extracted in Table 2. The review resulted in 72 properties being removed from the SBO2 extent.

In the table below, the unfiltered property layer represents all properties which were liable to inundation in the future 1 percent AEP event including climate change, no matter how minor. Criteria were then applied (such as flood depth and extent of the property affected) to derive the 'filtered property layer'. The exhibited SBO2 extent was based on the filtered property layer, and included 6,503 properties.

Table 2 Outcomes of mapping reviews in response to submissions

Measure/outcome	Number
Total number of properties with SBO2 applied (in whole or in part):	
- unfiltered property layer	14,133
- filtered property layer	6,503
Number of submissions requesting a review of the application of the SBO2 to their property	75*
Number of properties proposed to be removed following further review in response to submissions:	
- submitter properties	20
- non-submitter properties	52
- total	72

* 75 submitters requested property reviews, however two withdrew their submissions

Source: Document 010 – Appendix 1 to Council Part A submission

Council submitted that while the review process revealed some localised inaccuracies in the initial modelling and mapping, the refined 'Day 1' SBO2 map is fit for purpose, and any further refinements are best done at the planning permit application stage when an applicant will need to prepare a survey plan for their land. Council noted the findings of the Panel for Yarra Planning Scheme Amendment C210 which observed that:

The Panel accepts that there may be some localised inaccuracies in the mapping but site-specific characteristics can be considered in more detail at the planning permit application stage. The SBO is essentially only a permit trigger for the area identified at risk that alerts landowners and the responsible authority that there may be local flooding issues that need be considered when planning for subdivision, buildings or works. In that sense, small localised inaccuracies are not significant.

In his evidence for Council, Mr Ottrey stated the modelling:

- was undertaken using Runoff Routing (RORB) and Two-dimensional Unsteady FLOW (TUFLOW) programs which are widely used in flood modelling in Victoria
- was completed generally in accordance with the Australian Government's *Australian Rainfall and Runoff Guidelines* 2019 (ARR Guidelines)
- reflects technical specifications issued by Melbourne Water.

The ARR Guidelines were updated in 2024, after the modelling project commenced. Relevant Melbourne Water guidelines were also updated after the modelling commenced. The modelling was not updated to take account of the changes to the guidelines. Mr Ottrey's evidence was that

it is “*necessary and standard industry practice*” to adopt a particular version of a guideline or standard at the beginning of a project and carry that guideline or standard through to completion of the work, even if a newer version is released part way through the project. He stated:

The reason it is necessary not to change mid-project is that updated standards can change guidance for components of the project that have already been completed. For example, the update to Australian Rainfall and Runoff changed the hydrology assumptions associated with climate change.

Completing the hydrology model runs is one of the first steps in developing a flood extent, so having to update the hydrology runs means that all other steps after that point in the project must also be completed again. The runs of the hydraulic model represent a key stage in the process, with thousands of hours of computer processing time required to complete these runs. This makes updates to the hydraulic modelling or any step in the process before the hydraulic modelling very time-consuming. It is also not possible to do a “small update” for the hydraulic models without rerunning them in full, as the models are setup to simulate a complete storm and so must run from the start to the completion of each storm event.

Mr Ottrey’s evidence was the modelling was undertaken in accordance with relevant standards and guidelines at the time it was commenced and provides a suitable basis for the development of the SBO2 mapping. He was satisfied the changes in the guidelines do not mean that the modelling needs to be updated before the Amendment can be implemented.

Mr Moret gave hydraulic engineering evidence for Builtmore, the owner of 142 Dawson Street Brunswick West. He undertook a desktop review of the hydrological and hydraulic modelling used to support the Amendment. He concluded the TUFLOW and RORB models broadly adhered to current industry practices and standards relevant to floodplain mapping in urban catchments. He added that the TUFLOW model demonstrated a clear structure with modular references to geometry, materials and event files. In his view, the use of event configurations that comply with the ARR Guidelines, pre-wetting conditions and pit inlet hydraulics suggests that the modelling framework has been developed with reference to contemporary guidance including Melbourne Water’s flood mapping specifications. He concluded the RORB model appeared to have applied industry standard loss parameters, routing coefficients and temporal inputs consistent with the ARR Guidelines.

Mr Moret stated that no global errors or critical faults were identified in the overall model structure. He noted, however, that observations he made during his review highlight “*aspects of the model that may influence interpretation of predicted flood behaviour at 142 Dawson Street*”. He noted the modelling did not include or account for:

- the existing building across the northern boundary of the site, which would act as a physical barrier to stormwater flows
- potential localised smoothing of topographical detail
- the grated drainage pits within the car park area on the site
- the associated uncertainty regarding the routing and continuity of overland flow paths across the site.

The site specific issues are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.5 below.

(iv) Discussion

While the Panel acknowledges that some submitters raised concerns over the flood modelling, no evidence was presented to the Panel that called into question the fundamental soundness of the modelling methodology. Both experts agreed that the modelling adhered to industry best practice

and was based on the appropriate AAR Guidelines and Melbourne Water guidelines current at the time the modelling was commenced.

Guidelines have been updated since the modelling was undertaken. This does not, in the Panel's view, negate the soundness and efficacy of the modelling. In practical terms, the flood modelling and hence the mapping needs to be based on the best information and guidance available at the time. As Mr Ottrey pointed out, it is standard industry practice to adopt a particular version of a guideline or standard at the beginning of a project and carry that through to completion of the work, even if a newer version is released part way through the project. To adopt an updated guideline or standard during the course of a modelling project would be impractical and costly and could mean a modelling project would be in a constant state of updating with no settled output.

The site specific reviews of the SBO2 mapping in response to submissions resulted in the removal of several properties from the SBO2, and modifications to the extent of the mapping affecting other properties. On their face these reviews appear to have been thorough and done on a rational and consistent basis.

Catchment wide modelling will inevitably result in some localised inaccuracies in mapping, but this should not call into question the fundamental soundness of the modelling. An SBO creates a permit trigger to alert landowners and the responsibility authority to the potential for local flooding issues that should be addressed at the planning application stage. The Panel agrees with the findings made by the Yarra C210 Panel that small, localised inaccuracies are not significant and can be considered in more detail at the planning permit application stage.

(v) Conclusions and recommendation

The Panel concludes the modelling underpinning the SOB2 map is:

- based on accepted industry standards and practices, relevant guidelines and flood mapping principles
- fundamentally sound
- fit for purpose to determine the SBO2 mapping.

The Panel recommends Council:

Adjust the mapping of the Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 to reflect the 'Day 1' version revised following the review of the mapping in response to submissions (part of Document 10).

3.2 Climate change

(i) The issues

The issues are whether:

- the impacts of climate change have been appropriately addressed in the modelling
- a history of lack of flooding at a particular location is a relevant factor in predicting future flooding risk, given the impacts of climate change.

(ii) Evidence and submissions

Several submitters raised concerns with how climate change has been considered in the preparation of the SBO2 mapping.

Council submitted the modelling has appropriately factored in climate change considerations consistent with guidance in the *Climate Change Act 2017* and in accordance with industry standards contained in the ARR Guidelines. It cited the Technical Report which states that:

The consideration of climate change has remained consistent between the work done in 2017 and 2023. The modelling is assuming Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) 8.5, which assumes 3.5 degrees of warming by 2100. The modelling is simulating the assumed climate conditions in 2100. The hydrologic modelling has assumed an 18.5% increase in rainfall intensity because of the 3.5 degree warming in 2100. An 18.5% increase in rainfall intensity can translate to a greater increase in peak flow rates as rainfall intensity and the resulting overland flow peak flow rates are not linearly linked.

Council stated that Melbourne Water in its submission to the Amendment recognised that the SBO2 mapping effectively considered climate change impacts. Council submitted this is particularly notable with the recent release of Melbourne Water's publication *How the Victorian Flood and Planning Frameworks consider flood and climate impacts for land use planning*, Melbourne Water, 2024. Council added that the key settings outlined in Melbourne Water's publication (namely the 1 percent AEP event, rainfall intensity and planning horizon) were used for the preparation of the SBO2 map.

Council stated that:

Finally, while Council emphatically submits that the need to consider and factor in climate change should be undeniable, it recognises that some submitters may feel that the risk to their individual properties is remote. The conclusion reached by the Banyule C101 Panel when considering the issue of 'Historical flood data and information', encapsulates the position that Council adopts in response to these submissions:

The Panel accepts as reasonable that some properties may have not been inundated during the most recent severe rain events, and this could be as a result of several variables (referred to in the preceding section of this report). However, because inundation has not been experienced previously does not necessarily mean that flooding cannot occur in the future, particularly in light of climate change predictions relating to more intense rain events. Where the modelling has validated that there is a probable risk of inundation the Panel considers it appropriate for ground truthing of the in situ built structures and mitigation features via review and consideration of circumstance when a development permit is being considered.

It is not an issue of whether a specific site has flooded previously, but the likelihood of it meeting the threshold flooding criteria in a 100 year AEP event.

In conclusion, Council submitted the consideration of climate change in the Technical Report, and by extension the Amendment, has been appropriate and suitably informs the proposed application of the SBO2.

Mr Ottrey's evidence was that the modelling applied an 18.5 percent increase in rainfall intensity to the 'intensity duration frequency' rainfall data obtained from the Bureau of Meteorology. He stated the modelling was completed generally in accordance with the ARR Guidelines version 4.1 which was current at the time the modelling commenced.

Mr Ottrey explained that the ARR Guidelines version 4.2 was released in mid 2024, with the main change being how the influence of climate change on rainfall is estimated. Methodologies in version 4.2 increase the amount of rainfall expected in 2100 under different climate change scenarios, based on four shared socioeconomic pathways (SSPs) (low, medium, high and very high expected increases in temperature by 2040, 2060 and 2100). Each SSP has rainfall intensity increase factors.

Mr Ottrey noted the Victorian Government has not made a clear directive on which SSP to assume for future flood protection, and nor has Melbourne Water given advice on which SSP should be adopted.

Mr Ottrey advised that the worst impact on most of the local drainage network was from overland flows in storms of durations of one hour or less. Regardless of which SSP is chosen, the expected increase in rainfall intensity by 2030 is 18 to 20 percent for storms of one hour or less. Mr Ottrey considered this increase to be generally equivalent to the climate change increase of 18.5 percent which was modelled. In effect, this means that under the updated ARR guidance, the modelling only captured the expected climate change impacts up to 2030, not to 2100.

Mr Ottrey explained that under the updated ARR guidance, for storms of 1 hour or less the increase in rainfall intensity by 2100 ranged from 22 percent under the low SSP scenario to 86 percent for the high scenario. The upper end of these rainfall intensity increases is therefore significantly higher than what has been modelled. He explained that if the updated climate change guidance was applied to the modelling, the impact would depend on which SSP was chosen:

- the lowest SSP would give results very similar to what the modelling shows
- the higher SSPs would give an increase in depths of flooding throughout the model and a corresponding increase in the extent and number of properties impacted.

Mr Ottrey concluded that while the modelling may not represent the full impact of climate change by 2100, the current modelling covers the properties that would be most significantly impacted under the higher SSP scenario, which means the properties at highest risk of flooding are being captured by the proposed SBO2. Mr Ottrey considered this to be appropriate from a risk management perspective.

(iii) Discussion

The Panel is satisfied that the modelling has factored in the impacts of climate change based on the ARR Guidelines current at the time the modelling was commenced. The climate change scenarios in the ARR Guidelines version 4.2 mean the predicted impacts of climate change on the extent and severity of flooding by 2100 (and even the intervening years) is likely to be more widespread than what has been modelled. This is likely to mean that if the modelling were to be re-run based on the updated ARR Guidelines, more properties would be affected.

Mr Ottrey stated that the modelling is representative of 2030 conditions under the higher climate change scenarios outlined in the updated ARR Guidelines. He considered that if the model was re-run using the higher climate change scenarios in the updated ARR Guidelines to 2100, the most significant change would likely be that the flooding of the higher risk properties would be more severe, rather than a significant expansion to the SBO extent. He considered the SBO2 mapping therefore captures the properties most at risk of flooding in a 1 percent AEP storm event now and in the future, and is appropriate.

The Panel considers that the modelling and mapping will likely remain valid for some time beyond 2030, because it captures the most at risk properties even under the higher SSPs where climate change effects are predicted to be more severe. At some point in the future, revised modelling will need to be undertaken based on the advice of government on which SSP in version 4.2 of the ARR Guidelines should be adopted. While the SBO2 mapping may need to be updated in future, this does not invalidate the modelling or the SBO2 mapping done to date.

(iv) Conclusions

The Panel concludes climate change has been appropriately factored in to the modelling, noting:

- the modelling was based on the best guidance available at the time to account for the impacts of climate change
- the SBO2 covers the properties that would be most severely impacted by flooding in 2030 under a higher climate change scenario, which is appropriate from a risk management perspective.

3.3 Accuracy of topographic data**(i) The issue**

The issue is whether the data used in the modelling reflects the topography across the municipality and specific properties with sufficient accuracy.

(ii) Evidence and submissions

Mr Ottrey stated the topographic data used in the model was based on Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) captured in 2017 to 2018. His evidence was that the 2017 to 2018 LiDAR data is accurate to 100 millimetres vertically and ± 200 millimetres horizontally, with a root mean square error confidence of 68 percent. This level of accuracy means the data is suitable for use in flood modelling.

Mr Ottrey stated that the use of LiDAR is commonly accepted industry practice for two-dimensional flood modelling and it is not practical or necessary to use (generally more accurate) survey data to determine the topography information input into the model across the entire municipality. He added that some updates to the topographic data were made using design and as-constructed digital elevation models for major infrastructure projects (such as level crossing removals), and other minor adjustments were made to address localised inaccuracies in the LiDAR data.

Mr Ottrey explained that some submitters provided survey data of their properties, which were compared to the LiDAR levels. In most cases the surveyed levels were very close to the levels shown in the LiDAR. Where there was a larger difference, it was usually due to the presence of a vertical wall, such as a retaining wall, which LiDAR is not able to accurately represent.

Relying on Mr Ottrey's evidence, Council submitted the topographic data used in the modelling reflects accepted industry standards and provides a reliable basis for preparing the SBO2 map. It noted Engeny and Council officers did several site visits in response to submitter concerns, and in most cases on-site observations confirmed that the LiDAR data was generally an accurate reflection of on ground conditions.

Council noted the use of LiDAR data was considered by the Banyule C101 Panel which concluded reliance on LiDAR is a practical and cost effective method and *"the accuracy of the (then) most current 2008 LiDAR data is regarded by the Victorian Government as sufficient to be applied to SBO mapping"*. The Banyule C101 Panel found that:

Whilst there may be variations between LiDAR and in situ levels, the relative extent of the predicted flood shapes and their location in relation to the building envelope are salient considerations. Minor landform structures such as garden landscape walls and fence plinths are not necessarily permanent.

(iii) Discussion

The use of LiDAR is common practice and is the only practical and cost effective way to account for topography in catchment wide flood modelling. There are some limitations to the LiDAR data (such as the presence of vertical walls) but overall, the Panel is satisfied that the level of accuracy of the 2017 to 2018 LiDAR makes it suitable for modelling purposes.

The topographic data was corrected to match available as-constructed height data for major projects. Council and Engeny also responded to specific requests from submitters to review LiDAR levels against actual ground conditions and/or survey information, and adjustments were made where there were significant differences. There may be other locations where the LiDAR levels are inaccurate that were not drawn to the attention of Council or Engeny through submissions. The Panel accepts that undertaking extensive land surveys across the municipality for the purpose of validating the LiDAR data would not be justified.

As noted earlier, an SBO provides a permit trigger to alert landowners and the responsibility authority to the potential for local flooding issues that should be addressed at the planning application stage. The impact of localised inaccuracies on the potential for development of land within the SBO2 can be addressed at the permit application stage. Any small localised discrepancies in the LiDAR levels are not significant in terms of the accuracy of the municipal wide mapping.

(iv) Conclusions

The Panel concludes:

- the LiDAR data used in the modelling is fit for purpose to reflect with a sufficient degree of accuracy the topography of the municipality and specific properties
- while there may be some variations between LiDAR and actual levels at some properties, these are likely to be marginal and can be accounted for at the permit application stage.

3.4 Modelling of fences and buildings**(i) The issue**

The issue is whether obstructions to overland water flows caused by fences and buildings (which were modelled using the 'roughness' approach) have been modelled appropriately.

(ii) Evidence and submissions

Mr Ottrey explained that buildings have been represented in the model using a higher 'Mannings' roughness value based on estimated building footprints. This approach is common industry practice and is supported by Melbourne Water's Technical Specification and the ARR Guidelines. Mr Ottrey explained this allows for the flow of water through buildings being slower than over open ground such as a road or garden, but does not assume a building will completely obstruct overland flows.

Mr Ottrey explained there are multiple reasons why fences and buildings have not been modelled as obstructions to flows (using a 'block out' approach), including:

- fences are made from different materials, some of which will deflect or block flows while others (such as open mesh fences) will have little to no effect on flows
- fences and buildings often have openings

- fences cannot be relied on to provide flood protection to a dwelling
- there is little control over the removal or changes to fences and buildings
- building construction standards vary significantly including the type of foundations, the location of doors and windows and the potential for basements and underground car parks, all of which impact on the degree to which the building will block overland flows.

Mr Ottrey stated that the only instance where a wall was modelled using a 'block out' approach rather than a roughness approach was at the former Pentridge Prison, where a shallow flow path intersects with the external wall of the former prison. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.4.

Mr Moret's evidence was that the building at 142 Dawson Street is likely to act as a physical obstruction to overland flow. He considered the approach of only applying a roughness value does not appropriately account for this obstruction. He stated that from a modelling input perspective, the land use and building two-dimensional roughness file may not accurately reflect the actual building footprint. He considered this, combined with the adopted grid resolution and sampling approach in the model, "*may contribute to localised uncertainty in the modelled flow patterns and depths*" across the site.

In presenting his evidence, Mr Moret accepted that the roughness approach was common practice for catchment wide flood modelling but considered there may be instances where it is appropriate to apply the block out approach.

In responding to the issues raised by Mr Moret, Mr Ottrey noted the roughness approach followed the guidance set out by Melbourne Water in its Technical Specification *Flood Mapping Project Specifications* (July 2020). He noted the Technical Specification allows for both roughness (a Mannings coefficient) and building obstruction (block out) modelling of buildings. He quoted the Melbourne Water modelling guidelines which state that issues around the modelling of buildings are primarily related to scale, and Melbourne Water normally adopts the roughness approach.

Mr Ottrey also referred to a paper by Smith and Wasko (2012)² which used a physical scale model of an overland flow path through a housing development and drew the conclusion that representing buildings as block outs provided more accurate flood levels compared to roughness when using two-dimensional modelling such as TUFLOW.

However, Mr Ottrey noted that a key qualifier to this conclusion was that the grid size of the model must be small enough to accurately represent flow paths between buildings. Smith and Wasko reported that this was up to a 2 by 2 metre grid. The municipal wide modelling used a 3 by 3 metre grid, consistent with the Melbourne Water Technical Specification and standard industry practice. Mr Ottrey's evidence was that anything smaller than a 3 by 3 metre grid was not practical due to the impacts on model run times.

Relying on Mr Ottrey's evidence, Council submitted that the roughness approach is the appropriate way to model the obstructions caused by fences and buildings.

² Representations of buildings in two-dimensional numerical flood models. Australian Rainfall and Runoff Revision Project, Engineers Australia (2012)

(iii) Discussion

The Panel is satisfied that the roughness approach to account for the flow obstructions caused by buildings and fences is appropriate for catchment wide modelling. Both experts agreed that the roughness approach for catchment wide modelling is consistent with industry practice. This approach is also consistent with Melbourne Water guidelines and the Technical Specification.

While the Smith and Wasko research supports the case for using the block out approach when grid sizes smaller than a 3 by 3 metre grid can be applied, a smaller grid size for this municipal wide project would not be practical.

The Panel accepts that there may be instances where the block out approach would be more accurate in modelling the impact of buildings and fences at a localised level. Mr Moret suggested that 142 Dawson Street may be one such case. The block out approach could be applied to this site at the permit application stage to determine flood levels for the purposes of building design for any redevelopment of the site.

However, there is no evidence before the Panel to suggest that applying the block out approach to account for the flow impacts of all substantial buildings and fences across the entire municipality is justified, or would result in more accurate flood mapping when modelling at a catchment level.

(iv) Conclusion

The Panel concludes:

- the impact of fences and buildings on overland flows has been modelled appropriately.

4 Site specific issues

4.1 The issues

The issues are whether the following properties should be included in the SBO2:

- 24 Post Office Place, Glenroy
- 39A Everard Street, Glenroy
- 1 Champ Street, Coburg
- 142 Dawson Street, Brunswick West
- 41 and 41A Lytton Street, Fawkner.

These are the properties of the parties to the Hearing (including those who did not appear), who presented site specific information to the Panel that allowed an assessment of whether the outcome of the modelling for those sites were sufficiently robust and accurate to justify the retention of the SBO2. For other sites, the Panel had no information before it to suggest the modelling was inaccurate and the SBO2 should not be applied.

4.2 24 Post Office Place Glenroy

Submitter 21 objected to 24 Post Office Place Glenroy being included in the SBO2 on the basis that:³

- the mapping does not reflect the topography of the land and the existing drainage infrastructure
- footpath and roadway levels would direct overland flows from the north, down Pascoe Vale Road away from Post Office Place
- no detailed feature and level survey has been undertaken to find the true relative levels of the building entries
- there have been no issues with stormwater flow on the property in the past.

Submitter 21 also queried:

- the responsibilities of developers to reduce stormwater runoff upstream
- what intervention measures are being undertaken by Council to mitigate flooding that may occur due to future development.

These last two points are not relevant to the question of whether the Amendment should be supported, for the reasons set out in Chapter 1.4.

Engeny undertook a site visit and reviewed the site's inclusion in the SBO2 in response to Submission 21. Mr Ottrey's evidence described the outcomes of the site visit and review:

- The modelling shows water levels in a 1 percent AEP event with climate change of up to 94.34 metres Australian Height Datum (AHD) at the north western corner of the property and 94.18 metres AHD at the south western corner of the property.
- These modelled flood levels are both higher than the building entry levels at the respective points.
- Some changes had occurred in the vicinity of the property since the LiDAR data used in the modelling was captured:

³ Submitter 21's concerns are outlined in her original submission (S21) and a further written submission to the Panel (D25)

- footpaths had been replaced but the design intent was to match the existing footpath levels
- a raised crossing has been constructed across Post Office Place at the intersection with Pascoe Vale Road.
- The raised crossing will likely reduce the ability of overland flows to enter Post Office Place which may slightly increase water levels within Pascoe Vale Road and impacting on 24 Post Office Place, but this is not expected to be a significant change.

Mr Ottrey considered there is no justification to amend the SBO2 mapping in respect of the property at 24 Post Office Place, Glenroy based on site specific conditions.

The Panel accepts that Engeny undertook a sufficiently robust investigation of the site specific conditions, and is satisfied based on those investigations that the site specific conditions are sufficiently close to the modelled inputs to make the model reasonably accurate in terms of the potential for the property to be inundated in the 1 percent AEP event.

As noted above, no past flooding is not a reasonable basis on which to remove a property from the modelled flood extent where that modelled extent is found to be reasonably accurate based on reasonably accurate inputs.

The Panel concludes:

- There is no justification for removing 24 Post Office Place Glenroy from the SBO2.

4.3 39A Everard Street Glenroy

Submitter 24 objected to 39A Everard Street Glenroy being included in the SBO2 on the basis that:

- the conditions on the property minimise the need for the SBO2
- nearby development and landscaping is to blame for flooding impacts
- Council should be maintaining its drainage infrastructure to avoid flooding impacts from overland flows
- the application of the SBO2 will increase insurance costs and limit development opportunities
- the modelling and mapping represents one means of assessing floodwater impacts and is *“not a method of management in mitigation”*.

The further submission from the owners of 39A Everard Street (D26) makes mention of being denied permission for a garage on their boundary. It is not clear on what basis permission was denied, and in any event this is not a matter before the Panel.

Engeny undertook a site visit and reviewed the site's inclusion in the SBO2 in response to the site specific concern raised in Submission 24. Mr Ottrey's evidence described the outcomes of the site visit and review:

- on ground flow depths may differ slightly from modelled depths, which could impact on flow depths within a very localised area
- the resident confirmed a history of water inundating the property and had taken proactive steps to help minimise the damage to their property because of the past inundation events
- the allowance of open flow paths around the dwelling (east side and west side) will help to allow water to flow through the property and minimise the risk of above-floor level flooding, but the property is still likely to be inundated in a 1 percent AEP event.

Based on the above, the Panel does not consider there is any justification for removing 39A Everard Street from the SBO2 extent based on site specific conditions. Any future permit application for development on 39A Everard Street Glenroy will need to respond to the identified flood risk. Site specific conditions and how they influence overland flows will be further assessed at the permit application stage in the context of the proposed development.

The other issues raised by Submitter 24 are not relevant for the reasons set out in Chapter 1.4.

The Panel concludes:

- There is no justification for removing 39A Everard Street Glenroy from the SBO2.

4.4 1 Champ Street Coburg

Submitter 28 objected to 1 Champ Street Coburg being included in the SBO2 on the basis that the site accommodates existing development associated with the former Pentridge Prison, including significant bluestone walls that exist in the north-west corner of the site, that protect the land within the walls from overland flows.

Engeny undertook a site visit and reviewed the site's inclusion in the SBO2 in response to the site specific concern raised in Submission 28. Mr Ottrey's evidence explained that a structural engineering report was provided that confirms that the wall can resist the expected flows in the 1 percent AEP storm event (which the modelling predicts to be less than 300 millimetres). It also provides details on the long term maintenance requirements of the wall to continue resisting flows. On that basis, Engeny recommended removing the SBO from the area inside the bluestone wall.

Council supported removing properties within the bluestone wall from the SBO2 on the basis that:

- the wall is an effective barrier to the flow of water due to its size and construction
- the wall is heritage listed and is highly unlikely to be removed
- the owner has signed a statutory declaration that states they will not remove the wall while they are the owners of the property.

The Panel agrees, and supports the proposed change (reflected in the Day 1 SBO2 map) to remove 1 Champ Street Coburg from the SBO2.

4.5 142 Dawson Street Brunswick West

Builtmore objected to 142 Dawson Street Brunswick West being included in the SBO2 on the basis that:

- there has been no previous issues with flooding on the site
- the site conditions, including the existing structures and drains on the site, already manage stormwater risk
- the proposed SBO appears to rely on broad modelling rather than site-specific hydrological evidence
- the modelling relied on LiDAR data rather than site specific survey information which is more accurate than the LiDAR data
- there is no evidence that Council has exhausted alternatives such as public land mitigation before deciding to apply the SBO2 over private property
- the application of the SBO2 places unjustified constraints on the future development of the site

- the SBO2 will restrict the future use and development of the land.

Builtmore presented evidence from Mr Moret in support of the removal of the SBO2 from the site. He highlighted site specific conditions which had not been factored into the model and which he considered called into question the suitability of the application of the SBO2:

- the impact of the existing building on overland flows across the site
- potential localised smoothing of topographic detail in the LiDAR data
- the impact of the grated pits within the carpark area on overland flows across the site
- a proposed wetland project to be developed in the park to the north of the property, which he said may retard or retain stormwater that would otherwise divert to 142 Dawson Street.

Mr Moret did not contest the fact that overland stormwater flows will enter the site during the 1 percent AEP event. Rather, he considered the site conditions would influence the movement of stormwater through the site.

Engeny undertook a site visit and reviewed the site's inclusion in the SBO2 in response to the site specific concern raised in Submission 42. Mr Ottrey's evidence indicated that the LiDAR data used to represent the ground levels at the site in the model appears to be a good match to what was observed on and immediately surrounding the site, including the levels of the park to the rear of the site.

Mr Ottrey responded to Mr Moret's evidence in detail in D35. His responses to the modelling issues raised by Mr Moret are discussed in Chapter 3. This includes the 'block out' and 'roughness' approaches to representing buildings in the modelling (discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.1).

On the site specific issues raised by Mr Moret, Mr Ottrey responded:

- The modelling shows that an overland flow of water reaches the northern edge of 142 Dawson Street which places it at risk of inundation. Without a physical barrier, overland flow will enter the site.
- While the existing building on the site is a physical barrier across the northern boundary, it is not designed and may not be maintained as a physical barrier to overland flows.
- It is likely overland flows will enter onto the site from the east and west boundaries, and could enter the site from the south, resulting in inundation of at least part of the site notwithstanding the existing building.
- The pits are most likely private drainage assets which are used to drain rainfall from the site. No private drainage assets are included in the model, because:
 - Council does not have accurate records of where all private pits, pipes and drains are located
 - Council is not responsible for maintaining these drains
 - they are generally designed to drain runoff from the site to the legal point of discharge, not to manage additional flows onto the site
 - the Council drains that these pits and pipes would connect to would be full in the 1 percent AEP event (inclusive of climate change), so there is no additional capacity available for the private drains to discharge to.

On this basis, Mr Ottrey did not consider any changes to the SBO2 in relation to 142 Dawson Street are appropriate.

Council submitted:

- no evidence has been provided by Mr Moret that the current building is 'flood proof' or will prevent flows in a future 1 percent AEP scenario

- the on-site grates to drain the rear carpark will do little to alleviate the effects of stormwater flooding in a 1 percent AEP event
- the topographical issues highlighted by Mr Moret about potential localised ‘smoothing’ will not change the outcome that overland stormwater will enter the site during the 1 percent AEP event
- the proposed wetland in the park to the north is not being designed as a retention or retarding basin for stormwater, and in any event there is no certainty about whether or when the wetland project will go ahead.

The Panel is not persuaded that there is any justification for removing the SBO2 from 142 Dawson Street based on site specific conditions. The remaining issues raised by Builtmore are not relevant considerations for the Amendment, for the reasons set out in Chapter 1.4.

The Panel concludes:

- There is no justification for removing 142 Dawson Street Brunswick West from the SBO2.

4.6 41 and 41A Lytton Street Fawcner

Submitter 90 objected to 41 and 41A Lytton Street Fawcner being included in the SBO2 on the basis that:

- drainage works had been undertaken on the site in 2022 and 2023
- extensive upgrades had occurred in recent years to the drains in Lytton Street and surrounding streets
- the poor condition of Council’s drainage infrastructure is the main contributor to stormwater issues.

Engeny undertook a site visit and reviewed the site’s inclusion in the SBO2 in response to the site specific concern raised in Submission 90. Mr Ottrey’s evidence described the outcomes of the site visit and review:

- The LiDAR shows that the low point in Lytton Street in front of the site is approximately 300 millimetres below the footpath level, which matches what was observed on-site.
- The LiDAR shows a gradual fall from the corner of William Street and Lytton Street back to the site within the road pavement area (levels range from 92.8 metres AHD to 92.0 metres AHD over a distance of approximately 200 metres).
- The modelling shows that shallow sheet flow from the low point in Clovelly Avenue will reach Lytton Street in a 1 percent AEP event including climate change.
- This flow path is not included in the map as it does not meet the inclusion criteria (being too shallow), however it is still a source of runoff contributing to the water levels in the low point in Lytton Street in a 1 percent AEP event.
- The model shows that in a 1 percent AEP event, runoff will pond in Lytton Street once the capacity of the underground drainage is exceeded and the water level will build up until the footpath is overtopped, resulting in inundation of the site (and other properties in Lytton Street).

On this basis, Mr Ottrey did not consider any changes to the SBO2 in relation to 41 and 41A Lytton Street Fawcner are appropriate. Council agreed, and so does the Panel, noting that the various levels and overland flow behaviours in Lytton Street appear to have been extensively investigated and modelled by Engeny, and nothing observed on site by Engeny suggested the model is likely to be inaccurate.

The Panel concludes:

- There is no justification for removing 41 and 41A Lytton Street Fawkner from the SBO2.

Appendix A Document list

No	Date	Description	Presented by
1	24 Feb 2025	Directions Hearing notice letter	Planning Panels Victoria (PPV)
2	24 Apr 2025	Panel Directions and Hearing Timetable	PPV
3	5 May 2025	Request for Panel Direction on hydrological modelling	Builtmore Investments Pty Ltd (Builtmore)
4	5 May 2025	Panel Direction on hydrological modelling	PPV
5	9 May 2025	Response to Panel Direction on hydrological modelling: - Covering letter - Memo from Engeny on calibration and validation data - Attachment to Engeny memo: Historic flooding presentation	Merri-bek City Council (Council)
6	16 May 2025	Municipality map with submitter locations [CONFIDENTIAL]	Council
7	16 May 2025	Municipality map showing extent of Special Building Overlay mapping	Council
8	16 May 2025	Individual grid maps showing extent of the Special Building Overlay and submitter locations [CONFIDENTIAL]	Council
9	16 May 2025	Part A submission	Council
10	16 May 2025	Appendices to Part A submission	Council
11	22 May 2025	Request for extension to submit evidence	Council
12	23 May 2025	Submission	Mr Allenby
13	23 May 2025	Request for extension to submit evidence: - Attachment 1 - Email from Mr Moret to Mr Farah requesting further data	Builtmore
14	23 May 2025	Extension granted to Council to submit evidence	PPV
15	23 May 2025	Email to Panel – request for clarification on scope for Glenn Ottrey evidence presentation	Council
16	23 May 2025	Expert Evidence statement of Glenn Ottrey (drainage engineering)	Council
17	23 May 2025	Response to Builtmore Investments request for extension to submit evidence	Council
18	26 May 2025	Letter to Panel – procedural fairness and expert evidence	Builtmore
19	26 May 2025	Response to Builtmore Investments request for extension to submit evidence and Distribution List version 3	PPV
20	27 May 2025	Email to Panel – Confirmation of data requested: - Attachment 1 – Email from Mr Moret to Mr Farah	Builtmore

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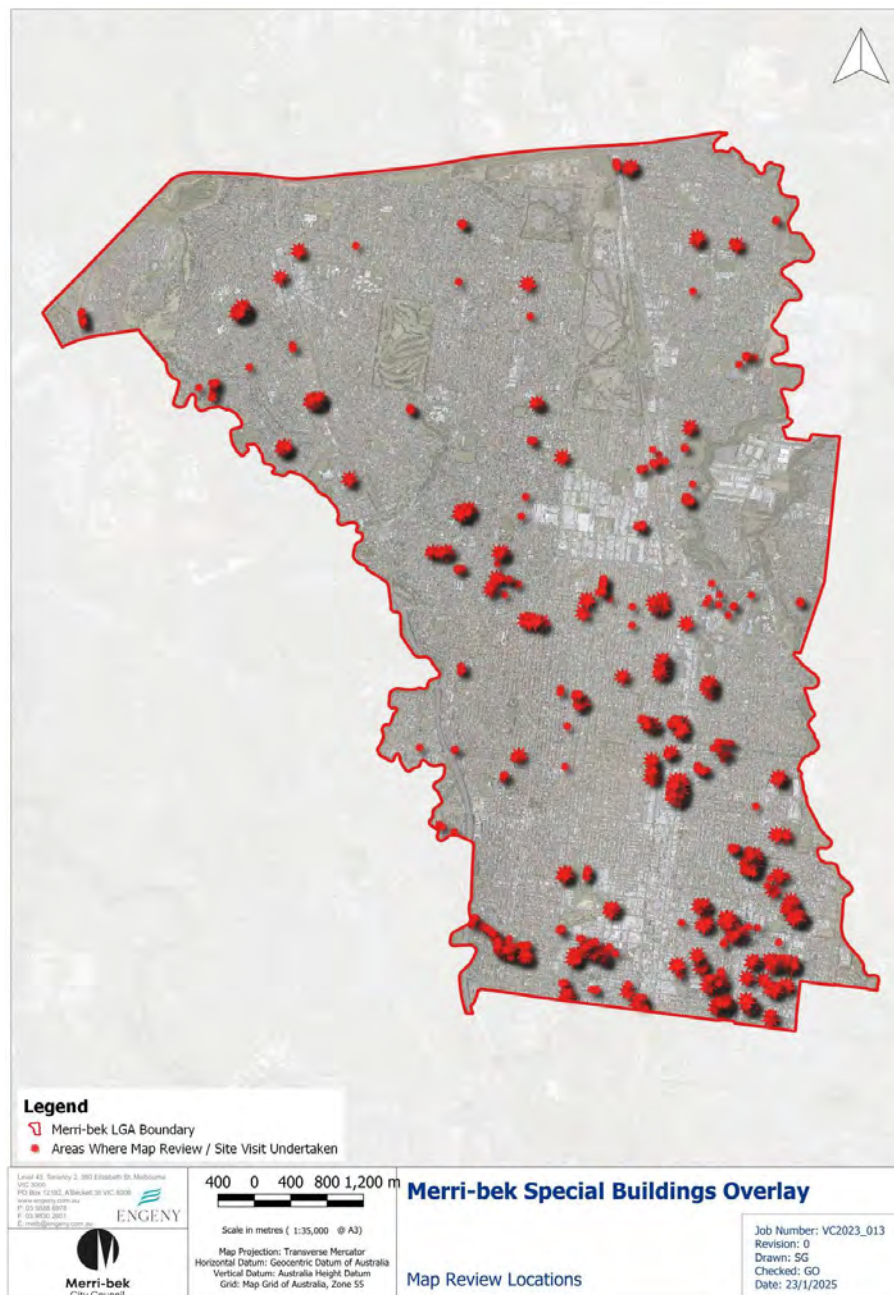
No	Date	Description	Presented by
		requesting further data (<i>note: same as Document 13 and 13a</i>)	
21	27 May 2025	Email to Panel – Support for Builtmore Investments request for extension to submit evidence	Mr Allenby
22	28 May 2025	Letter to Panel – Information requests and proposal for Hearing dates	Council
23	28 May 2025	Email to Panel – Information requested from Council	Mr Allenby
24	28 May 2025	Response to alternative Hearing dates proposed by Council	PPV
25	29 May 2025	Submission: - Attachment 1 – Response from Council dated 16 July 2024 - Attachment 2 – Post Office Place photos - Attachment 3 – Response to submission from Council dated 17 June 2024	Ms Whitfield
26	30 May 2025	Submission	Mr Adams and Ms White
27	2 June 2025	Hearing Timetable version 2	PPV
28	4 June 2025	Expert Evidence statement of David Moret (hydraulics engineering)	Builtmore
29	5 June 2025	Email to Panel – Memorandum from Engeny	Council
30	5 June 2025	Memorandum from Engeny - Model versions for Merri-bek SBO	Council
31	11 June 2025	Hearing submission	Builtmore
32	11 June 2025	<i>Drainage Asset Management Plan 2020</i> (Moreland City Council)	Builtmore
33	11 June 2025	Email to Panel – Hearing presentation documents	Council
34	11 June 2025	Part B submission: - Appendix 1 - Melbourne Water letter to Council's CEO 8 May 2025 - Appendix 2 - Email from Melbourne Water dated 29 May 2025 - Appendix 3 - Drainage infrastructure requests - Summary table - Appendix 4 - Drainage maintenance requests - Summary table - Appendix 5 - Banyule C6 Panel Report - Appendix 6 - Banyule C101 Panel Report - Appendix 7 - Bayside C153 Panel Report - Appendix 8 - Melbourne C384melb Panel Report - Appendix 9 - Moreland C50 Panel Report - Appendix 10 - Port Phillip C111 Panel Report	Council

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No	Date	Description	Presented by
		- Appendix 11 - Yarra C210 Panel Report	
35	11 June 2025	Memorandum from Engeny - Response to evidence from David Moret of DPM Consulting Group and written submissions to the Panel	Council
36	11 June 2025	PowerPoint presentation from Glenn Ottrey (drainage engineering)	Council
37	11 June 2025	Hearing presentation material: - Map of Glenroy area showing flood modelling - Image of Glenroy NE - Image of Glenroy NW - Image of Glenroy SE - Image of Glenroy SW	Mr Allenby
38	12 June 2025	Supplementary Hearing submission	Builtmore
39	12 June 2025	Email to Panel – Updates to presentation from Glenn Ottrey (drainage engineering)	Council
40	12 June 2025	Updated PowerPoint presentation from Glenn Ottrey (drainage engineering)	Council
41	17 June 2025	Hearing presentation	Mr Allenby
42	18 June 2025	PowerPoint presentation from David Moret (hydraulics engineering)	Builtmore

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Property	Map Review Result
216-216A Reynard Street, Coburg	Remove
705 Park Street, Brunswick	Remove
2/2 Alsace Street, Brunswick East	Remove
124 Evans Street, Brunswick	Retain
20 Bakers Road, Coburg North	Retain
220 Glenlyon Road, Brunswick East	Retain
1A Wadham Street, Pascoe Vale South	Retain
1-5 French Street, Coburg North	Retain
49 Sheffield Street, Coburg	Retain
144 O'Hea Street, Coburg	Retain
1350 Sydney Road, Fawkner	Retain
1009 Sydney Road, Coburg North	Revise
1A Pardy Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove
24 Post Office Place, Glenroy	Retain
67 Murray Street, Coburg	Retain
11 Jenkins Street, Brunswick East	Retain
39A Everard Street, Glenroy	Retain
2A Irvine Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove
59 Wales Street, Brunswick West	Retain
1 Champ Street, Coburg	Revise
5 Hennessy Street, Brunswick	Remove
33 Heller Street, Brunswick	Retain
30 Horne Street, Brunswick	Retain
1/301 Gaffney Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove
125-131 Brunswick Road and 152 Barkly Street and 166 Barkly Street, Brunswick	Retain
140 Barkly Street, Brunswick	Retain
50 Cameron Street, Coburg	Remove
48 Cameron Street, Coburg	Remove
1 Station Street, Coburg	Remove

Property	Map Review Result
142 Dawson Street, Brunswick West	Retain
11 Station Street, Coburg	Remove
6 Hutchison Place, Coburg	Remove
5 Station Street, Coburg	Remove
33 Chambers Street, Coburg	Retain
2 Graham Street, Pascoe Vale South	Retain
10 Jamieson Street, Coburg	Retain
2 Chambers Street, Brunswick	Retain
3 Ray Street, Pascoe Vale	Retain
13 Station Street, Coburg	Remove
5 Fallon Street, Brunswick	Retain
106 Albion Street, Brunswick	Retain
2 Bush Street, Coburg North	Retain
120 Evans Street, Brunswick	Retain
4 Bush Street, Coburg North	Retain
216 Brunswick Road, Brunswick	Retain
1389 Sydney Road, Fawkner	Retain
7 Gardiner Street, Brunswick	Remove
183-185 Sydney Road Coburg	Retain
26 Holloway Road, Brunswick	Retain
4/662 Pascoe Vale Road, Oak Park	Retain
32 Marks Street, Coburg	Revise
197 Sussex Street and 2A Heather Avenue, Pascoe Vale	Revise
17/8 Prospect Street, Pascoe Vale	Retain
458-460 Lygon Street, Brunswick East	Retain
21 Valdoone Court, Oak Park	Retain
860 Sydney Road, Brunswick	Retain
224 Victoria Street, Brunswick	Retain
222 Victoria Street, Brunswick	Retain

Property	Map Review Result
4 Fallon Street, Brunswick	Retain
17 Munro Street, Brunswick	Remove
193-195 Nicholson St Brunswick East	Remove
18 Bank Street, Brunswick	Retain
226A Victoria Street, Brunswick	Retain
15 Trafford Street, Brunswick	Revise
219 Dawson St, Brunswick West	Remove
222 - 226A Victoria Street, Brunswick	Retain
133 Reynard St, Coburg	Retain
4 Hudson Street, Coburg	Retain
13 Woolacott Street, Coburg	Remove
41 and 41A Lytton Street, Fawkner	Retain
66 Weston Street, Brunswick	Retain
15 Woolacott Street, Coburg	Remove
8 Woolacott Street, Coburg	Retain
27 Gregory Street, Oak Park	Retain
35 O'Hea Street, Coburg	Retain
18/9-11 Chris Court, Oak Park	Remove*
1/30 Snell Grove, Pascoe Vale	Retain
13 Valdoone Court, Oak Park	Retain
3/76 Pearson Street, Brunswick West	Retain
16 Moore Street, Coburg	Retain
2 Sheppard Street, Coburg North	Retain
392 Bell Street, Pascoe Vale South	Retain
30 Marks Street, Coburg	Revise
South west corner of city (where exhibited SBO2 map extends beyond municipal boundary with MCC)	Remove
38 Marks Street, Coburg	Remove
7 Sydney Road, Brunswick	Remove

Property	Map Review Result
210 Brunswick Road, Brunswick	Remove
37 Williams Road, Coburg	Remove
39 Williams Road, Coburg	Remove
27 O'Connor Street, Brunswick East	Remove
29 O'Connor Street, Brunswick East	Remove
7 Hennessy Street, Brunswick	Remove
9 Hennessy Street, Brunswick	Remove
303 Gaffney Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove
305 Gaffney Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove
2 The Avenue, Coburg	Remove
52 Cameron Street, Coburg	Remove
4 Graham Street, Pascoe Vale South	Remove
62 Victoria Street, Brunswick	Remove
35 Ashmore Street, Brunswick	Remove
1 Gardiner Street, Brunswick	Remove
3 Gardiner Street, Brunswick	Remove
5 Gardiner Street, Brunswick	Remove
365 Albert Street, Brunswick	Remove
363 Albert Street, Brunswick	Remove
361 Albert Street, Brunswick	Remove
2A Alfred Street, Brunswick	Remove
36 Marks Street, Coburg	Remove
34 Marks Street, Coburg	Remove
1/8 Prospect Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove
2/8 Prospect Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove
3/8 Prospect Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove
4/8 Prospect Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove
5/8 Prospect Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove
6/8 Prospect Street, Pascoe Vale	Remove

Property	Map Review Result
213 Victoria Street, Brunswick	Remove
23 Collier Crescent, Brunswick	Revise
28 Marks Street, Coburg	Revise
24 Marks Street, Coburg	Revise
110 Edward Street, Brunswick	Remove
119 Edward Street, Brunswick	Remove
121 Edward Street, Brunswick	Remove
2 Maghull Street, Brunswick East	Remove
15 Aintree Street, Brunswick East	Remove
13 Trafford Street, Brunswick	Revise
17 Trafford Street, Brunswick	Revise
11 Woolacott Street, Coburg	Remove
78 Cameron Street, Coburg	Remove
50 O'Hea Street, Coburg	Remove
5 Chris Court, Oak Park	Remove
7 Chris Court, Oak Park	Remove
5-7 Flannery Court, Oak Park	Remove
9 Flannery Court Oak Park	Remove



MERRI-BEK CITY COUNCIL
Creating the Local Drainage Authority's
Stormwater Map

TECHNICAL REPORT

VC2023_006-REP-002-8

30 JULY 2025



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Rev	Date	Description	Author	Reviewer	Project Mgr.	Approver
0	15/08/2023	Client Issue	Matt Lazarides	Scott Dunn	Matt Lazarides	Glenn Ottrey
1	23/08/2023	Client Issue	Matt Lazarides	Scott Dunn	Matt Lazarides	Glenn Ottrey
2	20/10/2023	Client Issue	Matt Lazarides	Scott Dunn	Matt Lazarides	Glenn Ottrey
3	24/10/2023	Client Issue	Matt Lazarides	Scott Dunn	Matt Lazarides	Glenn Ottrey
4	2/11/2023	Client Issue	Matt Lazarides	Scott Dunn	Matt Lazarides	Glenn Ottrey
5	16/11/2023	Client Issue	Matt Lazarides	Scott Dunn	Matt Lazarides	Glenn Ottrey
6	04/07/2025	Client Issue	Matt Lazarides	Scott Dunn	Matt Lazarides	Glenn Ottrey
7	07/07/2025	Client Issue	Matt Lazarides	Scott Dunn	Matt Lazarides	Glenn Ottrey
8	30/07/2025	Client Issue	Matt Lazarides	Scott Dunn	Matt Lazarides	Glenn Ottrey
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Most established suburbs in metropolitan Melbourne have areas affected by stormwater overland flows. These flows come from intense rainfall when major storms affect urban areas. Merri-bek City Council (Council) is the local drainage authority for the city's smaller catchments, less than 60 hectares. Council has a role to manage stormwater risk in these catchments. This includes having a stormwater map, which is imbedded into statutory mechanisms. Then, risks can be managed when land development is proposed.

In recent years Council has done various technical studies, to identify and manage risks for stormwater overland flows. Collectively, these represent a robust approach to informing a Stormwater Map, for the city's smaller catchments. These studies also inform how Council does drainage improvements in these catchments. A chronological summary of these studies and associated events, is given below.

2016 – Pilot Study

A pilot study was initially done in the Moreland Road catchment to demonstrate that available data and modelling software could suitably reproduce known stormwater overland flow issues in a smaller catchment.

2017-2020 – Initial Stormwater Map

Initial stormwater overland flow modelling and mapping was done in a study for the city's smaller catchments.

2018-2020 – Mitigation Assessment

Structural (engineering) mitigation options were assessed and prioritised for the 10% annual exceedance probability (AEP) event, otherwise known as the 1 in 10 year event. These options were described in a Drainage Investigation Study, which now gives direction to Council's annual capital works program for drainage upgrade works.

2021 - Building Act Designation

After sharing the initial Stormwater Map with affected landowners, Council activated the Building Regulations 2018 and designating the initial map. This triggered a reporting and consenting process for building surveyors.

2020-2023 – Melbourne Water Involvement

Melbourne Water picked up Council's work to pursue a 'whole-of-catchments' approach for both the smaller (local) and larger (main) drainage catchments. This included an independent peer review of the models for the municipality's four urbanised catchments, where there are stormwater overland flows.

2023 – Data Validation

Updated drainage, topographic data and technical guidelines were then reviewed and integrated into the modelling.

2023 – Updated Stormwater Map

All the work done was then used to prepare an updated Stormwater Map for the city's local drainage catchments, where Council is the relevant drainage authority. This resulted in reviewed stormwater modelling mapping for the 1% annual exceedance probability (1 in 100 year) event. Climate change was factored into this work.

Late 2023 – Landowner Consultation

The updated Stormwater Map will be shared with affected landowners, then Council intends to pursue statutory mechanisms. This includes a planning scheme amendment process so a final map can inform better land development outcomes, where there is a clear stormwater risk linked with an overland flow path in the Council's local drainage areas.

Late 2023 – Map Extent Review and Amended Stormwater Map

The updated stormwater map was used to consult affected landowners and a review of resident responses was completed in collaboration with municipal-wide field observations and a visual check of the mapping extent to produce an amended Stormwater Map for Council's local catchments.

2025 – Post-Exhibition Map Review Process

During the exhibition process there was an opportunity for submitters to request a review of the mapping. These requests were reviewed and the outcomes informed the final map extent.



1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Engeny acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people are the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways in Merri-bek City Council.

Engeny also acknowledges the assistance provided by Merri-bek City Council officers and Melbourne Water staff in sourcing data used in the preparation of this report, the modelling and mapping that underpins the report's findings.



2. LIST OF TERMS & ABBREVIATIONS

The following terms and abbreviations are used in this report.

Term (Abbreviation)	Explanation
Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP)	Refers to the probability or risk of a rainfall event of a given magnitude (intensity and duration) occurring or being exceeded in any given year. A 90 % AEP event has a high probability of occurring or being exceeded; it would occur quite often and would be a relatively minor rainfall event. A 1 % AEP event has a low probability of occurrence or being exceeded; but is likely to cause extensive damage. A 1 % AEP event has the same probability as a 1 in 100-year ARI.
Australian Height Datum (AHD)	A common national surface level datum approximately corresponding to mean sea level. Introduced in 1971 to eventually supersede all earlier datums.
Average Recurrence Interval (ARI)	Refers to the average time interval between a given storm event magnitude occurring or being exceeded. For instance, a 100-year ARI event is expected to be exceeded on average once every 100 years. The AEP is the ARI expressed as a percentage.
Freeboard	A factor of safety above the relevant design standard (e.g., 1 in 100 year) stormwater level. Is typically used for setting of floor levels or crest heights of levees. It is usually expressed as a height above the level of the design storm event.
Effective Impervious Area (EIA)	Impervious areas which are directly connected to underground drains or concrete lined channels. Examples include roofs with downpipes connecting to drains, road pavement and large carparks.
Hydraulics	The term given to the study of water flow in a river, channel, or pipe. In particular, for the evaluation of flow parameters - such as depth and velocity.
'Hot Spot'	An area which has a history of repeat stormwater impacts, highlighted through stormwater modelling, anecdotal information and / or customer complaints.
Hydrology / Hydrologic	Terms given to the study of the rainfall and runoff. Determining how much rain is likely to fall in each event and how much of that rain will become runoff.
Impervious	A ground covering or surface which water cannot pass through. Examples include roofs, concrete and asphalt. The opposite of impervious is pervious.
Indirectly Connected Area (ICA)	Includes all small pervious areas within a catchment (gardens, nature strips, pocket parks, lawns) and impervious areas which are not directly connected to an underground drain or concrete channel (runoff flows onto a pervious surface). Examples of impervious areas which are not directly connected include footpaths next to a nature strip, concrete or gravel paths through parks, roof of a garden shed where water falls onto the garden, most residential driveways and landscaped paving.
Intensity Frequency Duration (IFD)	Statistical analysis of rainfall, describing the rainfall intensity (mm/hr), frequency (probability measured by the AEP), duration (hrs). This analysis is used to generate design rainfall estimates.
Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR)	Airborne surveying technology that provides a regularly spaced grid (one metre horizontal interval in this case) of ground levels. The data allows for the representation of elevations along waterways and other key topographical features across the study area.
Pervious	A ground covering or surface which water can pass through. Examples include gardens, grass (lawns, nature strips, ovals) and other green landscaped areas. The opposite of pervious is impervious.



Term (Abbreviation)	Explanation
Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP)	Greenhouse gas concentration trajectories adopted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. These projections consist of four different climate futures relative to temperature and sea level rises possible depending on the volume of greenhouse gases emitted in the years to come.
RORB	Hydrological modelling software used in this study to calculate the runoff generated for rainfall events.
Stormwater Map	A map showing the outcome of modelling work for the representation of the 1% AEP event on affected land. In this report this term is interchangeable with 'stormwater overland flow path map'
TUFLOW	Hydraulic modelling software used in this study to simulate the flow of stormwater through the study area. The model uses numerical equations to describe the water movement.



3. PURPOSE

This report brings together the technical work done for stormwater mapping in the city's local drainage catchments, where Merri-bek City Council is the local drainage authority. It gives a timeline for the studies and shows a logical, sequential approach has happened. The studies give direction to reducing the risk of stormwater inundation, when land is being developed. To achieve this, the technical work is informing a Stormwater Map. Then, this map can be implemented into statutory mechanisms, such as a new Special Building Overland in the Merri-bek Planning Scheme. This outcome enables Merri-bek City Council to work with land developers and their consultants, to address stormwater issues when they prepare their proposals in Council's local drainage catchments.



4. INTRODUCTION

4.1 Study Overview

This report outlines a 5-step technical process that began in 2017 when Engeny was engaged by Moreland City Council (now Merri-bek City Council) to do stormwater flow modelling in local drainage catchments, where Council is the local drainage authority and has its drainage assets.

Figure 4.1 below gives a flow-chart of the 5-step process which informs this report. This process is summarised as:

- **Step 1 (2017-20) – Initial Models and Maps for Local Catchments.**
Engeny was engaged by Council to develop stormwater models for the city's smaller local drainage catchments, and produce an initial Stormwater Map which shows the overland flow paths in these catchments.
- **Step 2 (2020-23) – Integrated Whole of Catchment Models.**
Engeny was then engaged by Melbourne Water to review Council's (Step 1) modelling and include detailed modelling of all of Melbourne Water's larger drainage catchments in the city. This did not include modelling Melbourne Water's larger waterways, including Moonee Ponds Creek, Merri Creek and Edgars Creek. As part of this second step, the 2017 initial Council catchment models were integrated into new whole of catchment models, which incorporated Melbourne Water's overland flow paths for its main drainage catchments. The modelling was also independently peer reviewed. Section 5.1 explains the roles of the different government agencies in managing drainage within a catchment.
- **Step 3 (Mid 2023) – Validating for New Information.**
Since Council's independent modelling study in 2017, some of the data has been superseded with new information. There have also been major infrastructure projects, most notably two significant level crossing removal projects (LXRP) in Preston/Bell and Glenroy which have recently completed. Council has also done several drainage improvement projects since 2018, which were not included in the 2017 modelling. Also, Council has updated LiDAR data, captured in late 2021, which also needed to be considered.
- **Step 4 (Mid 2023) – Updated Models and Maps for Local Catchments.**
As a result of Step 3, the models have been validated and updated modelling has been done to incorporate the new information. This means the Council's models are up to date and captures the latest available data to understand stormwater overland flow paths. A preliminary version of the updated stormwater map was released for public comment.
- **Step 5 (Late 2023) – Map Extent Review and Amended Stormwater Map.**
As a result of Step 4, a municipal-wide review of the preliminary version of the updated stormwater map was undertaken by Council and Engeny to ensure the robustness and consistency of the updated stormwater overland flow extent. This includes a visual check for any anomalies or inconsistencies in the mapping extent. Separate to the visual extent checks, review requests of the stormwater overland flow extent were also undertaken based on responses from residents. Submitters requests for review have also been assessed by Engeny, including site visits to verify data in publicly accessible areas.

Arising from this step, an amended Stormwater Map superseding from the preliminary version released in Step 4 has been established for Council's local catchments.
- **Step 6 (2024- 2025) – Post-Exhibition Map Review Process**
After the Amended Stormwater Map (Step 5) was exhibited in mid 2024, there was an opportunity for submitters to request a review of the mapping. The outcomes of the reviews informed the final map extent. Like the work undertaken in Step 5, through Step 6 additional site visits and further interrogation of the modelling data were completed to respond directly to submitters requests to review the mapping extent. In addition to the submitters properties which were reviewed, properties that neighboured or were adjacent to the submitting property were also reviewed as part of the submitting property reviews and adjustments to the map extent were made to ensure consistency in decision making and that submitters did not receive favourable treatment over non submitters to the process.

Additional modelling was undertaken in specific areas near Heller St, Brunswick West and Marks St and Prospect St in Pascoe Vale to incorporate new information and validate the map extent in these specific areas which is explained further in Section 7.4.

Step 6 also incorporated the removal of several small fragments of polygons which were retained in the exhibited extent but have been removed in the final map extent.



Arising from this step, a final map extent has been established for Council's local catchments.

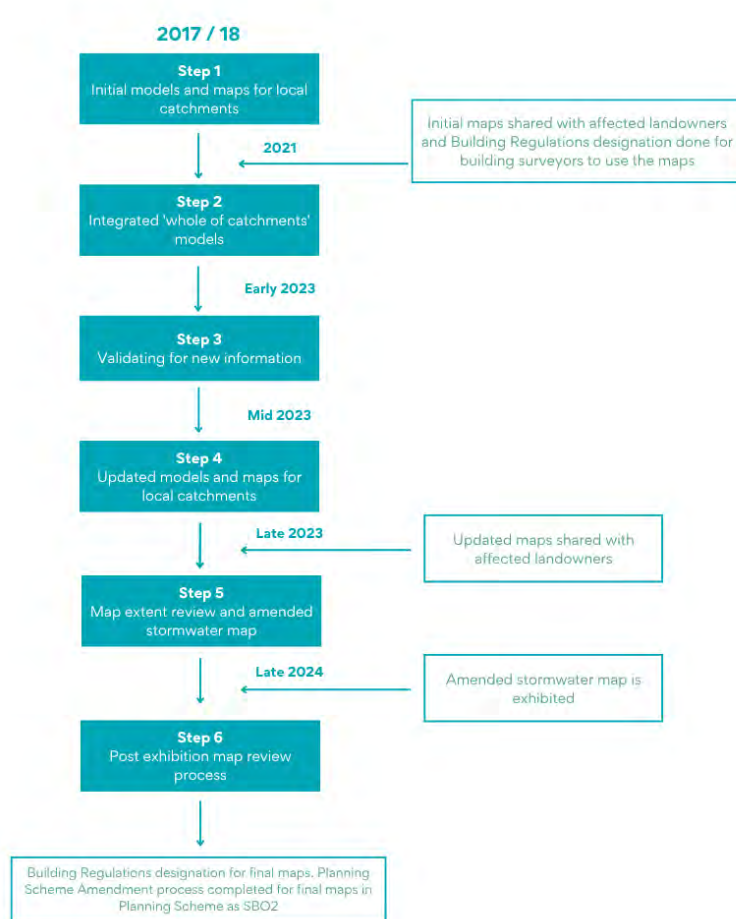


FIGURE 4.1: SIX STEP TECHNICAL PROCESS



4.2 Objectives

The objectives of this report are:

- To enable a stepped modelling and mapping technical method for Council's local catchments stormwater mapping, to be informed by the best available information.
- To enable a technical method for Council's local catchments stormwater mapping, that integrates consideration of downstream main-drainage catchments.
- To enable a technical method that is informed by changing national guidelines, that integrates consideration of climate change.
- To enable a technical method that included initial landowner consultation before Council used any initial Stormwater Map for designation under the Building Regulations.
- To enable a technical method that is robust and defensible for any future independent Planning Panel, that sits to consider any submissions for final maps being included in the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.
- For this report to be an important technical background document to explain how the final maps were prepared, in a manner that is industry standard for contemporary stormwater modelling and mapping.

4.3 Study Area

This report is for a stormwater overland flow mapping work program for Merri-bek's urbanised drainage catchments. This excludes the larger waterway catchments for Moonee Ponds Creek, Merri Creek and Edgars Creek. This exclusion does not affect the work program, because waterway catchment modelling requires a different approach. Furthermore, these major waterways are associated with large, complex catchments where different inputs, models and maps would be prepared. Furthermore, waterways are managed by Melbourne Water and are not the responsibility of the local drainage authority.

The municipality has been separated into four distinct hydraulic model areas, these are named after the:

- main drain which takes stormwater from catchment to the downstream waterway, or
- general location of the catchment within the city, where multiple main drains traverse the catchment.

Figure 4.2 shows the location of the different hydraulic models used for the study. The hydrology models were setup using a finer catchment breakup with a total of 7 hydrology models created. The hydrology models provide inputs to the hydraulic models but do not need to match areas as multiple hydrology models can be read into one hydraulic model.

Figure 4.3 shows the existing drainage network layout. It shows the Council drains, Melbourne Water drains, waterways (all Melbourne Water managed) and the retarding basins (Melbourne Water managed).

Melbourne Water is typically responsible for the management of drains and waterways in catchments greater than 60 hectares. This typically means that Melbourne Water manages the largest underground drains and most waterways and retarding basins within a given catchment. This report focuses on the overland flow paths associated with the Merri-bek Council drainage system only (not the Melbourne Water drains or waterways).

Stormwater drainage systems are generally designed to convey flows from relatively common or frequent storm events up to a typical design storm of a 20% (1 in 5 year) or 10% (1 in 10 year) AEP (depending on land use, storms such as the 10% AEP can be used in the design of drainage networks for commercial or industrial areas). Flows for rarer or larger storm events such as a 1% (1 in 100 year) AEP are designed to be conveyed via roads or dedicated drainage reserves under current design standards. Drainage design methodologies, data and standards, and land use can also change over time.

The typical design life for an underground drain is at least 50 years, however many extend well beyond this to over 100 years, especially large main drains. This long asset life and changes in design methodologies, data and standards can result in some areas being serviced by drains which do not meet the current design criteria, i.e., the drain is not able to fully convey flows from a 20% (1 in 5 year) AEP storm event.

The consideration of provision of suitable means to convey overland flow paths has been common practice since the 1960s and 1970s, however before this time these flow paths were not always considered in the design and layout of subdivisions. Much of Merri-bek was subdivided before this time and so not all overland flow paths have been properly protected from development. The grid type street



alignment which is common in many Merri-bek suburbs is evidence that protecting overland flow paths from development was not a high priority when the subdivision was created. While the grid alignment of the roads does work reasonably well in some relatively flat areas for conveying overland flows, it also fails to suitably convey flows in areas with more defined topography. It is this lack of consideration of overland flow paths from previous historical subdivisions that is driving the implementation of statutory mechanisms, such as the Special Building Overlay (SBO).

Figure 4.4 shows the different Special Building Overlays for stormwater overland flow, and Land subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO), for riverine flood maps. The SBO1 and LSIO is already part of the Merri-bek Planning Scheme. The SBO2 is Council's Stormwater Map for its local drainage catchments.

Council's future planning scheme amendment will be aiming to add SBO2 into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

It is understood Melbourne Water will be separately exploring a future planning scheme amendment to update its existing SBO1 map.

This report focuses only on Merri-bek City Council's Stormwater Map, which will inform a proposed SBO2. This report does not give technical information for any future changes to Melbourne Water's SBO1. Melbourne Water is separately doing technical study to consider the future need for updated main drainage maps.

Melbourne Water and Council have worked together to ensure an integrated modelling approach. This is also informing the future demarcation between separate Council and Melbourne Water overlays for the planning scheme.

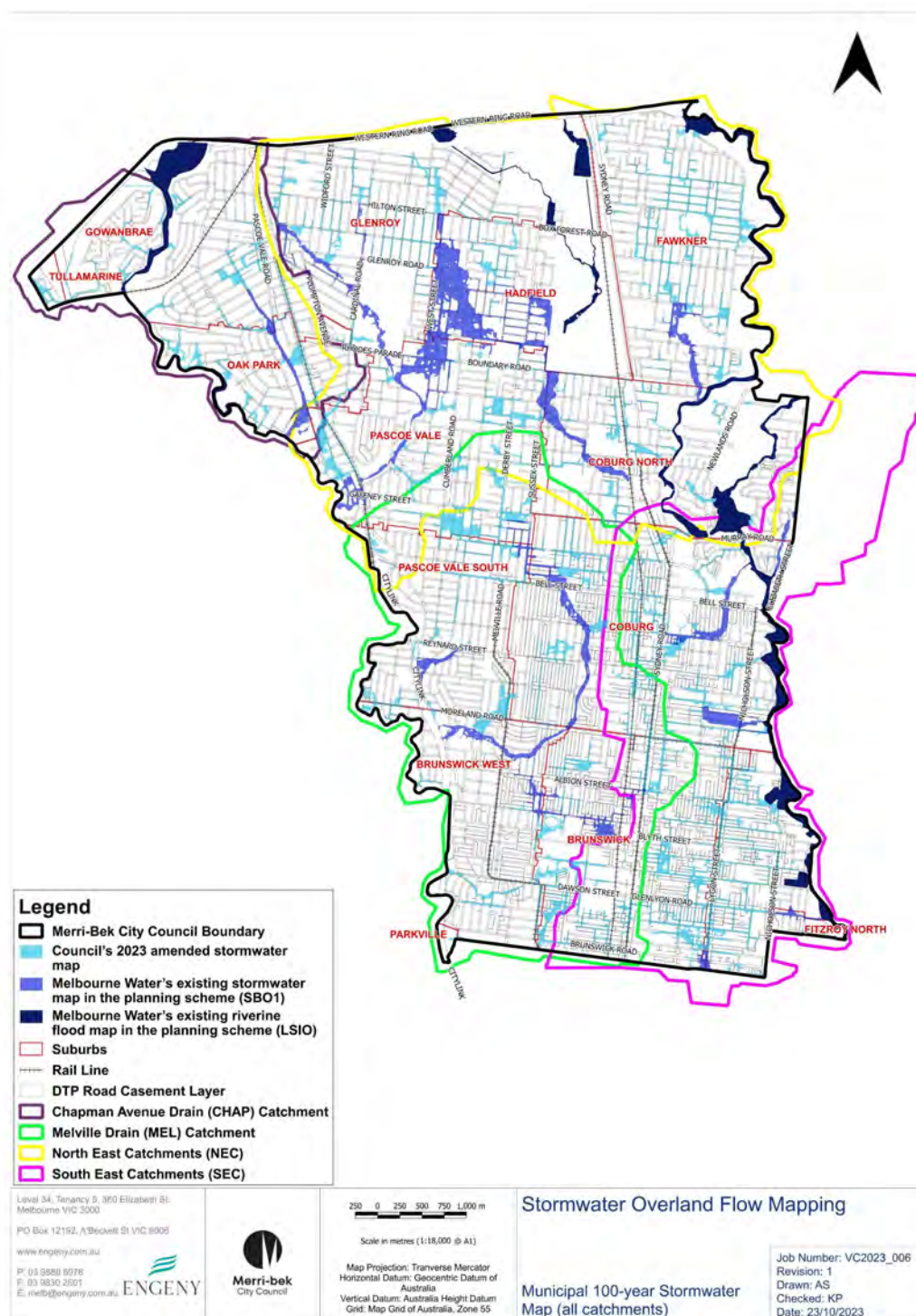


FIGURE 4.2: MUNICIPAL 1% AEP (1 IN 100-YEAR) STORMWATER MAP (ALL CATCHMENTS)

CREATING THE LOCAL DRAINAGE AUTHORITY'S STORMWATER MAP | VC2023_006-REP-002-8

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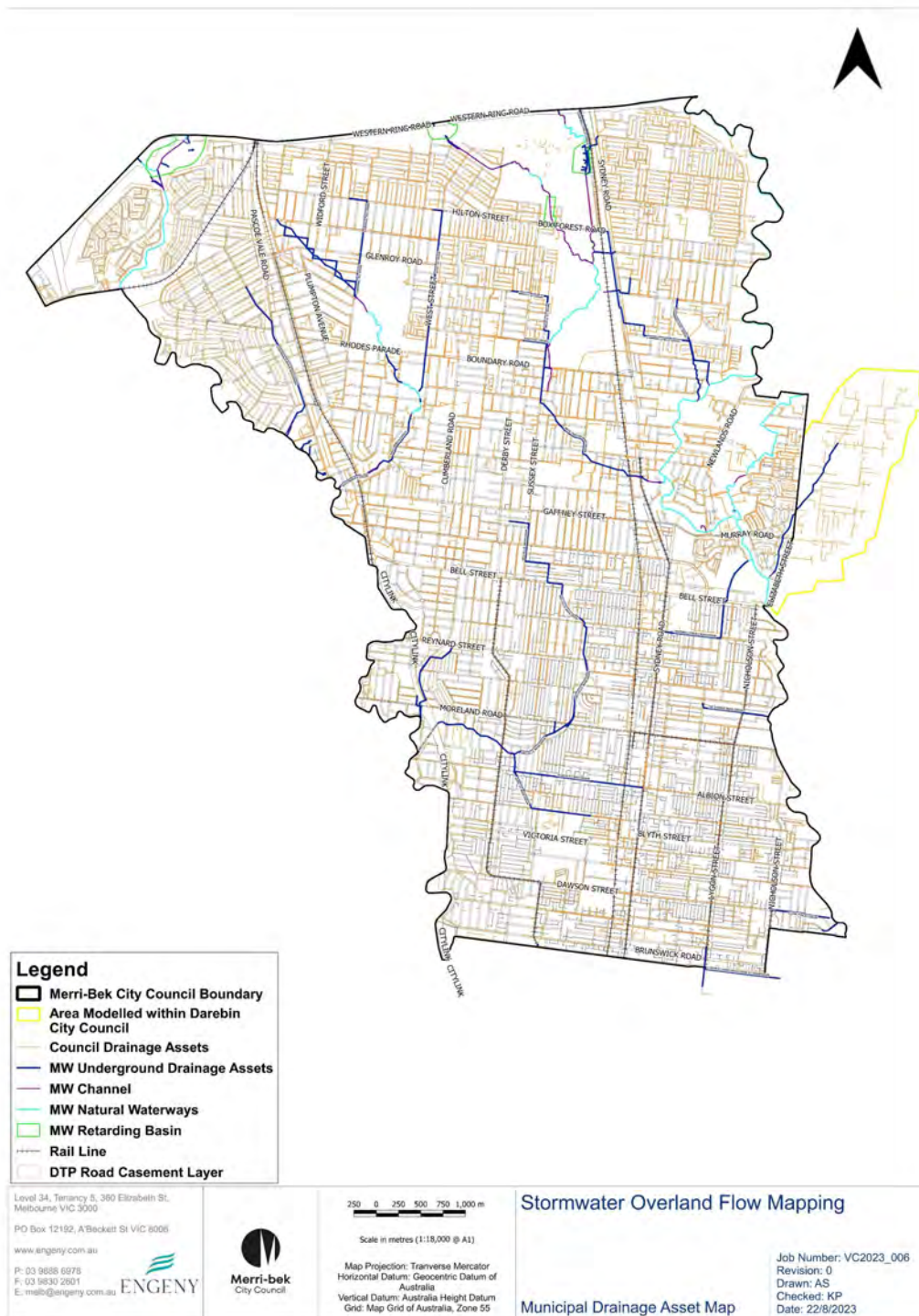


FIGURE 4.3: MUNICIPAL DRAINAGE ASSET MAP

CREATING THE LOCAL DRAINAGE AUTHORITY'S STORMWATER MAP | VC2023_006-REP-002-8

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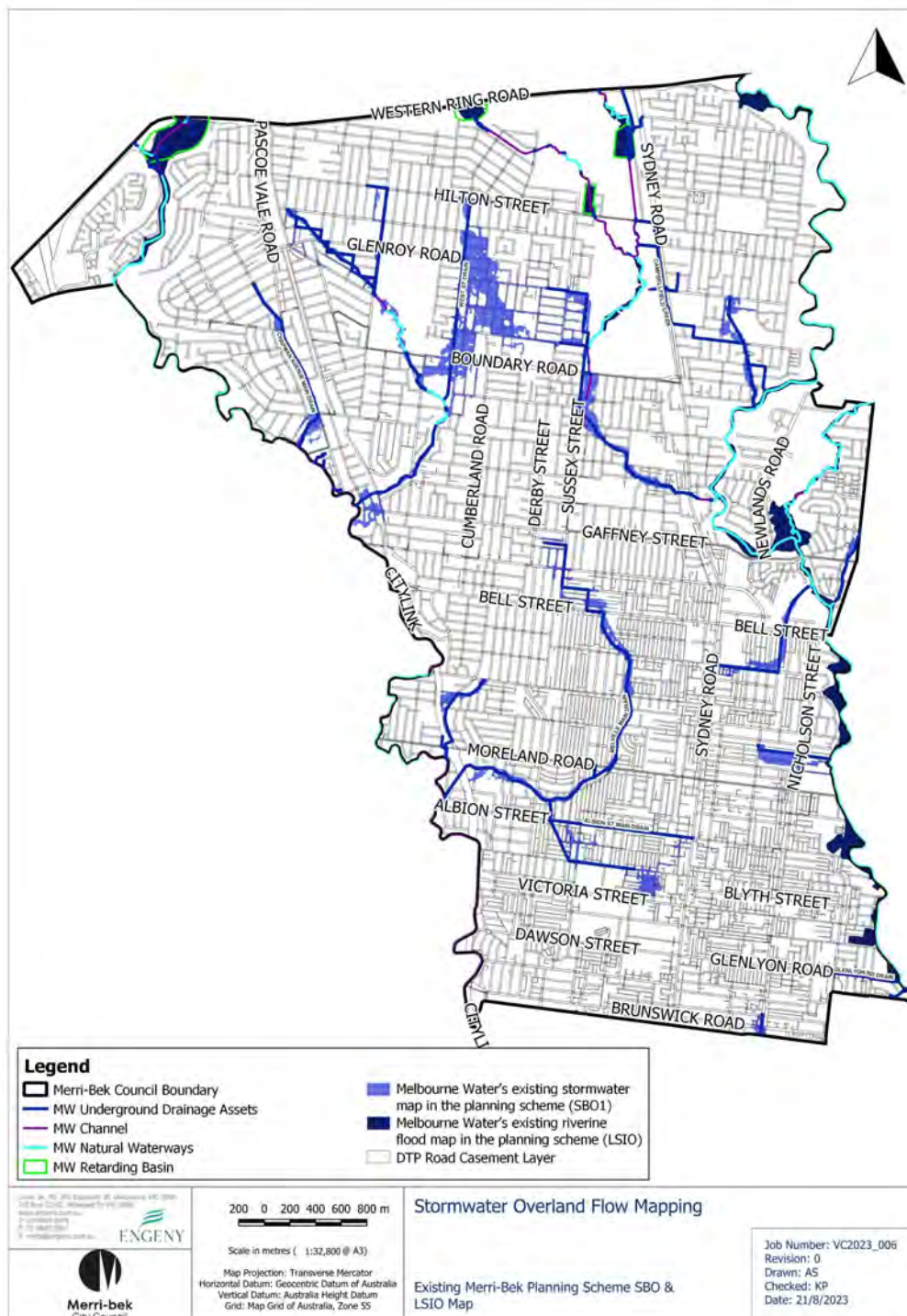


FIGURE 4.4: EXISTING MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME, SBO & LSIO MAP

CREATING THE LOCAL DRAINAGE AUTHORITY'S STORMWATER MAP | VC2023_006-REP-002-8

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5. CONTEXT

5.1 Institutional Arrangements

Melbourne Water and local councils, including Merri-bek City Council, both play a role in managing Melbourne's drainage system.

Melbourne Water is the floodplain management authority and the catchment management authority (CMA) for catchments which drain into Port Phillip and Western Port. Figure 5.1 shows the total area and catchments which Melbourne Water operates.

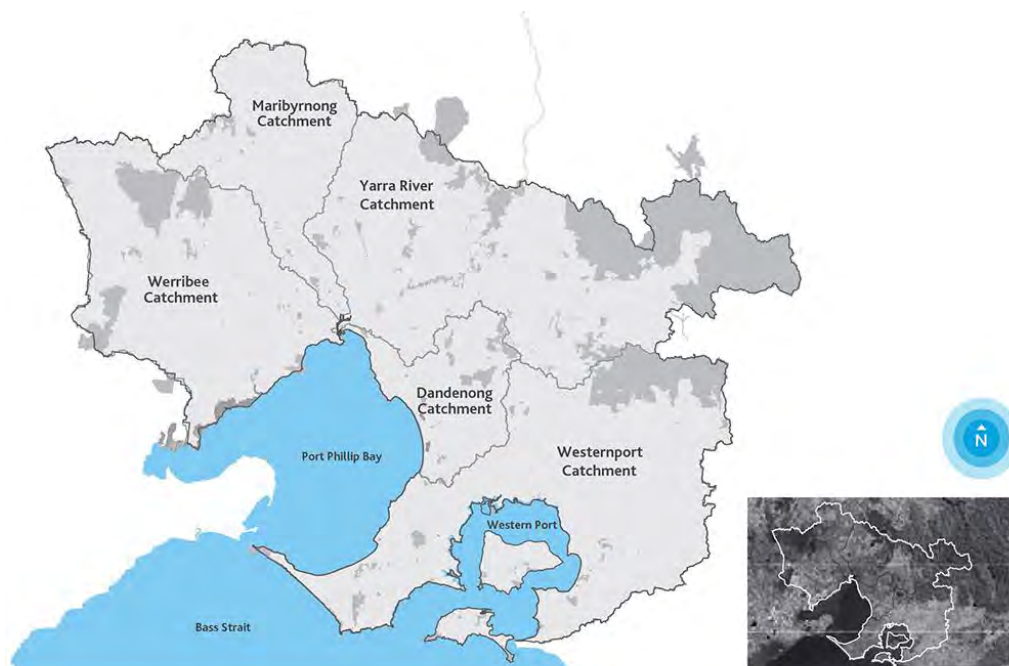


FIGURE 5.1: MELBOURNE WATER AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

(source <https://www.melbournewater.com.au/services/grants/liveable-communities-liveable-waterways-program/program-guidelines>)

Melbourne Water is also the main drainage authority for metropolitan Melbourne, and manages waterways, open drainage channels and underground drains with catchments typically greater than 60 hectares within its area of responsibility. Within the City of Merri-bek this includes Merri Creek, Edgars Creek and Moonee Ponds Creek, which (in parts) form the city's boundaries.



Melbourne Water is also responsible for the ownership and maintenance of wetlands and retarding basins within catchments generally larger than 60 hectares. This includes various assets within Merri-bek.

Melbourne Water's responsibility also extends to managing risk of flooding associated with waterway and drainage assets. Figure 5.2 shows the Melbourne Water managed drainage, channel, and waterway assets within Merri-bek.



FIGURE 5.2: MELBOURNE WATER DRAINAGE, CHANNELS AND WATERWAY ASSETS WITHIN MERRI-BEK CITY COUNCIL



Merri-bek City Council is responsible for local drainage. This drainage network is mostly comprised of underground drains, pits, kerbs and channels and road pavements in catchments typically less than 60 hectares in size. Merri-bek City Council also owns and maintains various Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) assets which serve multiple functions. This includes drainage, as well as urban heat management, urban greening, stormwater quality treatment and landscape design. Council's drainage responsibility includes ownership and maintenance of these assets.

VicRoads, VicTrack and some other government agencies also own and maintain public drainage assets in Victoria, including Merri-bek. However, Melbourne Water and Merri-bek City Council manage the majority of the drainage assets within the city.

The final layer of drainage ownership is privately owned drains. Most private properties have drainage assets which connect to either the Council or Melbourne Water drainage network. For individual houses this may include gutters, downpipes and a single underground or above ground connection to a public drain. For larger properties, such as industrial or commercial properties this may include significant pit and pipe infrastructure in addition to roof drainage. These private drainage assets are not managed by Merri-bek Council or Melbourne Water. Industry standards, guidelines and requirements inform the design and construction of privately owned drains.

This report focuses on the role of Council as the local drainage authority.

5.2 Engeny's Role

Engeny has been working in Melbourne since 2010, with a focus on stormwater modelling and mapping for local and state government clients. We have done numerous city-wide studies for local governments in metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria, in addition to also doing smaller catchment based studies as well.

Engeny has also been a panel contracted supplier of specialist stormwater modelling service to Melbourne Water since 2015 and is currently one of only four consultancies on Melbourne Water's Specialist services panel providing expert modelling services. We have done numerous studies for Melbourne Water individually and as joint projects between local councils and Melbourne Water. Our staff have also represented Melbourne Water and local councils at planning panels and expert witness hearings, to explain the technical work we have done.

Engeny started working with the City of Merri-bek on a pilot study in 2016 and has continued to work with Council, providing stormwater overland flow modelling and mapping advice for the Council's drainage system. Our studies have been done using RORB and TUFLOW software and have applied the relevant industry standards and guidelines for the development of hydrologic and hydraulic modelling.

Engeny's involvement with Merri-bek City Council and Melbourne Water over the past 7 years has given us a strong understanding of the overland flow dynamics in the city. This includes the issues the Council faces in managing its local catchments, where it is the local drainage authority.

5.3 History of Stormwater Studies in Merri-Bek

Engeny was first engaged by Moreland City Council (now Merri-bek City Council) in 2016 to do a pilot study for a local catchment (less than 60ha in size) with known drainage issues. The initial focus was a pilot study to determine whether the modelling software (RORB and TUFLOW) could provide an accurate representation of stormwater overland flows. The modelling of the pilot catchment provided results that matched with Council's understanding of the historic drainage issues and provided a proof of concept that the modelling approach was able to simulate with reasonable accuracy the performance of the drainage network.

Many other Councils that Engeny have worked with across Greater Melbourne have chosen to undertake a pilot catchment study or multiple studies before committing to the larger job of modelling the whole city. This stepped approach is consistent with good engineering industry practice when adopting a new product or study technique to first trial it in a small area and then adopt more widely if it performs well.

Following the pilot study, in 2017 Engeny was engaged to do a city-wide study with a focus on the Council's drainage catchments which was completed in 2020. The local drainage network is made up of mostly smaller pipes and pits. These pipes connect to the downstream Melbourne Water main drainage network. Within Merri-bek Melbourne Water's main drainage network includes large drainage pipes, large open channels, waterways and creeks, drainage retarding basins and large outlet structures into waterways and channels.

After the local drainage study was done, Engeny started a drainage investigation study in 2018. This technical work identified and assessed places at most risk from stormwater overland flows, and proposed concept-design structural mitigation solutions (i.e., design for new drains).



Council is now using this technical work to inform its long-term capital works planning. The final investigations focused on mitigation solution for the 10% AEP (1 in 10 year) event, as the adopted level of service for mitigation pipe upgrades.

Council's current drainage standard for residential areas is a 20% AEP (1 in 5 year) event sized pipe. It is likely that this standard was applied when pipes were originally constructed across the city. By adopting a 10% AEP (1 in 10 year) event, Council is providing extra flow capacity above the minimum design standards.

Arising from Council's progress for its local drainage catchments, Engeny was then engaged by Melbourne Water in 2020 to include the Council's modelling with Melbourne Water's urbanised main drainage catchments in the city (excluding major waterways). This 'whole-of-catchments' modelling approach was then subject to Melbourne Water's external third party peer review process.

Melbourne Water's peer review process is completed on all models developed for Melbourne Water. Melbourne Water has developed a standard template for reviews to ensure consistent quality is maintained in all catchments mapped across Greater Melbourne. The hydrologic (ROB) and hydraulic (TUFLOW) models and the draft and final deliverables are all reviewed at separate hold points with comments provided to Melbourne Water by the third party reviewer. Melbourne Water passes this feedback onto Engeny along with any additional comments from the Melbourne Water team. Engeny responds to all comments made and where appropriate will update the models or deliverables to address the comments. The modelling and mapping deliverables are only finalised by Melbourne Water once all of the review comments have been resolved. The consultancies completing the reviews are typically one of Melbourne Water's approved panel suppliers or have been contracted specifically because of their specialist skills in stormwater flow modelling and mapping.

In 2023 Engeny was engaged by Council to complete a review of new data which had come on-line, to ensure any updated Stormwater Map considered this new information. This gave Engeny an opportunity to also review changes in modelling guidelines, including those given in Australian Rainfall and Runoff 2019. The result of this review found there was sufficient change, associated with the new data and modelling methodology, to warrant further refinements in the overland flow path modelling.

Additional information can be found in the Mapping Data Validation Report which is attached in Appendix C.

The updated modelling utilising the more recent data and updated methodologies was completed in 2023 modelling and forms the basis for the proposed special building overland amendment maps. The special building overlay represents the non-structural mitigation measure that Merri-bek City Council is enacting to reduce the risk of inundation from stormwater overland flows.

Table 5.1 shows the recent history of the stormwater modelling studies which have been undertaken in the City of Merri-bek.

TABLE 5.1: HISTORY OF STORMWATER STUDIES IN MERRI-BEK

Date	Study
2016	Pilot study
2017-2020	Initial Stormwater Map for the city's smaller catchments
2018 -2020	Mitigation assessment and prioritisation of hotspots in the city's smaller catchments
2020-2023	City-wide study lead by Melbourne Water
2023	Data validation study for the city's smaller catchments
2023	Updated Stormwater Map for the city's smaller catchments



6. METHOD

This section of the report gives more detail the five-step process, which was introduced in Section 4.1.

6.1 Step 1 – Initial Models and Maps for Local Catchments (2017-2020)

After doing the pilot study in 2016, Engeny was engaged in 2017 to start doing stormwater overland flow mapping for the Council's local drainage catchments. A copy of the report for this initial mapping is in Appendix A:.

6.1.1 Data

The following key base data was supplied for use in the mapping project:

- LiDAR terrain data captured in 2007 and 2008
- Drainage asset (pit and pipe) data in GIS format from Moreland City Council
- Drainage asset (pit and pipe) data in GIS format from Melbourne Water
- Copies of previous stormwater models of some main drainage catchments from Melbourne Water

6.1.2 Hydrology

Hydrological calculations were done using RORB modelling software version 6.32. Seven individual RORB model were setup for the city's local catchments. The modelling adopted methodologies from the newly released Australian Rainfall and Runoff 2016 as much as was practical, subject to software limitations. The modelling adopted the new 2016 IFD data, applied the ten temporal patterns in an ensemble approach and utilised the revised hydrological losses from the Australian Rainfall and Runoff data hub.

The hydrology model was run for the 1, 2, 10 and 20% AEP events under current climate conditions and the 1% AEP under climate change conditions. The 10, 15, 30, 60, 120 and 180 minute storms were modelled for all events. Each duration was also modelled for 10 different temporal patterns as per the ensemble approach set out in Australian Rainfall and Runoff 2016.

The outputs from the RORB models were used as inputs to the hydraulic model. Most outputs from the RORB model were rainfall runoff excess hydrographs with no routing. However, some routed hydrographs were used for the external catchments which form part of the Westbreen Creek and Merlynston Drain catchments which are included in the North East Catchments (NEC) model.

6.1.3 Hydraulics

The hydraulic modelling was done using TUFLOW Classic version 2017-09-AC-IDP-w64. Six TUFLOW model were setup with the following key inputs:

- The Council's drainage network assets
- Melbourne Water (MW) drains which had direct connections to the Council drainage network.
- Topography (ground surface level) data based on DELWP LiDAR data
- Hydraulic "roughness" parameters defined using Mannings "n" values based on planning scheme land usage layers and aerial photography and in line with industry standards
- Inflows generated from RORB hydrologic models as per Section 6.1.2.

The Merlynston Drain and Westbreen Creek models were combined during the model development process due to the degree of cross-catchment flow between the two models. All the models were run for the same events as the hydrologic models.



6.1.4 Mapping

The results from the hydraulic mapping were combined to obtain one final output that could be used to create the stormwater overland flow extents. The approach involved running all the 10 different temporal patterns through the hydraulic model for each storm duration. This means that there are 10 similar but different sets of results for each modelled storm duration. To create a single stormwater depth grid, the following steps were taken:

- Determine the median value at each cell from the 10 ensemble pattern results for each storm duration within each AEP.
- Take the maximum value from each of the median grid from each duration (10, 15, 30, 50, 120, 180 minute) to determine the peak stormwater depth for a given AEP event.

The final grids were then converted into extents. The extents were based on a 50 mm depth filter and inclusion/exclusion criteria based on Melbourne Water's Technical Specifications.

6.2 Step 2 – Integrated Whole of Catchment Models (2020-2023)

In 2020 Engeny was engaged by Melbourne Water to complete mapping of Melbourne Water's drainage assets in the City of Merri-bek (excluding Moonee Ponds Creek, Merri Creek and Edgar Creek). This work was focused on completing whole of catchment modelling, which included Council's drainage network and Melbourne Water's drainage network.

As part of this Melbourne Water project the previously modelled Merri-bek catchments (Chapman Avenue Drain, Westbreen Creek, Merlynston Drain, Melville Drain, Elizabeth Street Drain, South-East Catchments and Harding Street Drain) were collated and modelled as 4 separate TUFLOW models and were revised to ensure the overland flow models were fully compliant with Australian Rainfall and Runoff 2019 (ARR 2019), Melbourne Water's current Mapping Projects Guidelines and Technical Specifications (July 2020) and incorporated the updated LiDAR data captured in 2017-18. Refer to Engeny's Draft Melbourne Water and Merri-bek City Council Merri-bek Mapping Project Report (November 2022) in Appendix B: for further details.

Step 1 allowed Council to engage with the community about stormwater risk as well as giving an opportunity to prioritize hot spots and high-risk areas across the local catchments. It has also allowed for mitigation assessments to be better quantified and ensure Council can consider stormwater risk to better plan development across the municipality.

During Step 1, all of the stormwater drainage assets for Council and Melbourne Water were modelled in detail but with an emphasis on Council assets. By revising the Melbourne Water drainage and mapping criteria as part of Step 2, the whole of catchment has been more considered and 1% AEP (1 in 100 year) stormwater extents for both Council and Melbourne Water are consistent as they use the same stormwater mapping approach.

The major hydrology updates as part of this Stage 2 work included:

- Application of fraction imperviousness updated to include new land surface type breakdown into Effective Impervious Areas (EIA), and Indirectly Connected Areas (ICA).
- Storm pre-burst losses were revised to 75% pre-burst based on the Benchmarking ARR 2019 for Victoria Technical Report.

The hydraulic TUFLOW modelling development was also revised to account for:

- Revised hydrographs from RORB modelling
- New LiDAR data (captured in 2017-18)
- Upgrades to the Council and Melbourne Water drainage network data with a particular focus of improving the accuracy of data on the Melbourne Water drains
- Changes to land-use and development since the 2018 Council study
- Modelling using the TUFLOW version 2020-01-AB-IDP-w64.

Due to the:

- Significant changes in stormwater mapping methodology and upgrades.
- Development in the city within the two years since the original modelling.



The modelling outputs from Step 2 were taken and compared against the previous mapping results as part of a data validation review. This approach enabled a further review process, to see if there was enough of a difference to warrant any mapping changes.

Refer to Step 3 for the data validation summary which highlights the changes between the hydrologic and hydraulic standard changes between the 2017 Council study and the latest 2020 Melbourne Water study, in particular the differences in LiDAR and differences in stormwater overland flows identified.

6.3 Step 3 – Validating for New Information (2023)

Merri-bek City Council has been motivated to achieve a final planning scheme outcome for its Stormwater Map. This motivation prompted Council to engage Engeny to do a data validation exercise before an updated Stormwater Map was produced.

Engeny reviewed the updated data and a report was produced. This report is in Appendix C: A summary of key findings were:

- Updated 2017-18 LiDAR was available and was used for the Melbourne Water updated mapping in Step 2.
- Merri-bek had obtained LiDAR in 2022 for assessing tree canopy coverage. This LiDAR was found to be less accurate than the 2017-18 data set, but suitable for doing geographic sensitivity analysis where land development had occurred. Given the reduced accuracy of this data, compared to the 2017-18 data, the 2022 data was not used in the modelling or mapping.
- Level crossing removal projects were assessed and found to have some beneficial impacts outside of the railway own land corridors.
- Council drainage works were assessed and found to have some beneficial impacts in the 1% AEP event.
- WSUD wetlands and sedimentation basins were designed to provide water quality benefits. There were no negative flow impacts found to be associated with these assets.

Changes in the hydrological approach between 2017 modelling and 2020 modelling (detailed in ARR 2019), which were impacting extents and total volumes of runoff, were also assessed and found to be contributing to differences in the modelled extents.

Based on the overall amount of change in the data and the changes in the hydrology, the decision was made to update the modelling to incorporate all the latest data.

6.4 Step 4 – Updated Models and Maps for Local Catchments (2023)

The 2023 modelling builds upon the 2020 modelling done for Melbourne Water. The models were developed and reviewed as part of the Melbourne Water modelling (Step 2), have been used and updated with the new information assessed under Step 3. Engeny's Draft Melbourne Water and Merri-bek City Council Merri-bek Mapping Project Report (November 2022) provides details on the development of the model for Melbourne Water. The following sections detail what has been updated from the Melbourne Water model, because of this step of the process.

6.4.1 Data

The following data has been added to the modelling:

- Updated pipe data, including all drainage upgrade projects completed from 2017 to the start of 2023.
- Updated pipe and topography data associated with the Bell to Moreland level crossing removal project. This data was sourced from the modelling undertaken by the level crossing removal project team.
- Updated pipe and topography data associated with the Glenroy level crossing removal project. The pipe and topography data were obtained from design plans and entered into the model.

6.4.2 Hydrology

No changes have been made to the Melbourne Water adopted hydrology models and outputs, with the hydrology modelling using the same RORB model and outputs as were used in Step 2. The objective of the hydrological modelling was generally to produce rainfall excess hydrographs for each subarea delineated within the study area. These are then used as inputs into the TUFLOW hydraulic model to undertake flow routing and to estimate stormwater flow dynamics within the modelled catchment. The flows from two large external catchments of



Merlynston Creek and Campbellfield Creek were applied to the North-East Catchments TUFLOW model as routed flows from the external catchment RORB models.

The rainfall-excess hydrographs were produced for all subareas within the study catchment for the 1 % AEP climate change conditions for all required storm durations and selected temporal patterns. Council and Melbourne Water have decided to adopt 1 % AEP climate change modelling results to inform a future update of the planning scheme and therefore only this AEP has been considered for the updated municipal modelling.

The models have all been run using the same critical temporal patterns and durations as the previous modelling in Step 2. The models have only been run using an Areal Reduction Factor (ARF) of 1. This has been adopted as all the catchments being mapped under this stage of the works are less than one square kilometre and so this is the appropriate ARF to apply.

While there were no changes made to the hydrology between the Melbourne Water study (Step 2) and the Step 4 modelling, notable changes were made between the original Council modelling and the Melbourne Water modelling. This includes incorporation of the updated advice contained in the Benchmarking ARR 2019 for Victoria study commissioned the Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning (DELWP). This study recommended changes to the treatment of the pre-burst in particular which results in a greater volume of runoff being generated in the storm events.

6.4.3 Hydraulics

The TUFLOW models developed as part of Step 2 for Melbourne Water were updated to include the data listed in Section 6.4.1. Table 6.1 shows the breakdown of the pipe diameters for the new pipes added to the hydraulic model as part of the 2023 Step 4 updates.

TABLE 6.1: NEWLY CONSTRUCTED PIPE SUMMARY

Diameter	Number of pipes	Diameter	Number of pipes
100	20	525	54
150	118	600	40
200	1	675	7
225	159	750	29
300	802	825	23
330	1	900	14
375	205	1050	3
450	136	1200	4
Total			1638

The TUFLOW models were run for the 1% AEP event including climate change. Climate change was accounted for assuming an 18.5% increase in rainfall intensity, which is in line with the recommendations in Melbourne Water's Technical Specifications for Mapping and *Australian Rainfall and Runoff 2019*.

6.4.4 Results Processing

The results processing is described in Section 7.2.3.



6.5 Step 5 – Map Extent Review and Amended Stormwater Map (2023)

To ensure the robustness and consistency of the updated stormwater overland flow extent a detailed assessment of the extent was completed by Council and Engeny to visually check for any anomalies or inconsistencies in the mapping extent. Separate to the visual extent checks, review requests of the stormwater overland flow extent were also undertaken based on responses from residents.

In collaboration with Council, Figure 6.1 below shows a simple schematic flow chart which details the methodology adopted for map-checking for anomalies. The same process was adopted for the visual map review and priority requests from residents.

Section 7.3 of this report provides additional detail on the map extent review process and outcomes.

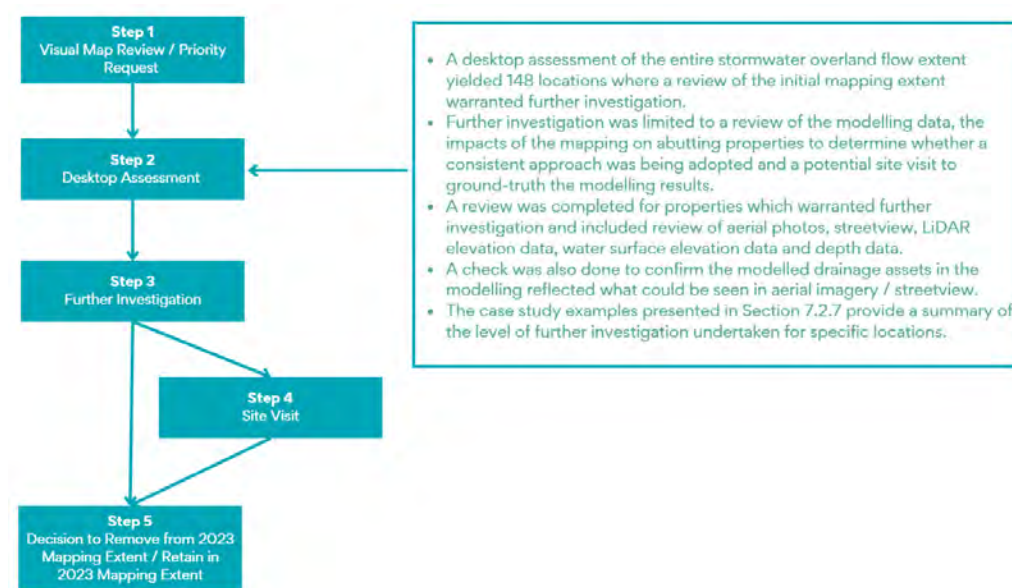


FIGURE 6.1: MAP CHECKING METHODOLOGY

6.6 Step 6 – Post Exhibition Map Review Process

Step 6 provided an opportunity for submitters to request a review of the mapping which informed the final map extent. The map checking methodology in Figure 6.1 above, specifically Step 3 to Step 5, was adopted for Step 6 to respond to requests from submitters.

Additional site visit investigations conducted to check that the input data to the model, in particular the LiDAR data which was used to represent the topography was reasonably representing the on ground conditions on the individual properties. Following the reviews each property was categorised into one of three groups:

1. Retain – the property would remain in the overland flow extent with no change
2. Revise – the property would remain in the overland flow extent but changes would be made to the extent of coverage over the property
3. Remove – the property would be completely removed from the overland flow extent

In addition to the submitters properties which were reviewed, properties that neighboured or were adjacent to the submitting property were also reviewed as part of the submitting property reviews and adjustments to the map extent were made to ensure consistency in decision making and that submitters did not receive favourable treatment over non submitters to the process.

Section 7.4 of this report provides additional detail on the post-exhibition map review process and outcomes to inform the final map extent.



A final check of the extent against an update property polygon layer was also undertaken to ensure that any changes in the property polygon layer had not resulted in additional inclusions of property from micro adjustments which occur periodically to the property polygon layer. Where a micro inclusion was detected and was not intended the extent has been adjusted to remove this unintended inclusion. The result is the no properties have been added to the extent as a result of changes to the property layer from when the SBO was exhibited until 20th June, 2025.



7. RESULTS

7.1 Part A - Stormwater Overland Flow Maps

This section of the report describes the outputs and references the maps in the Appendices.

7.1.1 Raw Model Outputs

For the 1% AEP climate change scenario, the TUFLOW results for the range of storm durations modelled have been combined to identify the maximum result at each modelled cell. Note the original *ARR 2016* modelling for Council identified the median temporal patterns for each duration for the municipality, for the updated modelling in 2023 the same temporal patterns were applied.

Provided alongside this report are the following raster grids:

- Maximum Stormwater Depth (max_d)
- Maximum Stormwater Level in mAHD (max_h)
- Maximum Stormwater Velocity m/s (max_V)
- Maximum Hazard Velocity x Depth (max_Z0)
- Maximum Hazard (ARR 2019 Hazard Criteria H1-6) (max_ZAEM1)

Refer to Appendix E: for the mapped maximum stormwater overland flow depths, and maximum hazard for each modelled catchment. The modelling results presented in Appendix E are not entirely reflective of locations near Prospect Street and Marks Street in Pascoe Vale. Physical works undertaken in these areas have slightly altered the overland flow paths in these areas. The final map extent captures changes made to the exhibited extent in these areas.

7.1.2 Extents

Melbourne Water's filtering guidelines have been applied to the maximum depth grids to create stormwater overland flow extents.

Points are included in the development of the stormwater overland flow extent if the following conditions are satisfied:

- Depth ≥ 0.05 metres
- Isolated areas of stormwater overland flow < 100 square metres excluded from the stormwater overland flow extent.
- Surrounded dry islands (or high points) ≤ 100 square metres and considered to be overland flow and are included in the stormwater overland flow extent.

Melbourne Water's method for stormwater extent creation using Feature Manipulation Engine (FME) to create a smoothed stormwater overland flow extent has also been adopted.

Stormwater overland flow extents for each AEP and scenario have been delineated only for Council drainage catchments.

In some areas, the stormwater overland flow extents produced by applying the filtering criteria and using the FME process were discontinuous. Interrogation of the raw modelling outputs showed that in some of these areas, the discontinuous sections of the extent were connected by wet cells, which may have been filtered from the extent due to low depths of flow.

The extents have subsequently been manually adjusted and refined to:

- Connect some of the discontinuous areas of the extent, where the model identifies that the disconnected areas are connected by wet cells with a depth of less than 50 mm. An example of where this can occur is if ponded water is dropping off a ledge, flowing down a very steep embankment or overtopping a road the depth can reduce to less than 50 mm, but the flow path is still continuous.
- Remove some areas where the extent was being included due to the modelling approach of applying flows directly to the 2D domain, but the extent did not represent part of the major flow path but was rather a minor lateral inflow.



- Starting stormwater overland flow extents in roads or council reserves rather than having flow paths beginning in private or commercial properties.
- Starting stormwater overland flow extents where 100 mm stormwater depth occurs rather than 50 mm to ensure flow paths are continuous and not caused by modelling limitations (such as model grid size and kerb definition limitations).

In addition to the above, Engeny developed a secondary filtering criteria. Refer to Section 7.2.3 for further details.

Maps showing the 2023 amended final extents at a wider municipal scale are in Appendix F. Maps showing the amended final extents at a closer scale are in Appendix G. The maps presented in Appendix F and Appendix G have been prepared after community consultation and a visual mapping review which is discussed in Section 7.3.

7.1.3 Properties Affected

The latest version available of the geospatial dataset *Vicmap Property – Property Polygon with Property Detail* (ANZILIC ID: ANZVI0803003299, Resource Name: V_PROPERTY_MP, Publication Date: 2025-06-20) was sourced at the time of analysis via the DataVic web-portal. The Department of Transport and Planning is the custodian of this dataset, and Vicmap more broadly.

The data was downloaded as a ESRI file geodatabase alongside the datasets for the remainder of the *Vicmap Property Simplified 1* data model from DataVic, projected in Map Grid of Australia 2020, Zone 55 (EPSG: 7855) and buffered a reasonable extent from the municipal boundary.

Filtering this dataset to include only those properties assigned the LGA code utilised by Vicmap for Merri-bek (351), yields a total of 107,776 entities. 14,092 of these were found to spatially intersect with the final extent, representing 13% of the properties in Merri-bek.

Note that the above numbers are inclusive of locations where multiple properties are applicable to the same parcel of land, and where a single property is applicable to multiple parcels of lands (i.e. duplicate and overlapping geometries have not been removed).

7.1.4 Hazard

For each AEP event and scenario, the TUFLOW results for the range of modelled storm durations have been combined to identify the maximum hazard result at each modelled cell. The hazard outputs are categorised from H1-H6 with H6 being classified as unsafe for vehicles and people with all building types considered vulnerable to failure. Refer to Figure 7.1 below for the hazard curves and descriptions taken from the ARR 2019 Guide to Flood Estimation.

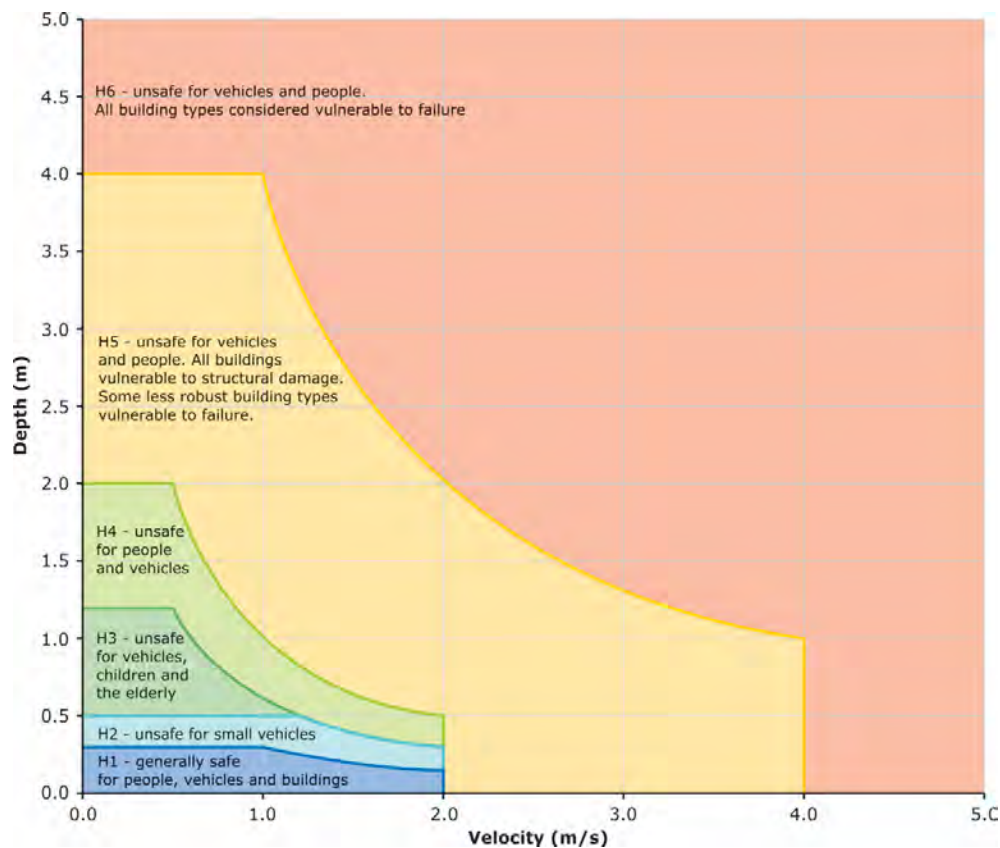


FIGURE 7.1: COMBINED HAZARD CURVES, (SMITH ET AL, 2014)

Stormwater hazard is influenced by:

- Velocity
- Stormwater Overland Flow Depth
- Isolation
- Warning Time, and
- Rate of rising stormwater



The hazard rating criteria in ARR 2019 is calculated based on Depth (D), Velocity (V) and combined $D \times V$ as per the table below:

TABLE 7.1: COMBINED HAZARD CURVES - VULNERABILITY THRESHOLDS CLASSIFICATION LIMITS (SMITH ET AL., 2014)

Hazard Vulnerability Classification	Classification Limit (D and V in combination)	Limiting Still Water Depth (D)	Limiting Velocity (V)
H1	$D \times V \leq 0.3$	0.3	2.0
H2	$D \times V \leq 0.6$	0.5	2.0
H3	$D \times V \leq 0.6$	1.2	2.0
H4	$D \times V \leq 1.0$	2.0	2.0
H5	$D \times V \leq 4.0$	4.0	4.0
H6	$D \times V > 4.0$	-	-

The H1 category is regarded as generally safe inundation, except for vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly for which there is no safe level of inundation. However, any category H2 or above is considered hazardous.

Structures are generally considered safe for H2 to H4, but in circumstances which produce H5 and H6 conditions structures are also at risk of failure. These conditions would typically be seen on floodplains or major flow paths, often associated with large river systems.

Maps shows the hazard are shown in Appendix E:

7.1.5 Hot Spots

Starting in 2018, Engeny did assessment of areas most at risk of inundation and proposed a series of concept designs to address the stormwater overland flows in these locations. A prioritised list of mitigation projects was developed. These were based on the cost to benefit ratio of reducing the risk of stormwater flows at each location.

Council has used this work to inform capital works planning for structural mitigation projects. The updated modelling done in 2023 does not invalidate the previous work as the areas which were previously identified as at high risk of inundation, still have that some risk - unless the mitigation works have been completed, in which case the benefits of the works has been captured in the updated modelling.

7.2 Part B – Comparison of 2017 and 2023 Stormwater Overland Flow Maps

Between the beginning of the original modelling for Council in 2017 and January 2023 there have been various changes to available data, as well as changes to guidelines and standards for doing overland flow modelling. These changes are discussed in the Data Validation report in Appendix C:

The key changes are:

- Updated LiDAR data
- Updated drainage data
- Completed major infrastructure projects in the city, such as level crossing removal projects
- Updated technical guidelines, in particular Australian Rainfall and Runoff 2019 and Melbourne Water's Technical Specifications for Flood Mapping.
- Updated modelling software.

This section of the report discusses these key changes and their impact on the modelling and mapping results.



7.2.1 Impacts of Changing National Standards

Australian Rainfall and Runoff is the key national hydrology guideline. It was first released in 1958 and has been periodically updated since. A major release in 1987 was the industry standard for nearly 30 years until an updated draft version was released in November 2016 (*ARR 2016*). This release occurred just before the start of the Step 1 modelling for Merri-bek City Council. The Step 1 modelling adopted, as much as was reasonably and practically possible in accordance with the direction and advice provided in *ARR 2016*. A finished version of the 2016 draft was released in 2019, and while largely like the 2016 draft it also included additional guidance on modelling in urban catchments.

Following the release of *Australian Rainfall and Runoff 2019* (*ARR 2019*) Melbourne Water and the then Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) commissioned a study to provide further information specific to Victoria. This advice was commissioned based on concerns that some of the updated advice in *ARR 2019* was resulting in flows being calculated which were below expected outcomes based on historical data. The *Benchmarking ARR 2019 for Victoria* report was released in October 2020 and contained additional advice on how to best adopt *ARR 2019* for Victorian conditions specifically.

The most significant changes between *ARR 2016* and *ARR 2019* including the additional Victorian information, relate to the method of selection of loss parameters for hydrologic modelling and the treatment of pre-burst in hydrologic modelling. The treatment of pre-burst can have a significant impact on the level of inundation experienced in areas where the extent of inundation is being drive by volumetric factors more so than the peak flow rates. Volumetric factors are likely to be important in areas with hydraulically constrained outfalls, for example a localised depression / retarding basin which is only drained by a pipe, whereas peak flow factors are more likely to drive maximum inundation extents where flows are not limited by downstream factors, such as flow along a road or within a channel or waterway.

The changes in Australian Rainfall and Runoff have also required changes to the hydrology software that provides inflows to the hydraulic models. There was a lag period between when the updated Australian Rainfall and Runoff guidelines were released and when the updated hydrologic modelling software (RORB) could also be released. The updated to the hydrologic modelling software were also staged with some major updates being provided initially followed by a series of smaller updates. These changes to the hydrologic software have led to some changes between the 2017 and 2023 modelling results.

Version 6.32 of RORB was used for the 2017 modelling, which was released in September 2017. Version 6.45 of RORB was used for the 2023 modelling and was released in March 2019. Version 6.45 provided additional functionality and improvements for modelling which enabled the hydrology modelling to better align with the guidance provided by *ARR 2019*.

7.2.2 Implications for Applying Melbourne Water's Technical Specifications for Flood Mapping

The 2017 Merri-bek modelling and mapping adopted, where applicable, Melbourne Water's *Flood Mapping Guidelines and Technical Specifications* (November 2016). As *ARR 2016* had only recently been released Melbourne Water's Technical Specifications at that time did not provide comprehensive advice on how to incorporate the new guidelines.

The main deviations from the Melbourne Water Technical Specification 2016, which were done as part of the 2017 modelling, included:

1. Adopted the new 2016 IFD data
2. Applied the ten temporal patterns in an ensemble approach,
3. Used the revised the losses parameters provided by the Australian Rainfall and Runoff data hub

The 2023 modelling has referenced the updated July 2020 Melbourne Water Technical Specifications which did respond to *ARR 2019* with several changes from the 2016 Technical Specifications, mostly due to the updated *ARR* guidelines.

Below is a summary of the key changes between the 2016 and 2020 MW Technical Specifications:

1. RORB software was previously compared against the Rational Method for catchments where no calibration data is available – this validation approach was not supported under *ARR 2016*.
2. The 2016 Technical Specifications state to use *Australian Rainfall and Runoff 1987* Intensity Frequency Duration (IFD) data and compare against 2013 IFD, whereas the 2020 Specifications require adoption of the new 2016 IFD design rainfalls.
3. Climate Change was applied using a 1.16 multiplier to IFD parameters in 2016, rather than an 18.5% increase as is recommended in the 2020 Technical Specifications.



4. Initial and continuing losses were 10 mm for urban catchments and 10-25 mm for rural catchments in 2016, whereas the 2020 Specifications adopt ARR Data Hub losses, and apply different losses for EIA, ICA, and Pervious Areas (lower total loss values in 2020 than 2016, resulting in more runoff).
5. Multiple temporal patterns were considered in the 2020 Specifications as they weren't available prior to the 2016 Technical Specifications.

7.2.3 Refined Approach for Establishing Extents

The 2017 modelling work was done in line with the Melbourne Water Technical Specifications for Mapping (November 2016). The updated 2023 mapping is based on the July 2020 version of the same document. Each of these documents provide detailed guidance on how Melbourne Water converts the raw hydraulic model outputs into a stormwater flow path extent. The processes used between the two versions are broadly similar, but more detail is provided on what "clean up" is required once the automated processes have been completed.

The goal of the methodologies described for converting raw hydraulic model results into stormwater flow path extents for use in the planning scheme, is to ensure Melbourne Water takes a consistent approach between catchments and also to ensure that different consultancies, who do the studies for Melbourne Water, can produce consistent results.

In agreement with Council, the 2017 study utilised the methodology of stormwater extent creation as detailed in the Melbourne Water Technical Specifications for the creation of the Merri-bek extents. For the 2023 extent creation very similar methodologies have been applied and agreed with Council. However, there is some variance from exactly what Melbourne Water proposes for its main drainage stormwater mapping.

A key issue for creating planning scheme ready overlay maps, from raw mapping results is to answer - what to do with those properties at the perimeter of the raw mapping result?

The process in Melbourne Water's Technical Specification, leads to any property where greater than 2 % of the property area is covered by the stormwater extent being included in the final map. These specifications also lead to properties being included, where the raw mapping result has less than 2 % area coverage, but where greater than 25 % of the total road frontage of the property is included in the raw extent.

An area of 2 % property area has been chosen by Melbourne Water as a risk threshold at which it will accept properties which may be at some risk of stormwater flows not being included in the final map. A different test is applied to road frontages with a much lower threshold due to the risk posed by basements, in particular basement car parks.

A basement carpark in a new development can ramp straight down from the edge of the property into the basement to maximise the basement carpark area. If the property is at risk of inundation, Melbourne Water will require the basement entry ramp's apex to be constructed at a level either 300 mm (Special Building Overlay areas) or 600 mm (Land Subject to Inundation Overlay areas) above the stormwater level. Without this apex, a carpark basement which has a driveway which ramps down from the property boundary, even where only a very small fraction of the property is inundated, could result in a large amount of stormwater entering a basement.

For the development of the 2023 overland flow extents for Merri-bek City Council, Engeny has adopted Melbourne Water's Technical Specifications inclusion criteria for all land use zonings except for the General Residential Zone and Neighbourhood Residential Zone. This captures all of the properties likely to be built with large basement car parks, including commercial property along main roads, industrial property and residential growth zoned areas.

For properties which are in a General Residential Zone or a Neighbourhood Residential Zone, the road frontage criteria have been removed and the total area impacted has been raised to 5 % from 2 %.

This change has been made for the following reasons:

- There are many overland flow paths along roads throughout the city's local catchments. The resolution and placement of the model grid and resolution of the LiDAR can mean that one or two properties along a road are included in the overland flow extent while the rest are not. In most cases the road cross sections are homogenous and continuous within a single block and so the inclusion of one or two properties is driven not by physical overland flow characteristics but more by modelling resolution factors. By removing the road frontage and increasing the total percentage of coverage required to 5 %, a more consistent outcome for overland flows along a road is achieved.
- 5 % of total property area is still a relatively low total threshold for property inclusion and is considered appropriate for managing local catchment risk of inundation for residential properties in the General Residential Zone and Neighbourhood Residential Zone.



- The Council flow paths are generally occurring across relatively flat terrain, where there is nominal overland flow velocity. In this setting, when flows are predominantly contained within road reservations, any hazard impacting upon abutting properties will be minimal.
- Many properties in a General Residential Zone or Neighbourhood Residential Zone are likely to have front, side, or rear property setbacks. This is also the case for residential redevelopment in these zones. This reduces the risk of buildings being built at property boundaries, where there may be a nominal stormwater impact.
- Council flow paths are of smaller magnitude to flow paths managed by Melbourne Water. This is largely due to the Council catchments being smaller and upstream of Melbourne Water's larger catchments. Therefore, the risks associated with smaller, upstream catchment overland flows are typically less than for the larger, downstream Melbourne Water flow paths.
- Adopting this criterion removes various properties from the raw mapped areas where there is nominal risk. This will reduce the administrative load on Council and give more certainty for land developers. This outcome makes for a more effective application of the Special Building Overlay in local drainage catchments.
- Properties in a General Residential Zone or a Neighbourhood Residential Zone are unlikely to construct underground car parks, due to the cost associated with construction and the planning constraints enabled by the zone.
- Council informs that having the final Special Building Overlay map extend up to a property's frontage, still gives Council the opportunity to discuss 'frontage design issues' with land developers. In this way Council can address concerns, if any changes are proposed at a property boundary that defines the extent of the map.
- If any underground car parking is proposed, it is likely to be for a smaller development (i.e., single dwelling or smaller multiple dwelling development), because the property size and zoning restrictions will limit the opportunity for a large basement carpark that services a multistorey apartment. Therefore, any risks in the General Residential Zone and the Neighbourhood Residential Zone will be limited.

Where properties have been removed from the stormwater overland flow extent there may be hard or sharp edges that have been created by the removal process as it occurs after all other smoothing processes. Figure 7.2 shows an example of a flow path along a road where two properties have been removed. At this scale the extent appears to be smooth and logical with a few straight edges. At the property-level scale, the smoothing of the Stormwater Map's edges is visible, refer to Figure 7.3, and shows how the location of a property boundary informs the mapping limit. The presence of a mapping edge at property boundaries is helpful because it goes to show that changes to front boundary conditions (enabled by property development that lowers land levels) can still be highlighted via the SBO map. A small gap is deliberately left between the property boundary and the stormwater flow extent boundary. This gap is left as different geographic information systems (GIS) which are used by government organisations can result in very small movements to the locations of the lines depending on the file format used. If the lines are perfectly on top of one another and the files are converted to a different GIS platform it can result in overlaps between the extent and the property boundary which are not intended. Given that property overlaps are a key method of identifying if a property is affected by an overlay, leaving a very small gap prevents this issue from occurring.

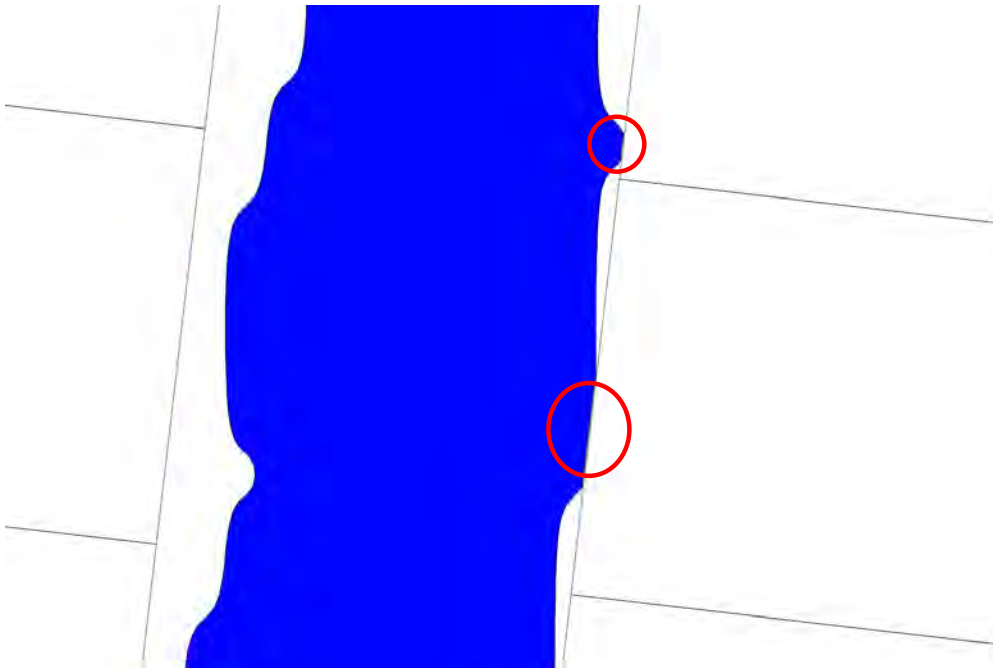


FIGURE 7.2: EXAMPLE OF FLOW PATH ALONG A ROAD WITH PROPERTIES REMOVED

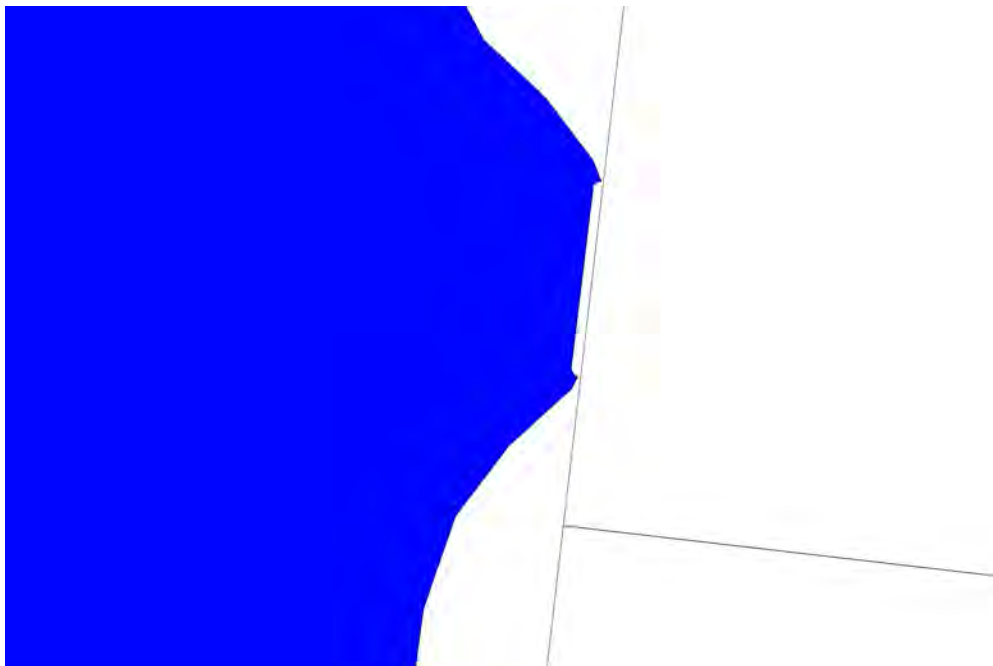


FIGURE 7.3: CLOSER INSPECTION OF PROPERTY REMOVED FROM EXTENT

CREATING THE LOCAL DRAINAGE AUTHORITY'S STORMWATER MAP |
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Figure 7.4 to Figure 7.6 are examples of some sharp edges which are an artefact of the filtering process. The sharp edges do not represent an error in the stormwater overland flow modelling but are a result of the filtering parameters and process. Additional automated smoothing after completing the filtering process can adjust the extents too much and bring in properties which have already been removed from the extent by the filtering process, and thus has not been implemented. In some instances where these angles look particularly stark or potentially misleading / erroneous they have been manually smoothed in the GIS software.

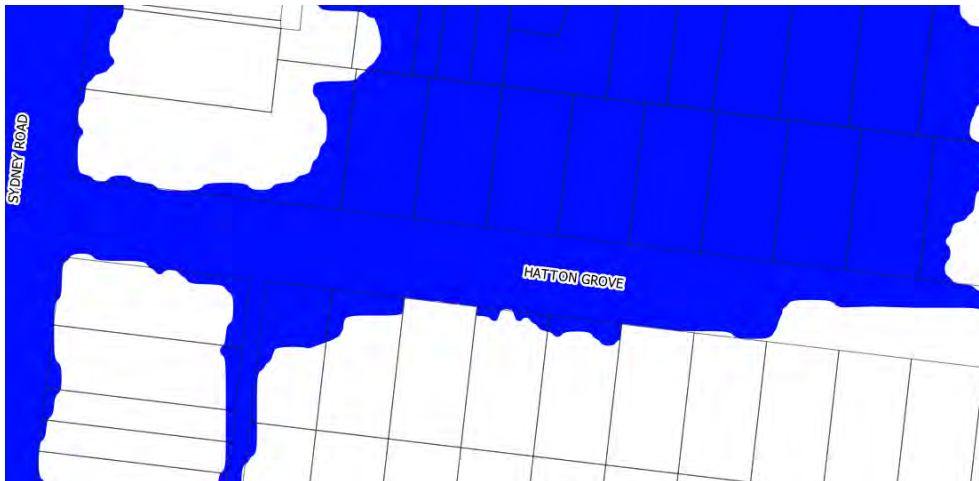


FIGURE 7.4: EXAMPLE 1 OF FLOW PATH ALONG A ROAD WITH SOME SHARP EDGES

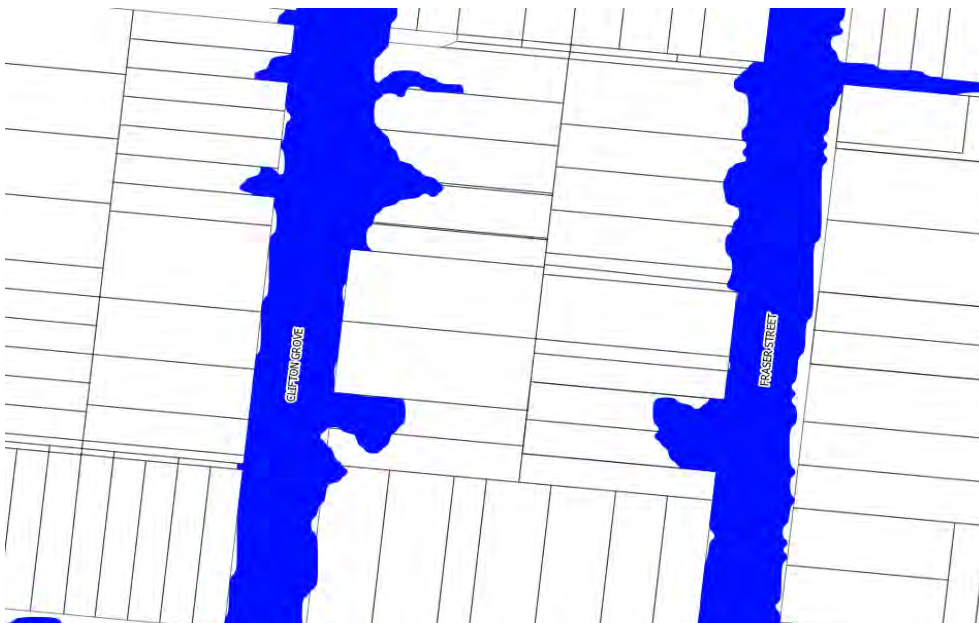


FIGURE 7.5: EXAMPLE 2 OF FLOW PATH ALONG A ROAD WITH SOME SHARP EDGES



FIGURE 7.6: EXAMPLE 3 OF FLOW PATH ALONG A ROAD WITH SOME SHARP EDGES

7.2.4 Climate Change

The consideration of climate change has remained consistent between the work done in 2017 and 2023. The modelling is assuming Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) pathway 8.5, which assumes 3.5 degrees of warming by 2100. The modelling is simulating the assumed climatic conditions in 2100. The hydrologic modelling has assumed a 18.5% increase in rainfall intensity because of the 3.5 degree warming in 2100. A 18.5% increase in rainfall intensity can translate to a greater increase in peak flow rates as rainfall intensity and the resulting overland flow peak flow rates are not linearly linked.

7.2.5 Hydraulic Modelling Software

TUFLOW has been used for all model simulations undertaken. All modelling of Merri-bek has used a version of TUFLOW known as TUFLOW Classic. The 2018 modelling used version 2017-09-AC-IDP-w64. The 2023 modelling (and the modelling completed for Melbourne Water in 2021) used version 2020-01-AB-IDP-w64. While there are differences between the two versions used the impacts on the outputs from the different model version is insignificant.

7.2.6 Example locations where the initial 2023 map extent has changed

There are several locations where the initial 2021 map extents have significantly changed which is largely driven by the whole of catchment modelling (Step 2) and mapping validation study (Step 3). This has resulted in areas being completed removed from the initial 2021 map or re-designated as Melbourne Water mapped extents. Melbourne Water and Council have conducted a series of workshops to determine the flow location splits and determine which extents are assigned to which organisation, generally based on the origination point of the overland flow being from either a Council or Melbourne Water asset. Eight specific locations have been identified below with a brief summary provided as to why the initial 2023 mapping extent has altered in these areas.



7.2.6.1 Location 1 – West of Sydney Road

This area has been re-classified as Melbourne Water stormwater overland flow (based on Step 2 as mentioned above) and as a result mapped extents have been reallocated to Melbourne Water.



FIGURE 7.7: LOCATION 1 - WEST OF SYDNEY ROAD



7.2.6.2 Location 2 – Glenlyon Road / Alister Street

This area has been re-classified as Melbourne Water stormwater overland flow (based on Step 2 as mentioned above) and as a result mapped extents have been reallocated to Melbourne Water.

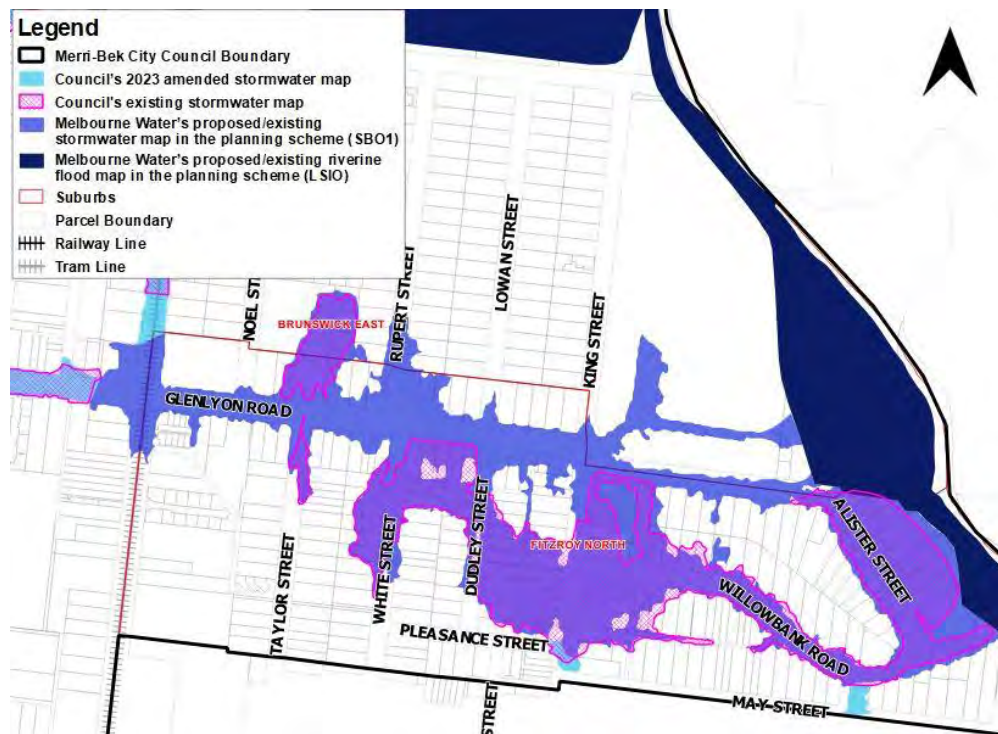


FIGURE 7.8: LOCATION 2 – GLENLYON ROAD / ALISTER STREET



7.2.6.3 Location 3 – North of Dawson Street / Near Halpin Street

The depth of stormwater overland flow in Halpin Street and Dawson Street does not trigger the threshold to be included in the 2023 mapping extent. This is a function of the updated 2023 mapping and from our review is most likely due to differences in the underlying terrain data adopted between the 2021 and 2023 overland flow mapping projects.

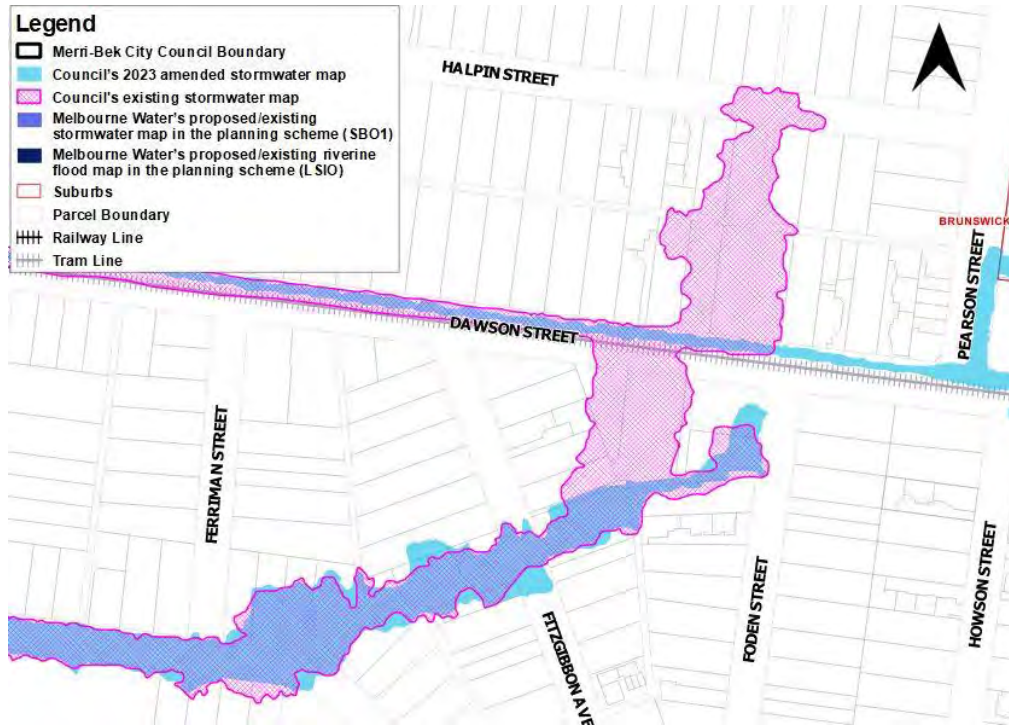


FIGURE 7.9: LOCATION 3 – NORTH OF DAWSON STREET / NEAR HALPIN STREET



7.2.6.4 Location 4 – Near Brunswick Road / Coronation Street

The depth of stormwater overland flow in Brunswick Road does not trigger the threshold to be included in the 2023 mapping extent. This is a function of the updated 2023 mapping as the terrain data adopted has better kerb definition and limits the amount of water that can spill over the southern kerb of Brunswick Road and be modelled as impacting properties.



FIGURE 7.10: LOCATION 4 – NEAR BRUNSWICK ROAD / CORONATION STREET



7.2.6.5 Location 5 – East of Tullamarine Fwy / Citylink

This area has been re-classified as Melbourne Water stormwater overland flow (based on Step 2 as mentioned above) and as a result mapped extents have been reallocated to Melbourne Water.

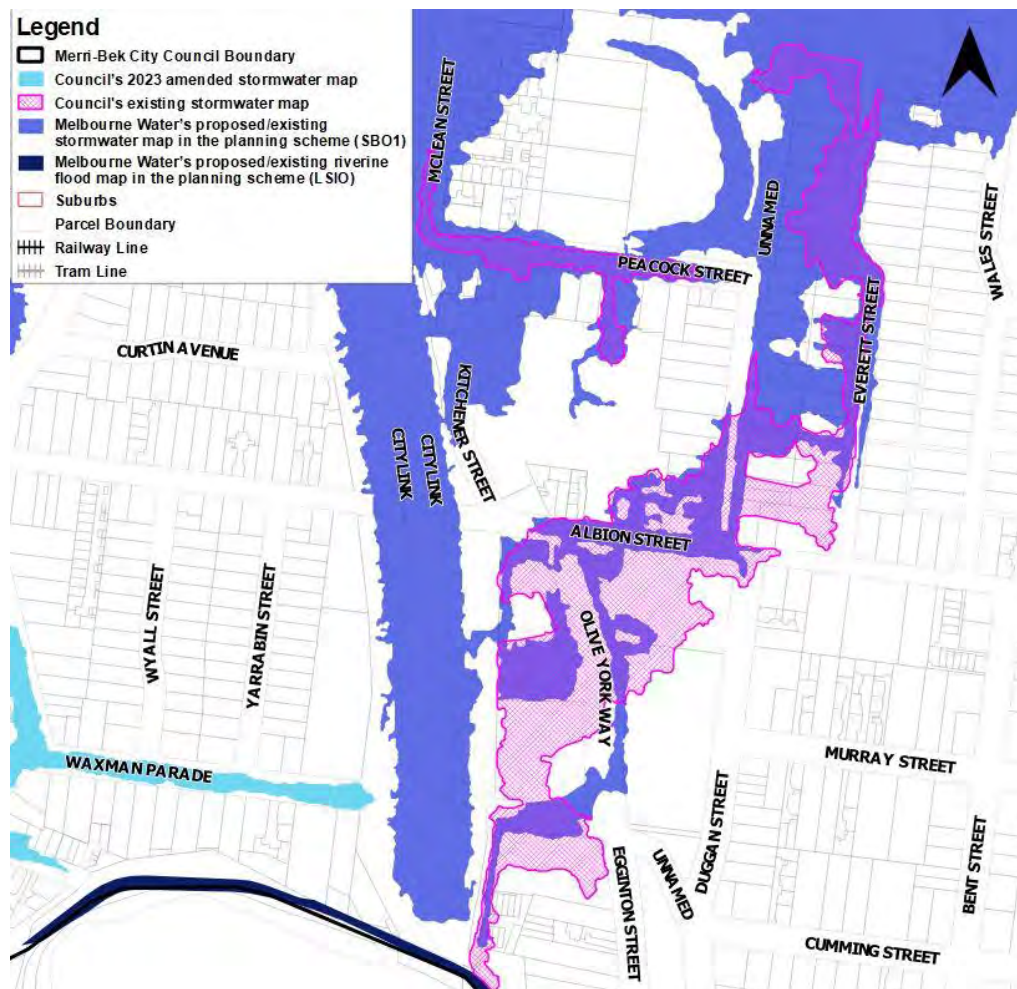


FIGURE 7.11: LOCATION 5 – EAST OF TULLAMARINE FWY / CITYLINK



7.2.6.6 Location 6 – Melville Road / Reynard Street

The depth of stormwater overland flow in Melville Road does not trigger the threshold to be included in the 2023 mapping extent. This is a function of the updated 2023 mapping and from our review is most likely due to differences in the underlying terrain data adopted between the 2021 and 2023 overland flow mapping projects. Furthermore, under Stage 3, updates have been made to Council's drainage system north of the Melville Road low point (additional Council assets constructed post 2018 which are included in the 2023 mapping but weren't included in 2021) which reduces the amount of water that can flow overland to the low point in Melville Road.

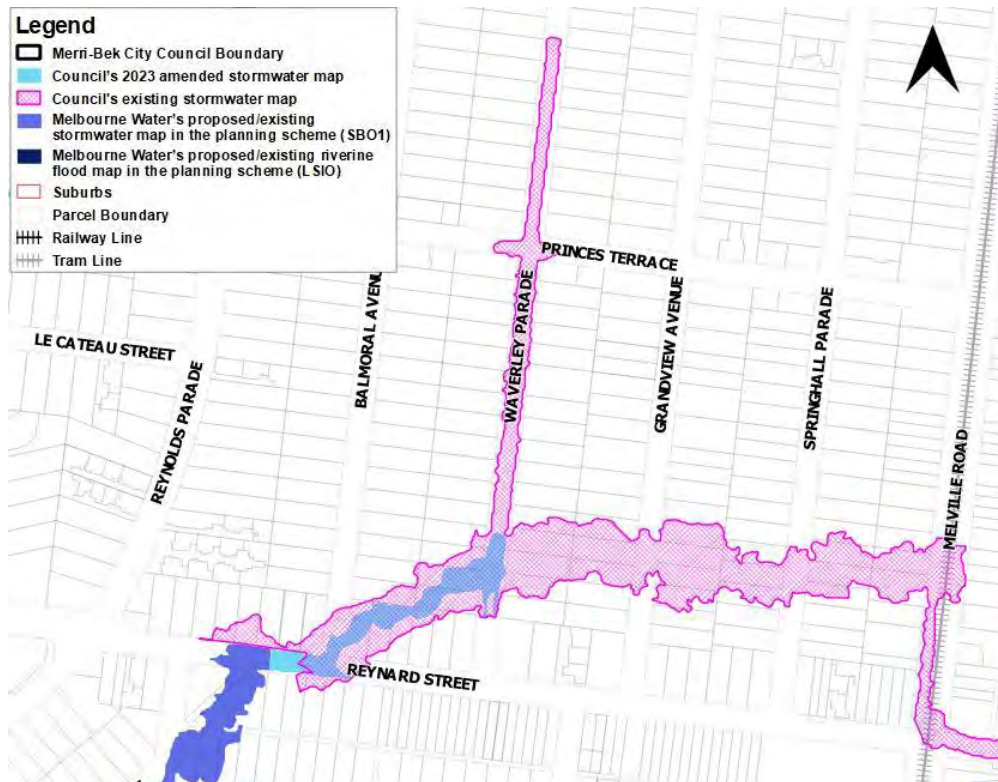


FIGURE 7.12: LOCATION 6 – MELVILLE ROAD / REYNARD STREET



7.2.6.7 Location 7 – Various Locations in Hadfield

This area has been re-classified as Melbourne Water stormwater overland flow (based on Step 2 as mentioned above) and as a result mapped extents have been reallocated to Melbourne Water.

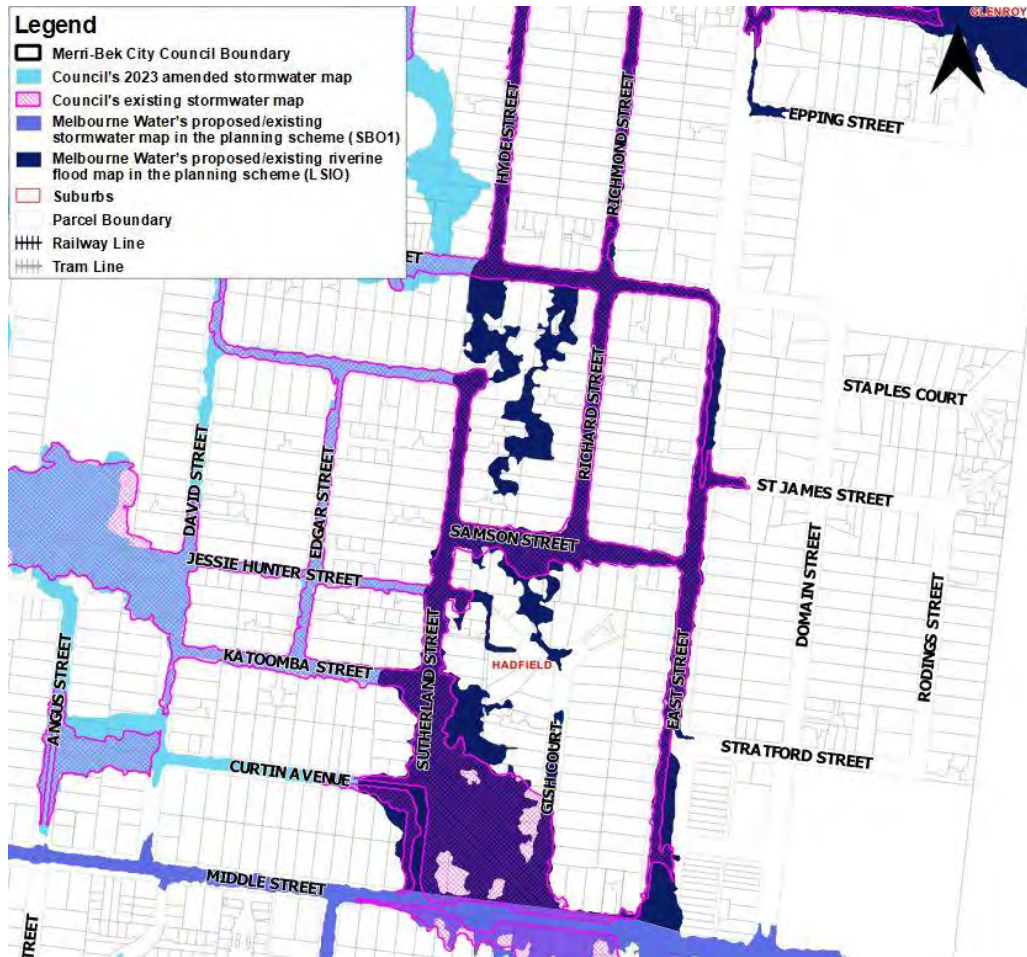


FIGURE 7.13: LOCATION 7 – VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN HADFIELD



7.2.6.8 Location 8 – Various Locations East of Hume Fwy

This area has been re-classified as Melbourne Water stormwater overland flow (based on Step 2 as mentioned above) and as a result mapped extents have been reallocated to Melbourne Water.

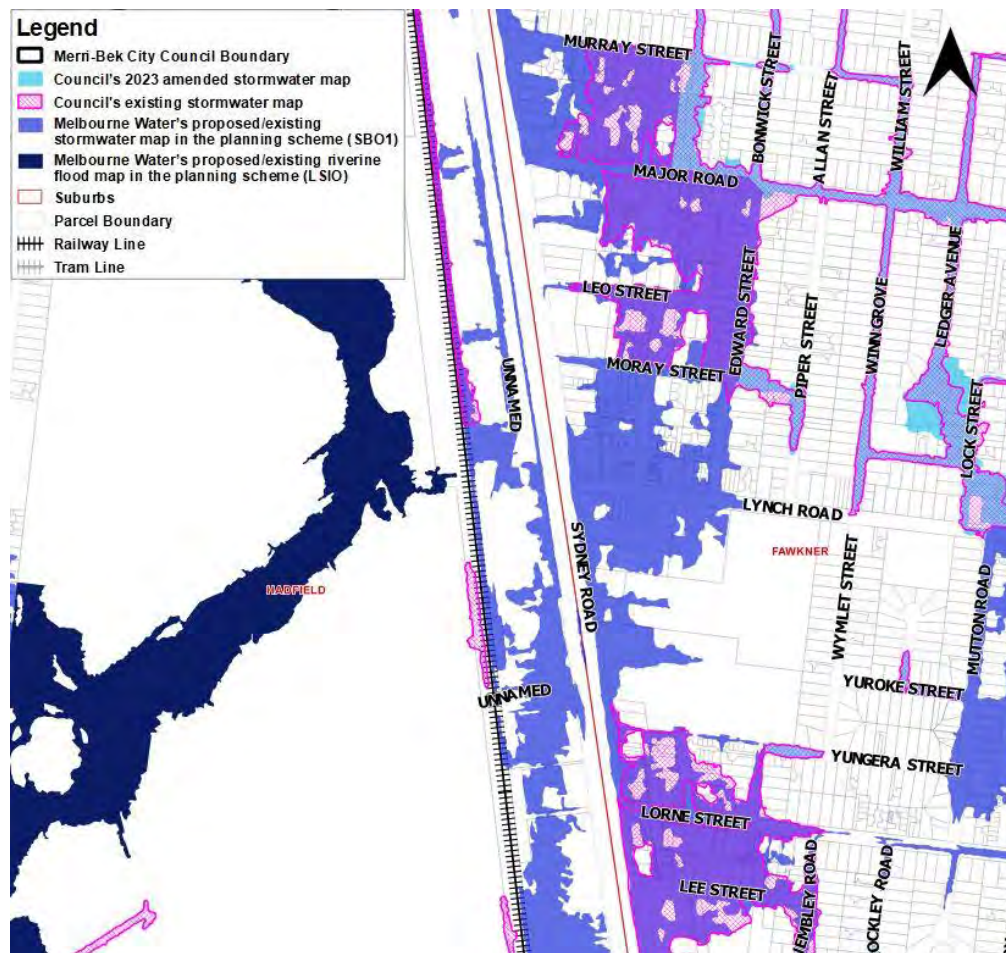


FIGURE 7.14: LOCATION 8 – VARIOUS LOCATIONS EAST OF HUME FWY



7.2.7 Case Studies

Several locations, separate to the example locations in Section 7.2.6, were also reviewed where the 2021 and 2023 mapping extents differ because of the factors detailed in previous sections (Section 7.2.1 to 7.2.5). The following locations have been identified as case study locations because they show an example of the following:

- A property that was not impacted by stormwater runoff under the 2021 mapping extent (current SBO2) but is predicted to be under the 2023 mapping extent (future SBO2)
- A property that was impacted by stormwater runoff under the 2021 mapping extent (current SBO2) and is predicted to remain in the 2023 mapping extent however with a slightly larger extent impacting the property.

Both case study locations are examples of where the 2021 mapping extent differs compared to the updated 2023 mapping extent.

Case Study Example 1 – 293 O’Hea Street Pascoe Vale

293 O’Hea Street (hereafter referred to as ‘the site’) was reviewed in detail due to the notable changes in extent of stormwater runoff between the 2021 and 2023 mapping extents which saw the site included in the Updated Stormwater Map Extent (2023) noting the site is not included in the current 2021 extent. Figure 7.15 below provides an overview of 2021 mapping extent compared to the 2023 mapping extent (future SBO2) for this specific location. The following can be noted with respect to the site:

- The site is subject to impact from stormwater runoff due to build-up of water in Dace Court which overtops the kerb and flows through the property in question, nearby sites (1-4 Dace Court & 295 O’Hea Street) and the existing drainage easement which runs along the western boundary of the property. Stormwater runoff is predicted to pond up to a depth of 350 mm in a 1 % AEP CC event in Dace Court. The depth of water impacting the 293 O’Hea Street is expected to reach up to 150 mm at the rear of the property.
- A review of the LiDAR terrain information suggests the following:
 - The grade of the drainage easement (south to north) is relatively flat and therefore is unlikely to provide a sufficient overland flow conveyance for the runoff which is not captured by the piped system.
 - The subject site is also at a relatively similar level to the drainage easement and therefore flows in the drainage easement have the potential to break out of the easement and flow east into the property based on observations during a site visit.
- The modelled drainage infrastructure in the hydraulic model reflects the drainage assets which can be viewed through Google Streetview and as seen on the site visit. The extent of the updated stormwater map impacts the property where the 2021 extent did not due to changes in the adopted methodology in the 2023 modelling. Specifically, the impacts of ARR2019 methodologies and use of 75th percentile pre-burst contributes to greater depths of stormwater runoff in roadways across the whole municipality. A review of the hydraulic grade line (HGL) in the direction of flow from the upstream catchment and through the site also noted the following:
 - Stormwater runoff can travel from the upstream catchment, into Dace Court and through the existing drainage easement / western boundary of the subject site before flowing into O’Hea Street. Overland flows from the upstream catchment enter into Eunice Court and Dace Court (immediately upstream of the subject site) from Eastgate Street. The underground piped drainage in Dace Court area is unable to convey flows from the 1 % AEP climate change storm event and the modelling shows runoff will build up and flow north through the subject site (and surrounding properties also impacted by the Updated Stormwater Map).

The review findings detailed above concluded that the site should remain in the updated mapping extent.

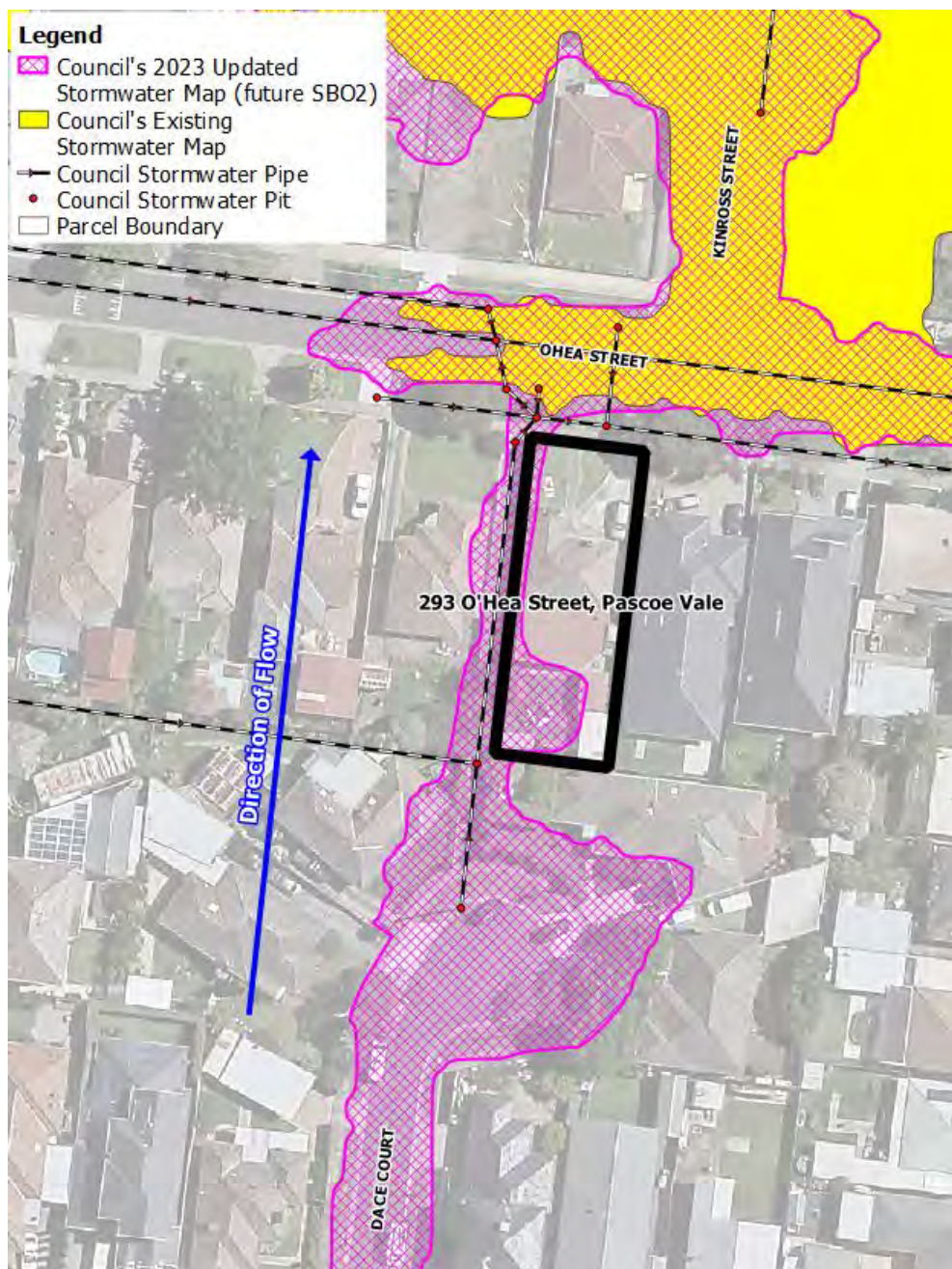


FIGURE 7.15: CASE STUDY EXAMPLE LOCATION 1



Case Study Example 2 - 13 Darlington Grove, Coburg

13 Darlington Grove, Coburg (hereafter referred to as 'the site') was reviewed in detail due to the change in extent of stormwater runoff between the 2021 and 2023 mapping extents which saw an expansion of the mapping extent impacting the site under the 2023 mapping extent scenario. Figure 7.16 below provides an overview of 2021 mapping extent compared to the 2023 mapping extent (future SBO2) for this specific location. The following can be noted with respect to the site: The site is subject to impact from stormwater runoff due to build-up of water in Hardwick Street. Stormwater runoff is predicted by the model to pond up to a depth of 250 mm in a 1 % AEP climate change event in Hardwick Street immediately at the rear of the subject property. The depth of water impacting the property is expected to reach up to ~150-200 mm at the rear of the property. Only the rear of the property is predicted to be subject to impact from stormwater runoff. There is a brick garage located at the rear of the property also. The dwelling footprint is not shown to be impacted by stormwater runoff in the model. The following can be noted with respect to the site:

- A review of the LiDAR terrain information suggests the following:
 - The grade and levels of the laneway and Hardwick Street near the vicinity of the brick garage at the rear of the property (as shown in the site photos) appear to be captured in the LiDAR.
 - The site photos and Google Streetview (snip below) suggest the level of the garage / rear access gate are higher than the low point in Hardwick Street and this is confirmed in the LiDAR.
 - Water that builds up in the low point at the rear of the subject property / within Hardwick Street flows north through the laneway (following Council's drainage alignment).
- The modelled drainage infrastructure in the hydraulic model reflects the drainage assets which can be viewed through Google Streetview and which were observed onsite. This includes the grated pit in Hardwick Street at the rear of the site.
- The updated stormwater map impacts the property slightly more than the initial map due to changes in the adopted methodology in the latest modelling. Specifically, the impacts of ARR2019 methodologies and use of 75th percentile pre-burst contributes to greater depths of stormwater runoff in roadways. The modelling also adopted a 3 m grid size which is consistent with municipal wide urban mapping as per Melbourne Water's latest flood mapping projects specifications.
- Structures have been modelled with a higher manning roughness to simulate the effect of water slowing down as it passes through these areas. Focusing on this property, the entire brick garage may not be considered as a full blackout to flow as water has the ability to pass through / under the laneway access door and roller door.
- A review of the Hydraulic Grade Line (HGL) in the direction of flow suggests stormwater runoff can build up and tip into the rear of the property

The review findings detailed above concluded that the site should remain in the updated mapping extent. A site visit was also undertaken at the site to ground-truth the modelling results.

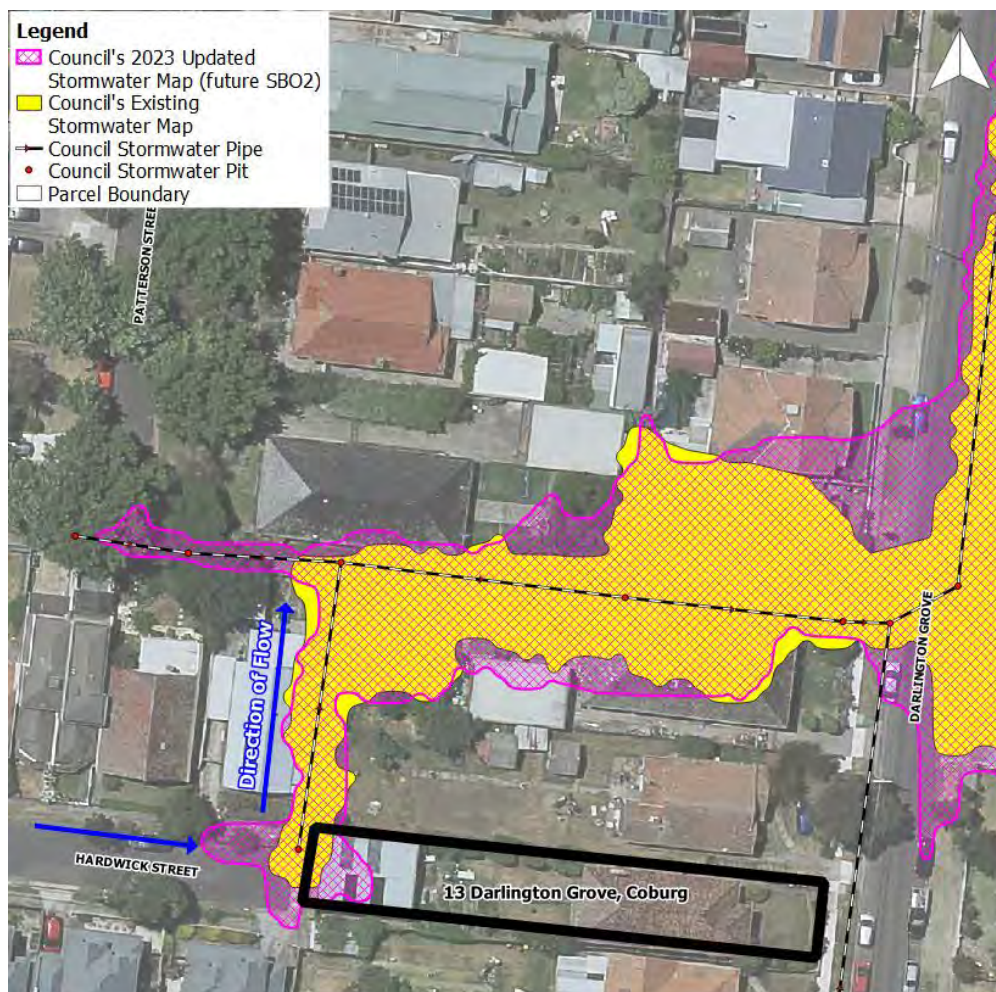


FIGURE 7.16: CASE STUDY EXAMPLE LOCATION 2



7.3 2023 Mapping Extent Review

The initial 2023 stormwater overland flow extent was created largely by automated GIS processes which implemented the inclusion / exclusion criteria detailed in section 7.2.3. To ensure the robustness and consistency of the updated stormwater overland flow extent a detailed assess of the extent was completed by Council and Engeny to check for any anomalies or inconsistencies in the mapping extent across the entire municipal area.

An anomaly in this instance refers to a location where the 2023 mapping extent provides a potentially unrealistic or inconsistent result and therefore warrants further review and investigation. An example of an anomaly is a location where a visual check of the extent indicated that one property is in due to minor intrusion of the extent into the property but neighbouring properties are not included in the extent. If the anomaly location warranted a site visit this was undertaken to determine on-site observations and ensuring on-the-ground checking was completed before a decision was made to update the stormwater mapping extent for that respective location.

For properties in a General Residential Zone or Neighbourhood Residential Zone, the mapping extent includes a property where the total percentage of property impacted is more than 5% based on the adopted criteria mentioned in Section 7.2.3. For properties not in a General Residential Zone or Neighbourhood Residential Zone, the mapping extent may include a property where the total percentage of property impacted is more than 2% and if greater than 25% of the property frontage is covered by the stormwater overland flow extent.

Separate to the visual extent checks, review requests of the stormwater overland flow extent were also undertaken based on responses from residents.

In collaboration with Council, Figure 7.17 below shows a simple schematic flow chart which details the methodology adopted for map-checking for anomalies. The same process was adopted for the visual map review and priority requests from residents.

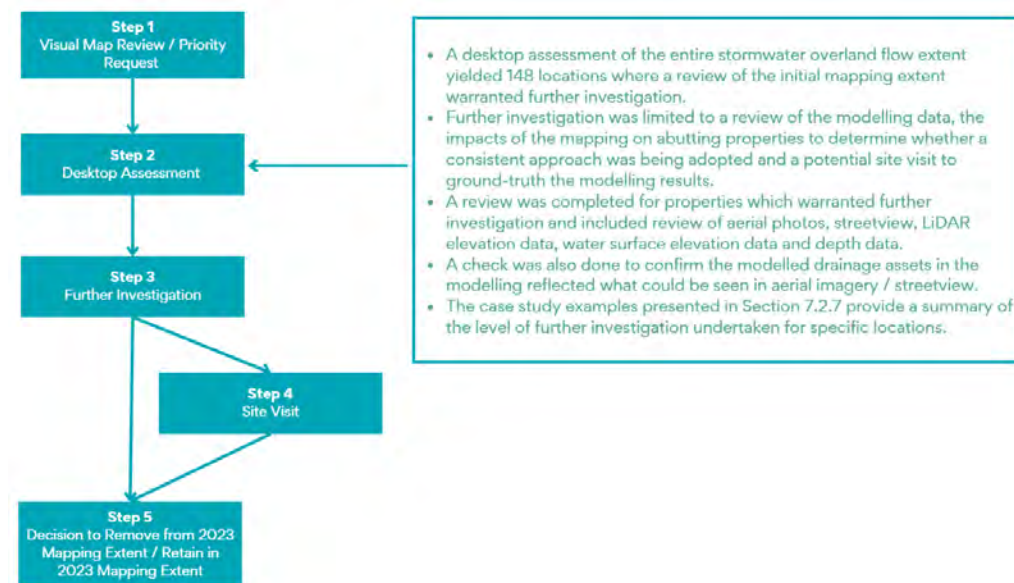


FIGURE 7.17: MAP CHECKING METHODOLOGY



The 2023 amended stormwater overland flow extent maps, prepared after community consultation and the map checking process detailed above, can be found in Appendix G.

The results of the map-checking, as detailed in the methodology shown in Figure 7.17 above, are provided in Appendix H in a table format. All properties identified in the visual scan or through resident requests have been included.

A comparison between the 2021 mapping extent (current SBO2) and 2023 amended mapping extent can be found in Appendix I. This map shows the difference between the 2021 mapping extent and 2023 amended mapping extent by identifying areas which have been added to the 2021 mapping extent and removed from the 2021 mapping extent.

7.4 2025 Post-Exhibition Map Review Process

There was an opportunity for submitters to request a review of the mapping extent after the extent was exhibited in 2024 (Step 6). As part of this step, additional site visits were conducted to review and confirm the impact of the mapping on extent on properties. This followed a similar process to that adopted in Step 5 as presented in Figure 7-17 above.

When reviewing the stormwater map following its exhibition, it was noted that several small fragments of polygons with an area less than 0.1 m² remained associated with larger neighbouring geometries. These areas have been removed from the final map extent. Similar cases were removed in earlier stages of refinement before exhibition, however these additional fragments were missed. The majority of areas were located within a road reserve, or within property polygons which did not impact the inclusion or exclusion of a property, and did not result in any properties being incorrectly flagged as intersecting with the proposed SBO extent.

The final map extent, prepared after the post-exhibition process, can be found in Appendix J.

Appendix K shows a tabulated list of the properties which were reviewed and the outcome of that review. Outcomes were either to remove the property from the extent, retain the property in the extent, with the extent unchanged, or to revise the extent but keep the property in the final map extent. Based on the reviews, a total of 68 properties were removed from the extent, 56 properties were retained with the extent unchanged, and 11 properties had the extent revised with the property staying in the final map extent. A total of 68 properties were removed from the extent.

A comparison between the 2023 mapping extent (exhibited mapping extent) and final map extent (map extent reviewed in the post-exhibition map review process) can be found in Appendix L. This map shows the difference between the 2023 mapping extent and final map extent by identifying areas which have been removed from the 2023 mapping extent to inform the final map extent.



8. CONCLUSION

Merri-bek City Council has uncovered the impact of the 1% AEP (1 in 100 year) storm event in its local drainage catchments. This was achieved through a thorough, stepped process, where sequential reviews and ongoing refinements have achieved an updated Stormwater Map that is now suitable for statutory implementation. This work has focused on the city's local drainage catchments, because this is where Council has its drainage assets and is the local drainage authority. It has also imbedded consideration of climate change.

The process started with a pilot study in 2016, when a proof of concept demonstrated modelling software and available information could effectively represent overland flow paths, informed by past storm events.

This triggered a study for the city's local catchments, to initially uncover flow paths in these catchments (Step 1). A mitigation study was also done so Council had well informed structural mitigation options, to reduce stormwater overland flow risks in 'hot spots' where more frequent storm impacts are expected.

Giving local catchment models and maps to Melbourne Water, then enabled a review of the Council's initial 2020 Stormwater Map. The Floodplain Management Authority facilitated a whole-of-catchments approach, for both local and main drainage areas across the city's urbanised catchments. This technical work included an independent peer review and application of updated technical standards. Arising from this, Council had access to improved models (Step 2).

Motivated by the need to 'capture the best available information', the Council then did a validation exercise for its local catchments, to ensure final models and technical standards informed an updated Stormwater Map (Step 3).

Then, to bring all past work together, further modelling and mapping has been done to produce the updated Stormwater Map (Step 4).

The updated stormwater map was used to consult affected landowners and a review of resident responses was completed in collaboration with municipal-wide field observations and a visual check of the mapping extent to produce an amended Stormwater Map (Step 5).

After the Amended Stormwater Map (Step 5) was exhibited in late 2024, there was an opportunity for submitters to request a review of the mapping. The outcomes of the review process informed the final map extent (Step 6).

The 6-step process is shown in Figure 8.1 and demonstrates a sequential process to continually review and refine technical information, and apply technical methods for an updated Stormwater Map, which can now be considered for statutory implementation.

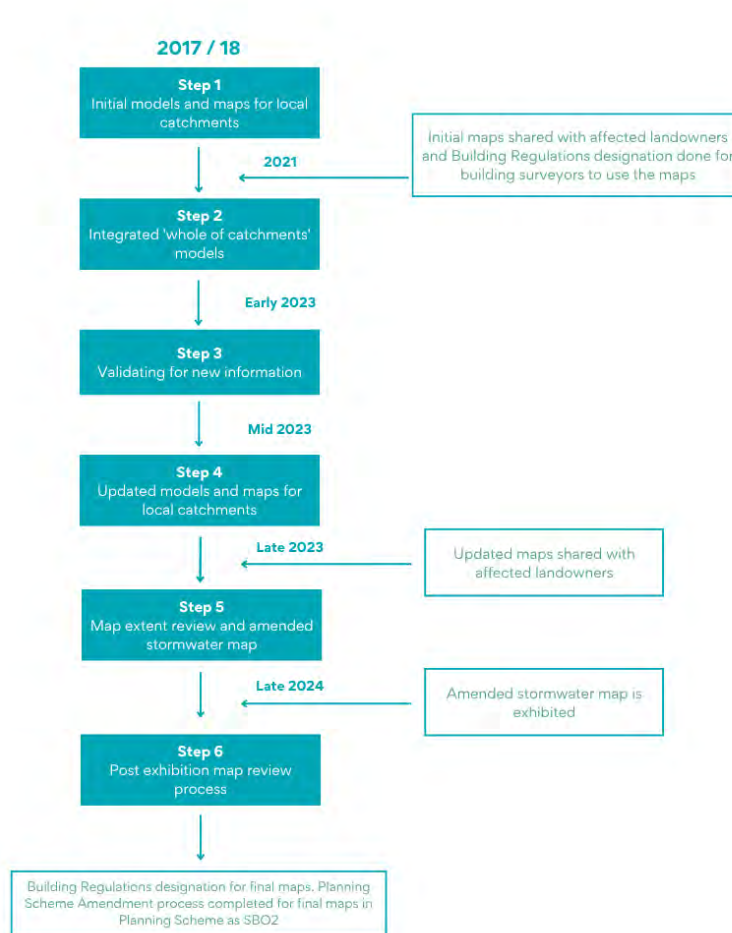


FIGURE 8.1: SIX STEP MODELLING AND MAPPING PROCESS



9. QUALIFICATIONS

- (a) In preparing this document, including all relevant calculation, and modelling, Engeny Australia Pty Ltd (Engeny) has exercised the degree of skill, care and diligence normally exercised by members of the engineering profession and has acted in accordance with accepted practices of engineering principles.
- (b) Engeny has used reasonable endeavours to inform itself of the parameters and requirements of the project and has taken reasonable steps to ensure that the works and document is as accurate and comprehensive as possible given the information upon which it has been based including information that may have been provided or obtained by any third party or external sources which has not been independently verified.
- (c) Engeny reserves the right to review and amend any aspect of the works performed including any opinions and recommendations from the works included or referred to in the works if:
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APPENDIX A: 2017 MERRI-BEK STORMWATER OVERLAND FLOW MAPPING REPORT

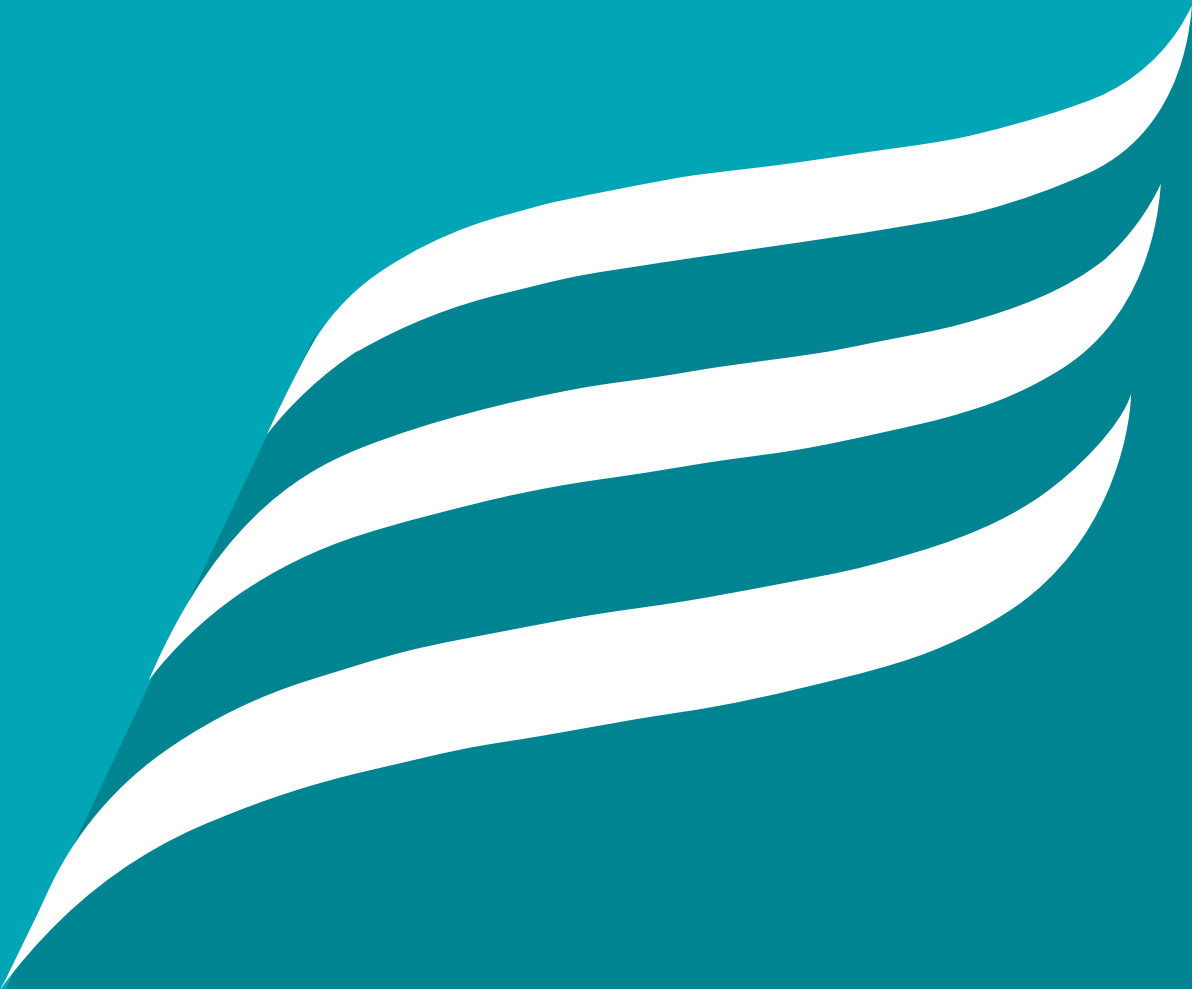
APPENDIX B: MELBOURNE WATER AND MERRI-BEK CITY COUNCIL MAPPING PROJECT REPORT (NOVEMBER 2022)

APPENDIX C: DATA VALIDATION REPORT

APPENDIX D: TUFLOW MODEL LAYOUTS

APPENDIX E: 1% AEP DEPTH AND HAZARD MAPS

APPENDIX F: 2023 AMENDED STORMWATER OVERLAND FLOW EXTENT MAPS (WIDER SCALE)



APPENDIX G: 2023 AMENDED STORMWATER OVERLAND FLOW EXTENT MAPS (LOCAL SCALE)

APPENDIX H: 2023 MAPPING EXTENT REVIEW OUTCOMES

APPENDIX I: 2023 AMENDED MAP COMPARED TO 2021 MAP

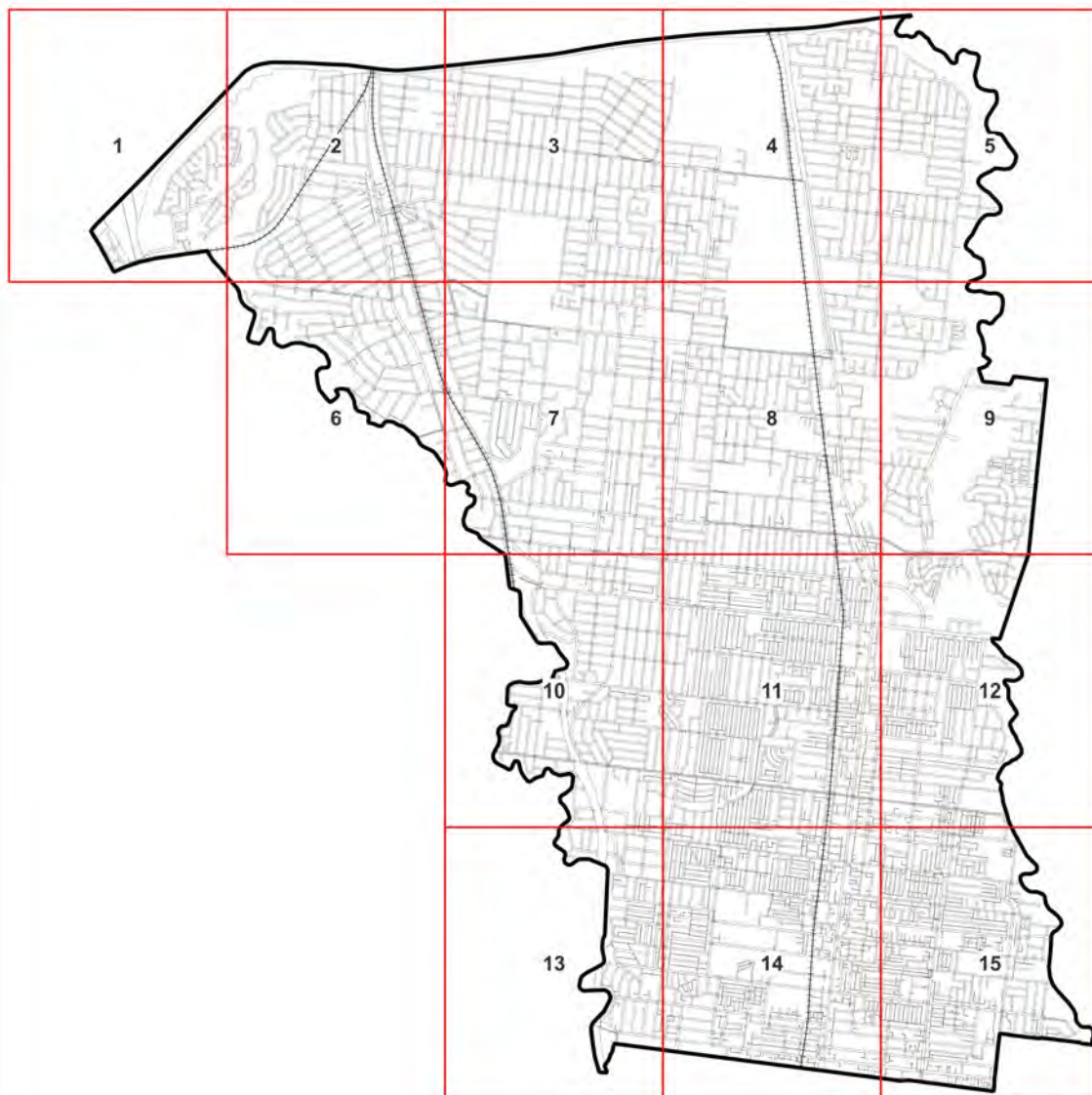
APPENDIX J: FINAL MAP EXTENT

APPENDIX K: 2025 POST- EXHIBITION MAPPING REVIEW OUTCOMES

APPENDIX L: FINAL MAP COMPARED TO 2023 MAP



Sourced from Merri-bek City City Council, Creating the Local Drainage Authority's Stormwater Map, Technical Report, Appendix J 'Final Map Extent' (Engeny, July 2025)



Legend

- Merri-Bek City Council Boundary
- Railway Line
- VicPlan Road Casement Layer
- Index Grid

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250 0 250 500 750 1,000 m

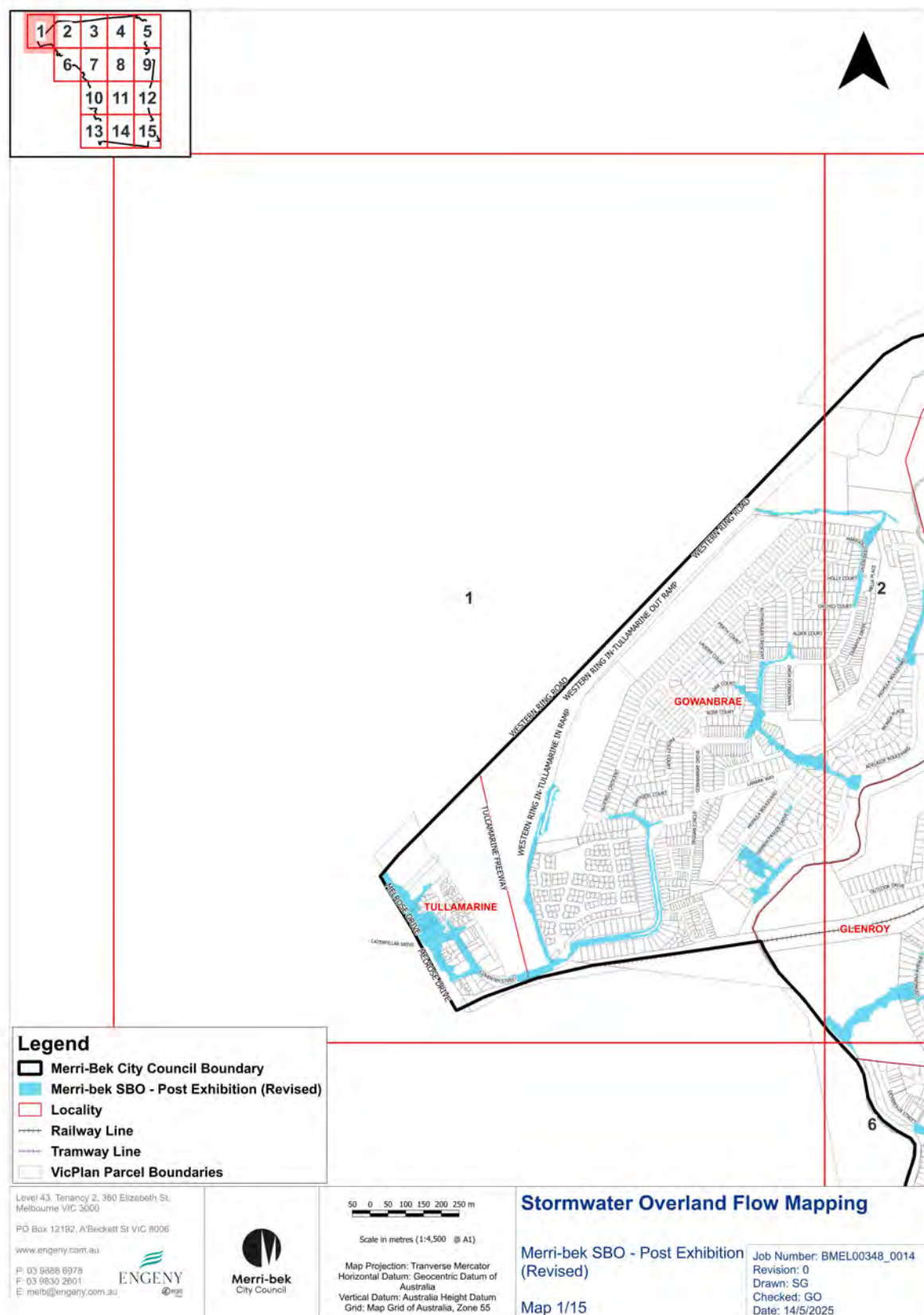
Scale in metres (1:18,000 @ A1)

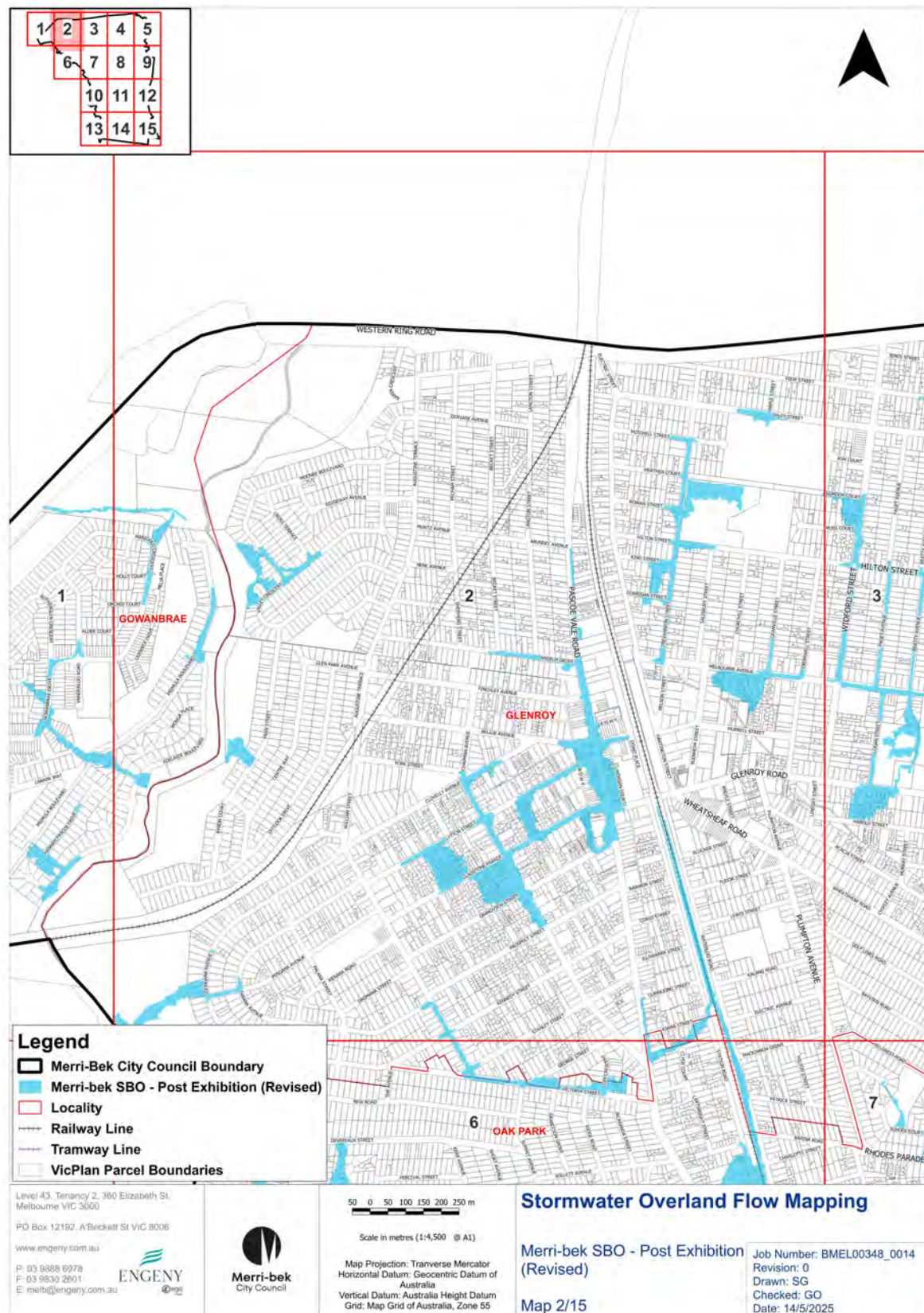
Map Projection: Transverse Mercator
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia
Vertical Datum: Australia Height Datum
Grid: Map Grid of Australia, Zone 55

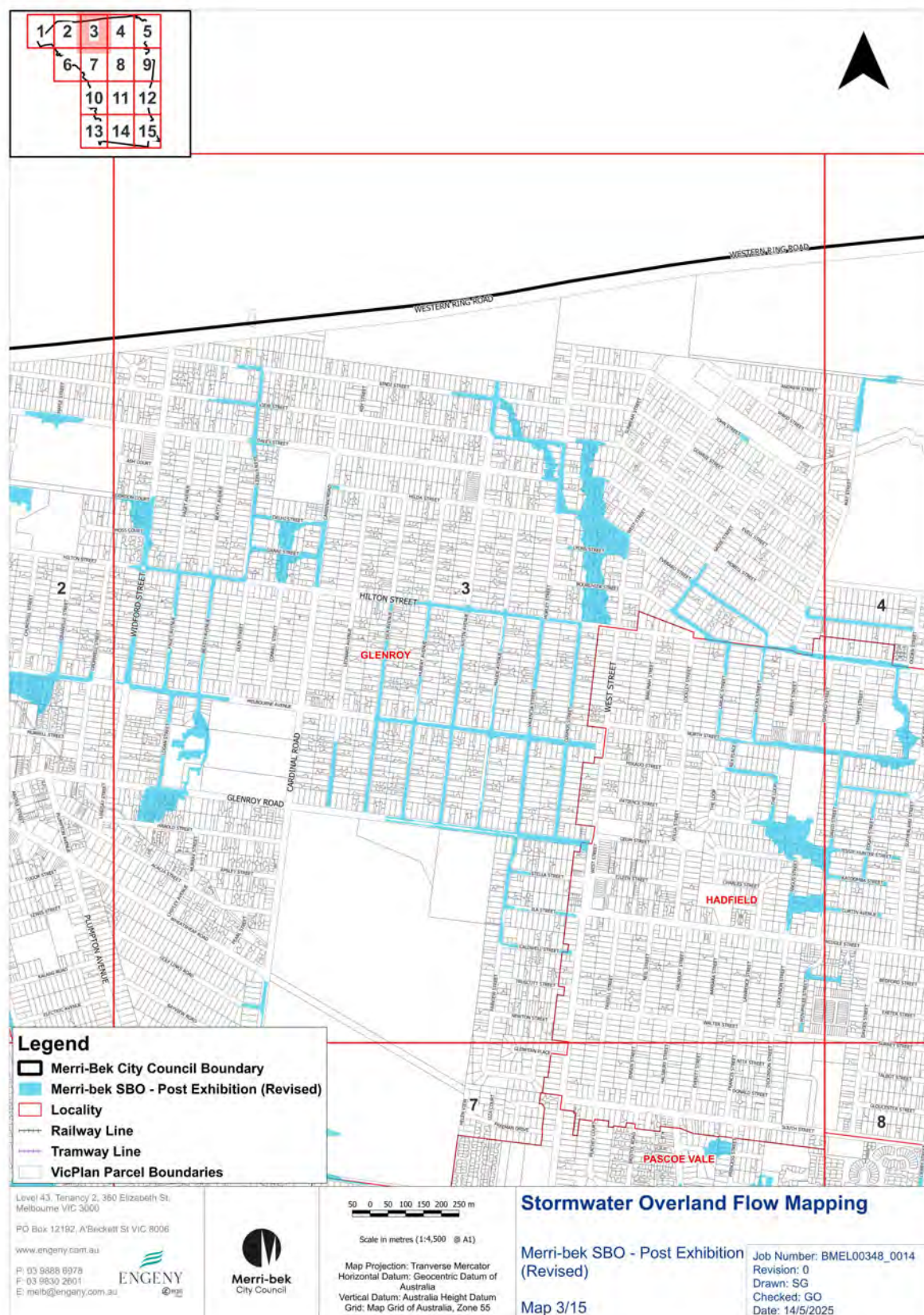
Stormwater Overland Flow Mapping

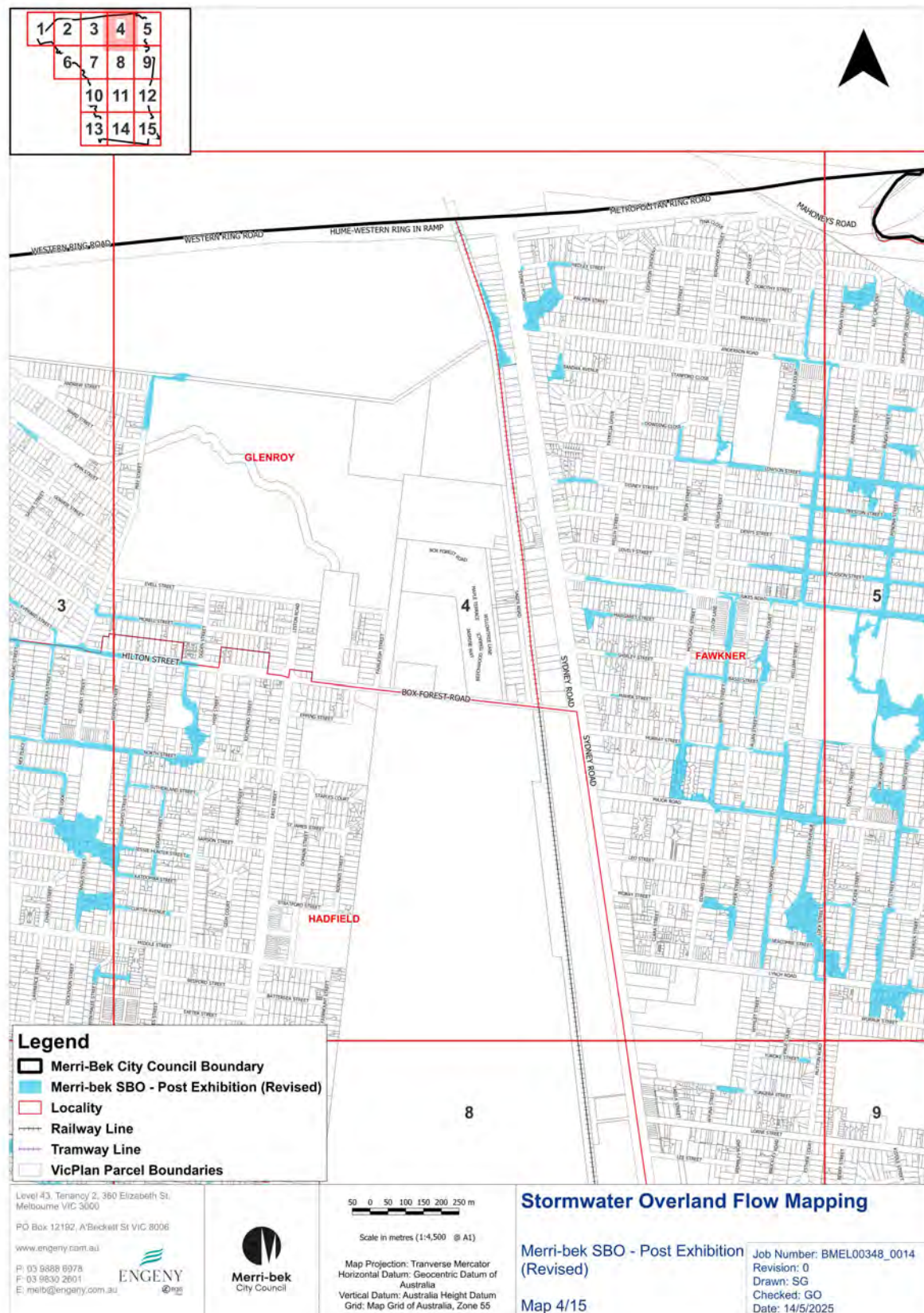
Merri-bek Index Map

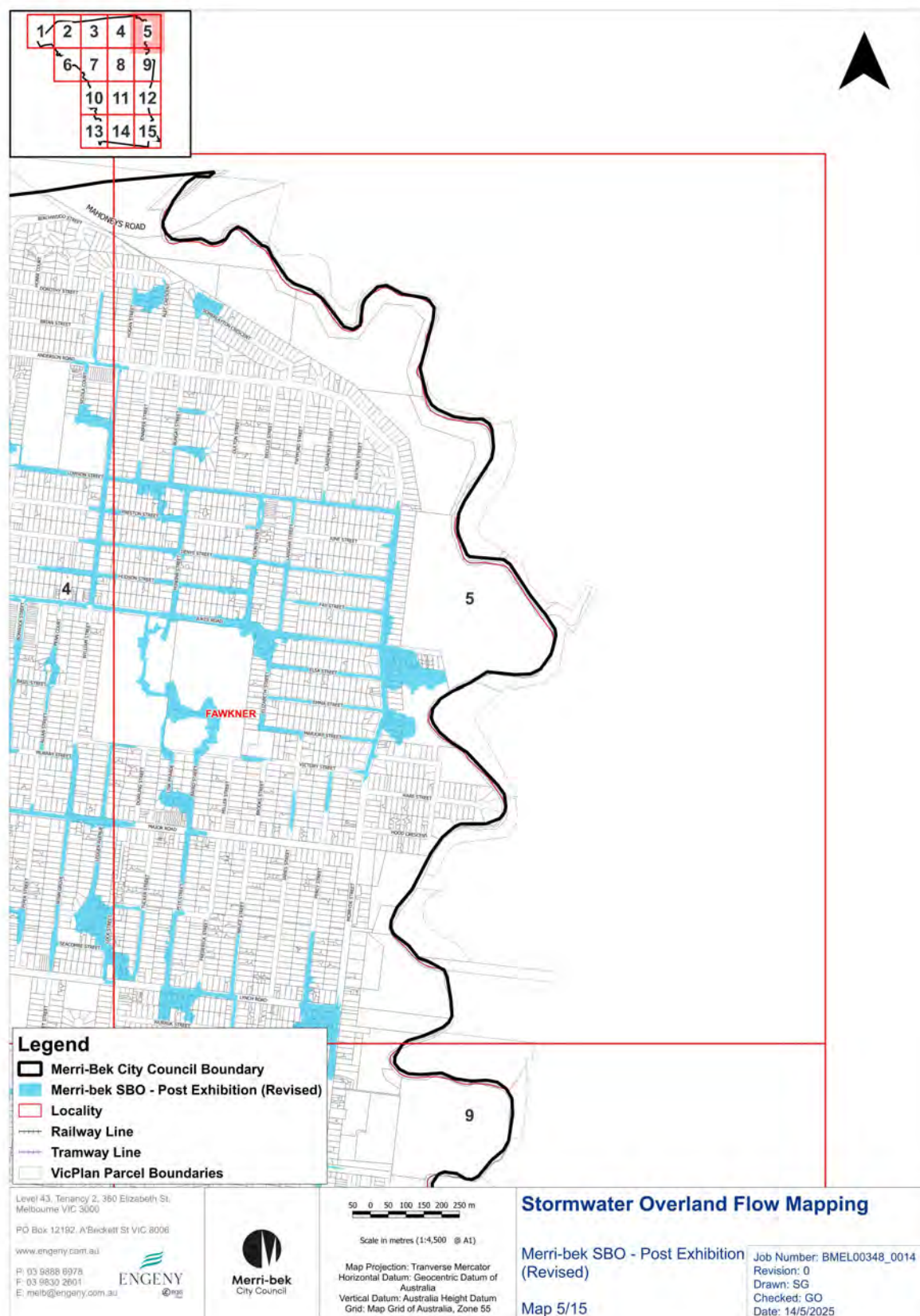
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Revision: 0
Drawn: SG
Checked: GO
Date: 14/5/2025

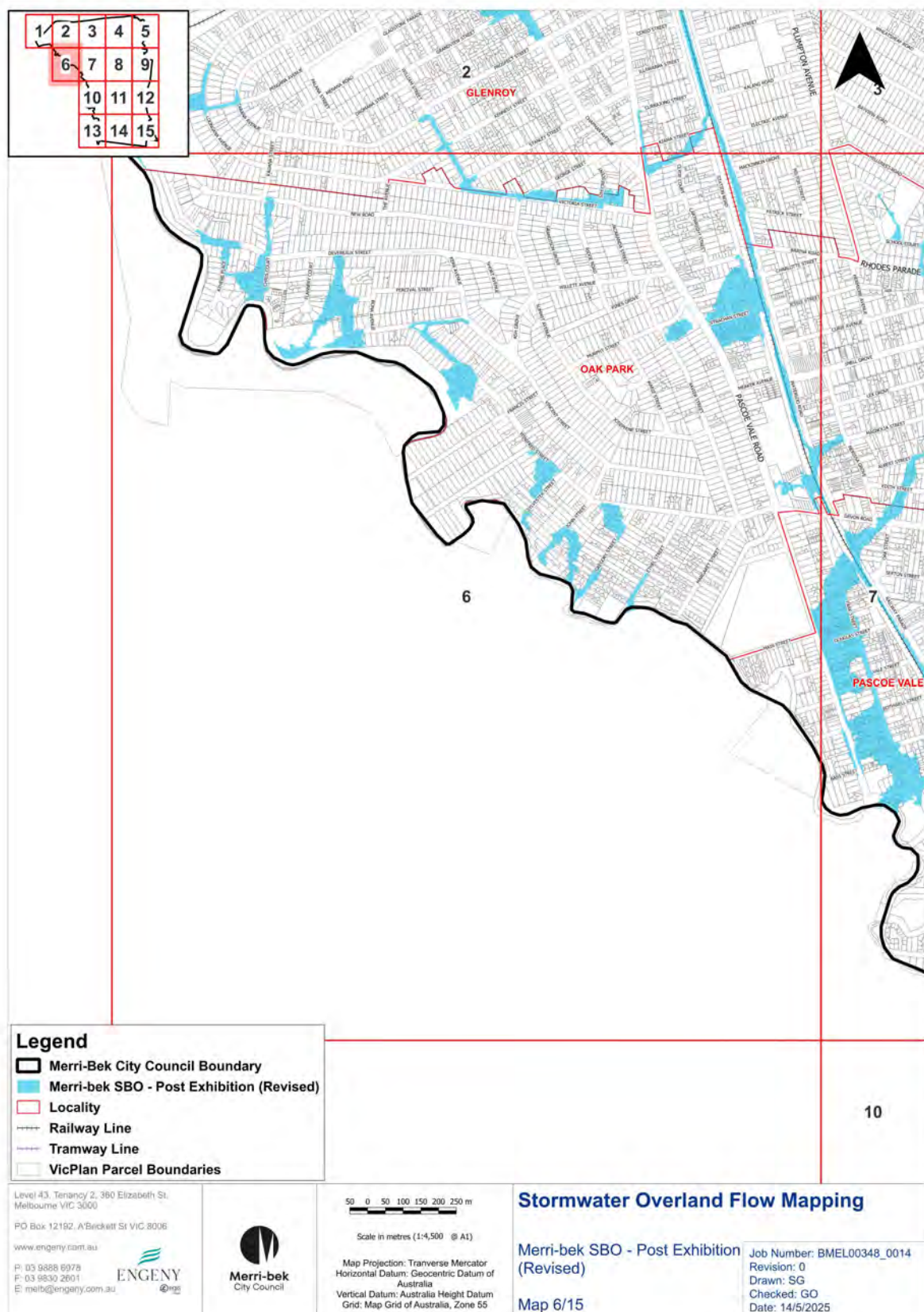


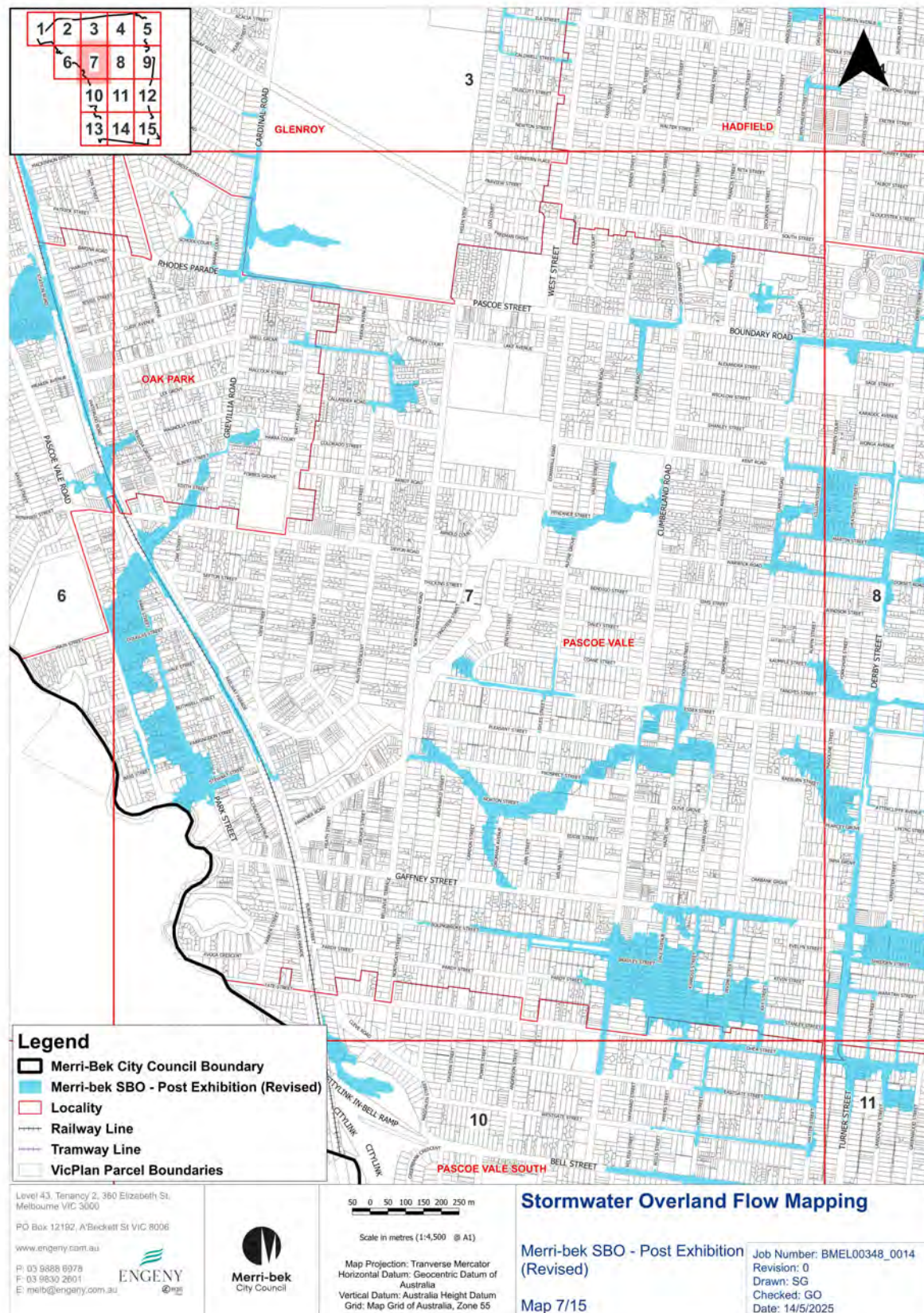


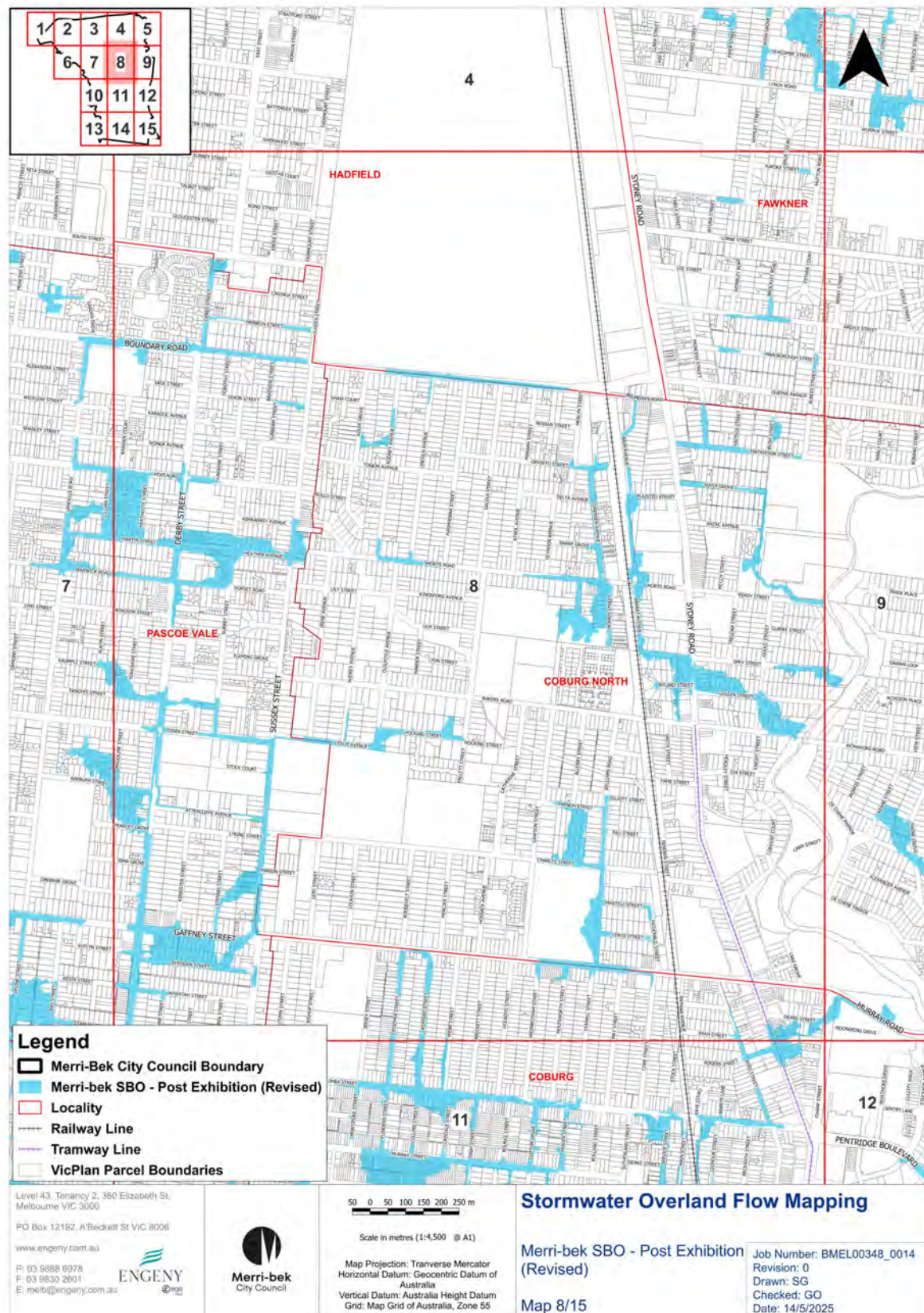


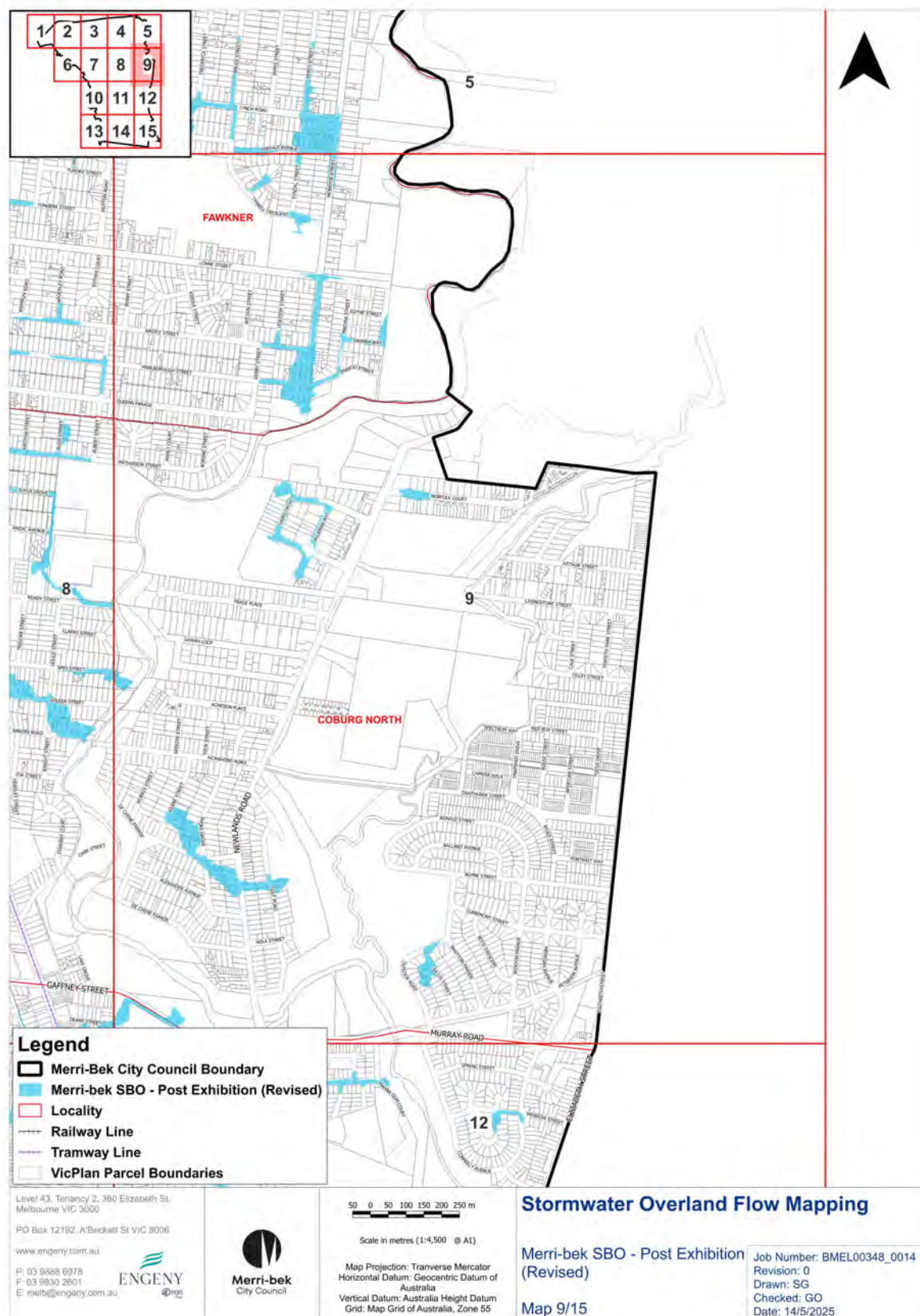


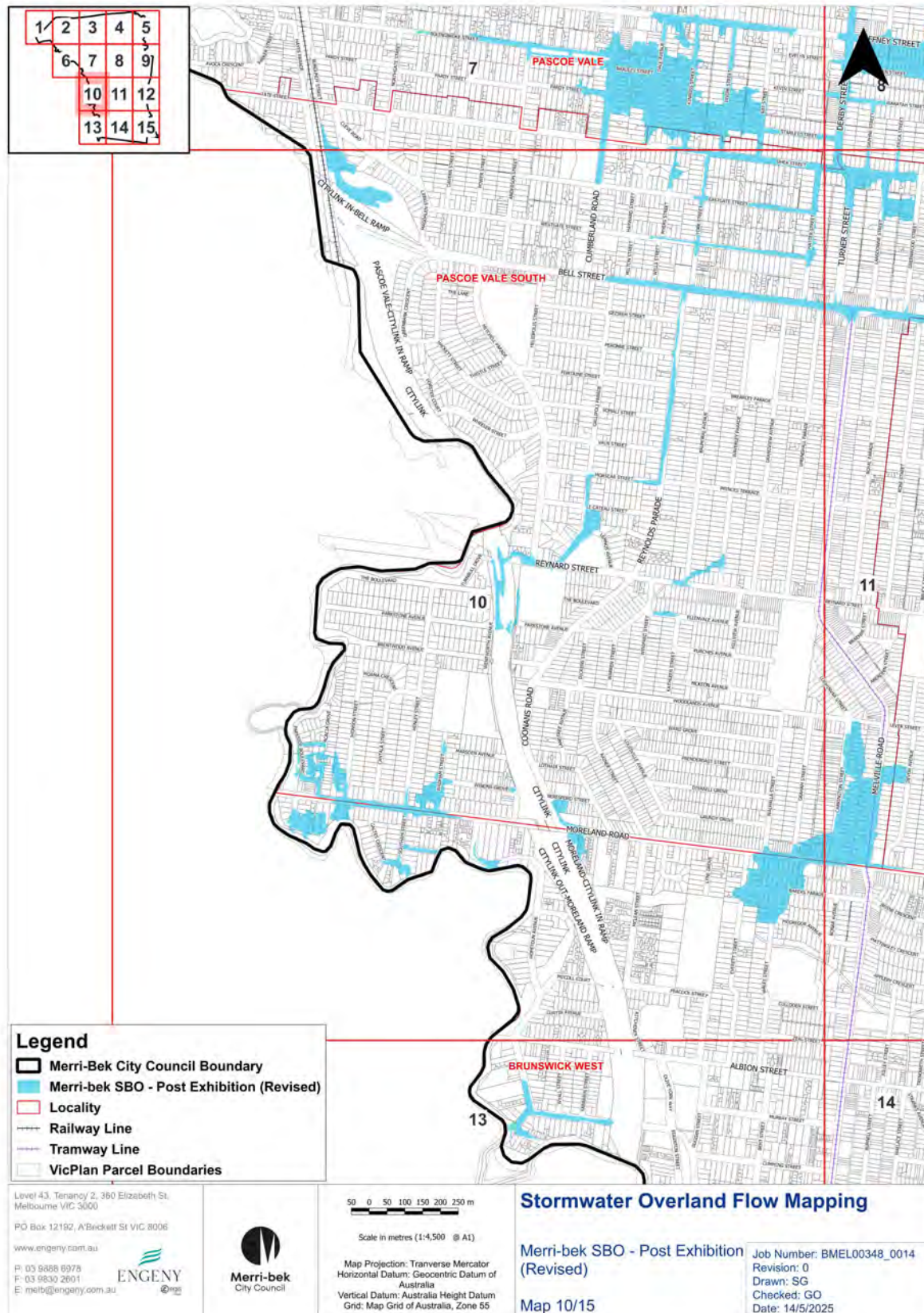


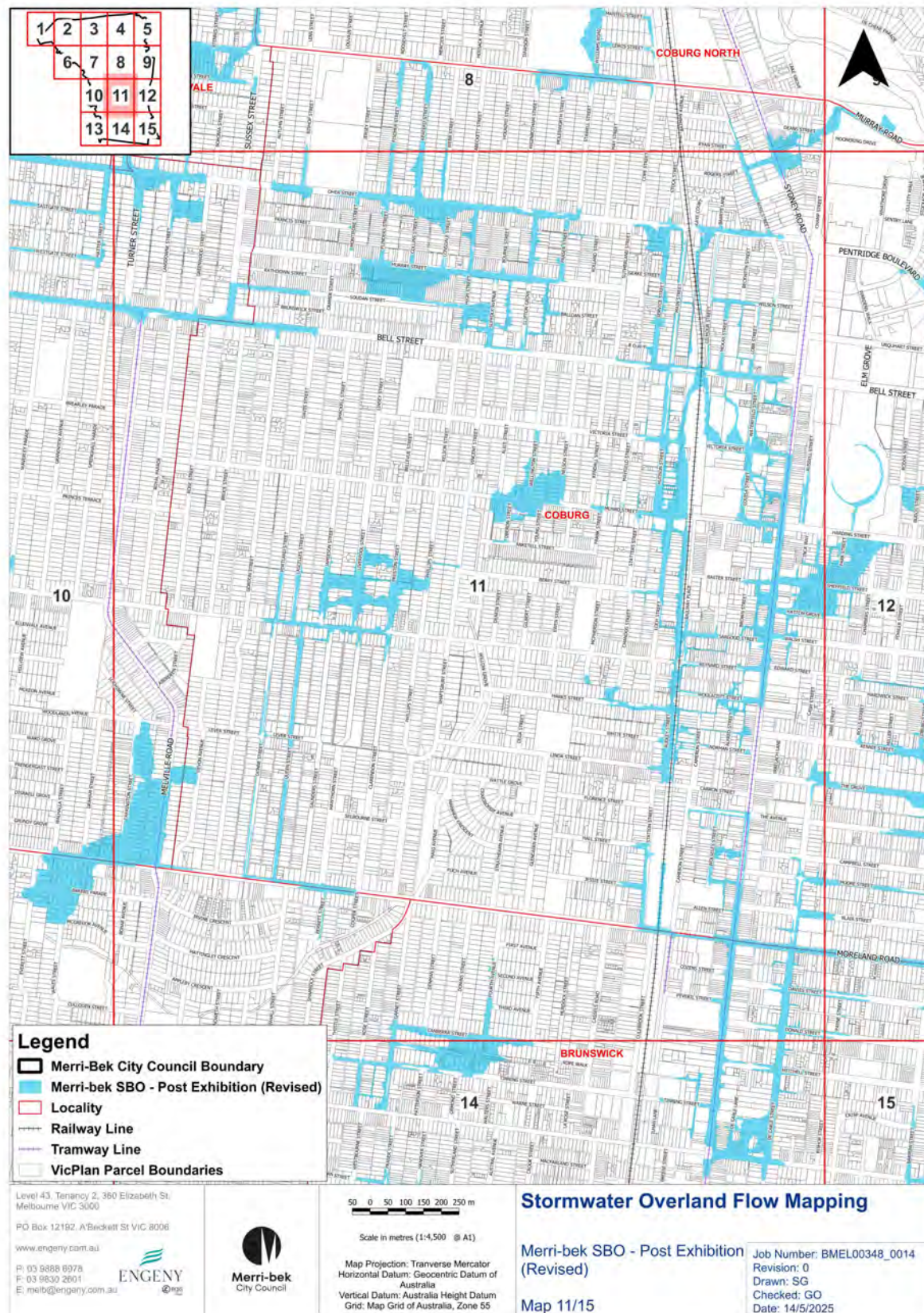


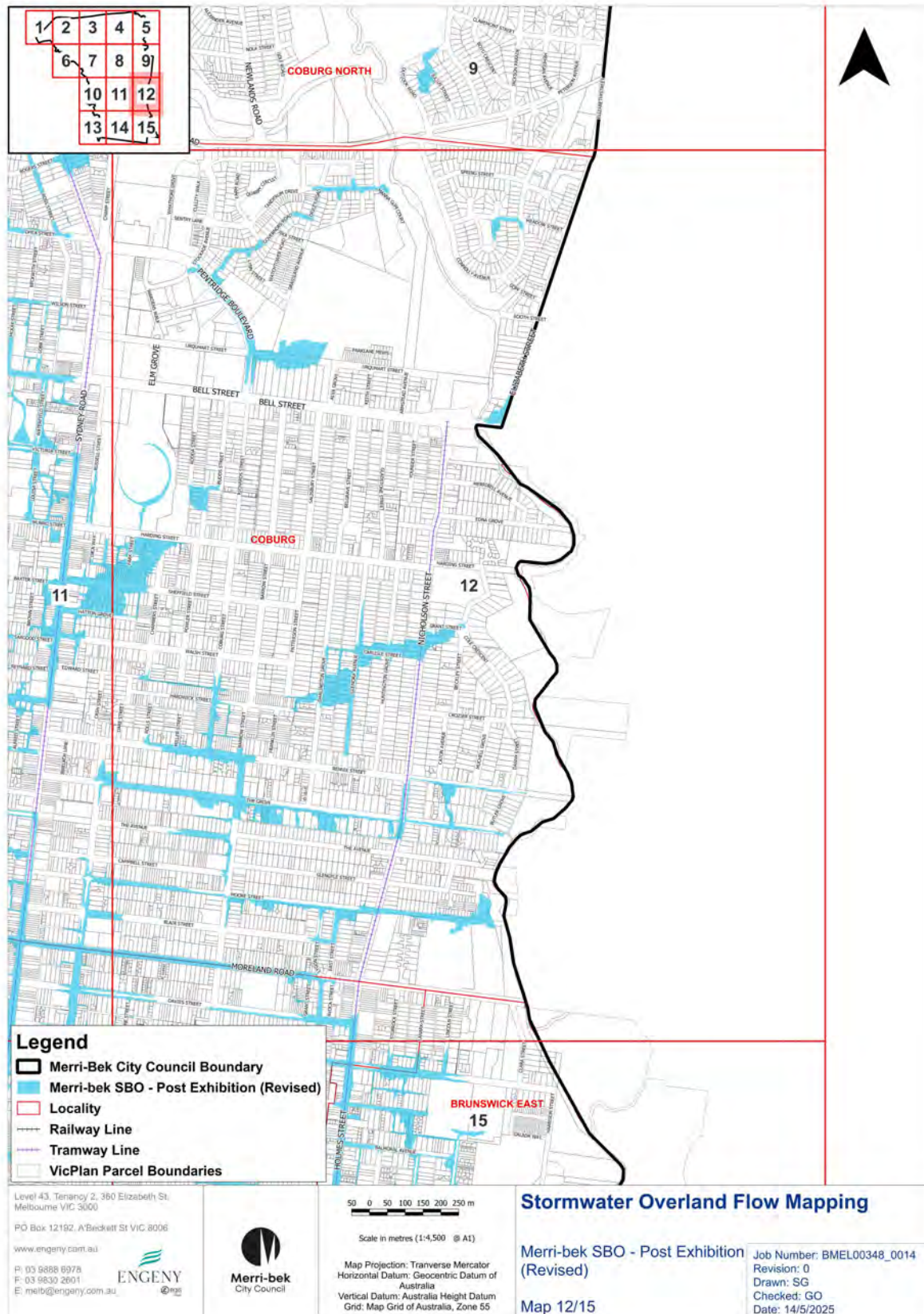


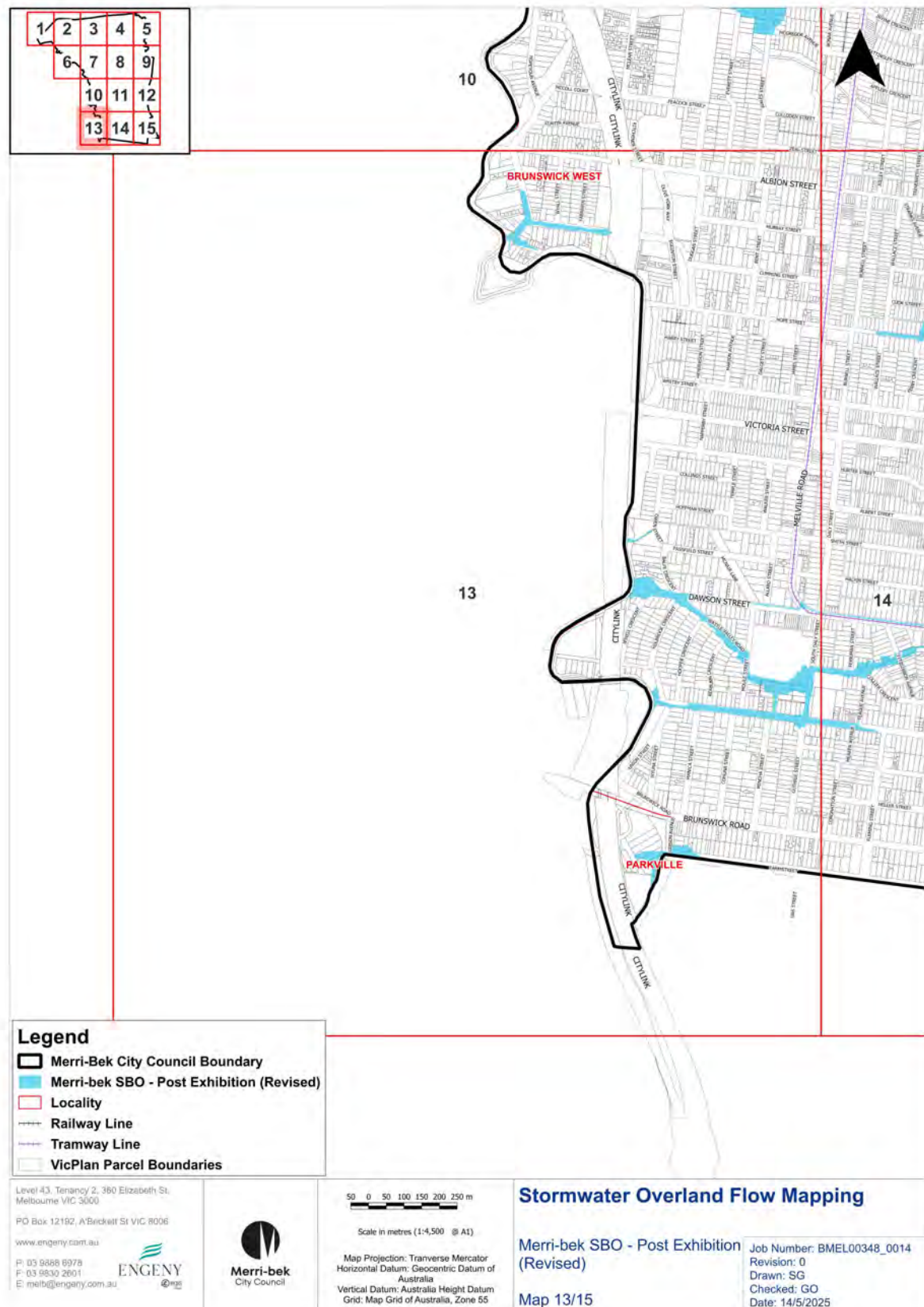


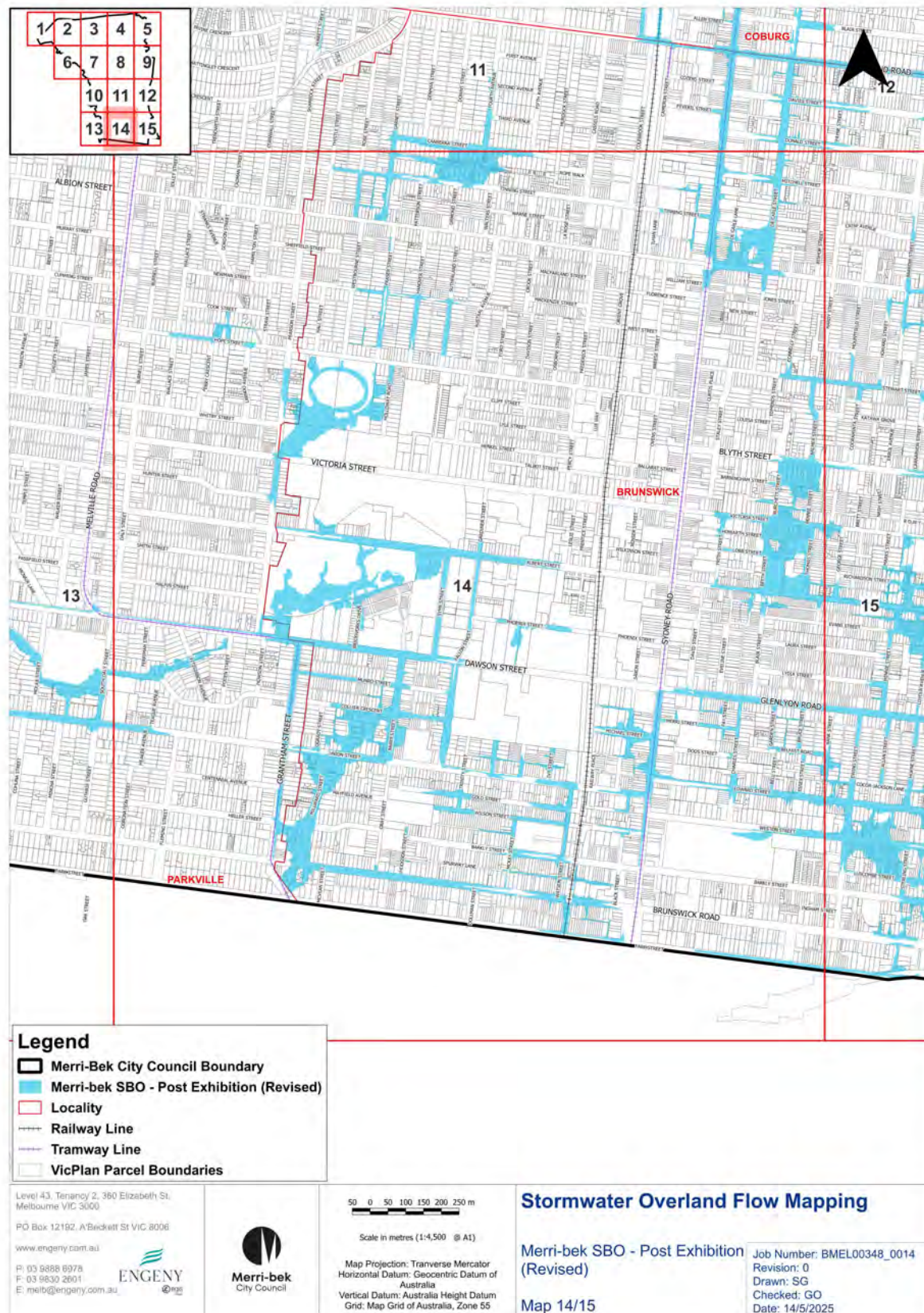


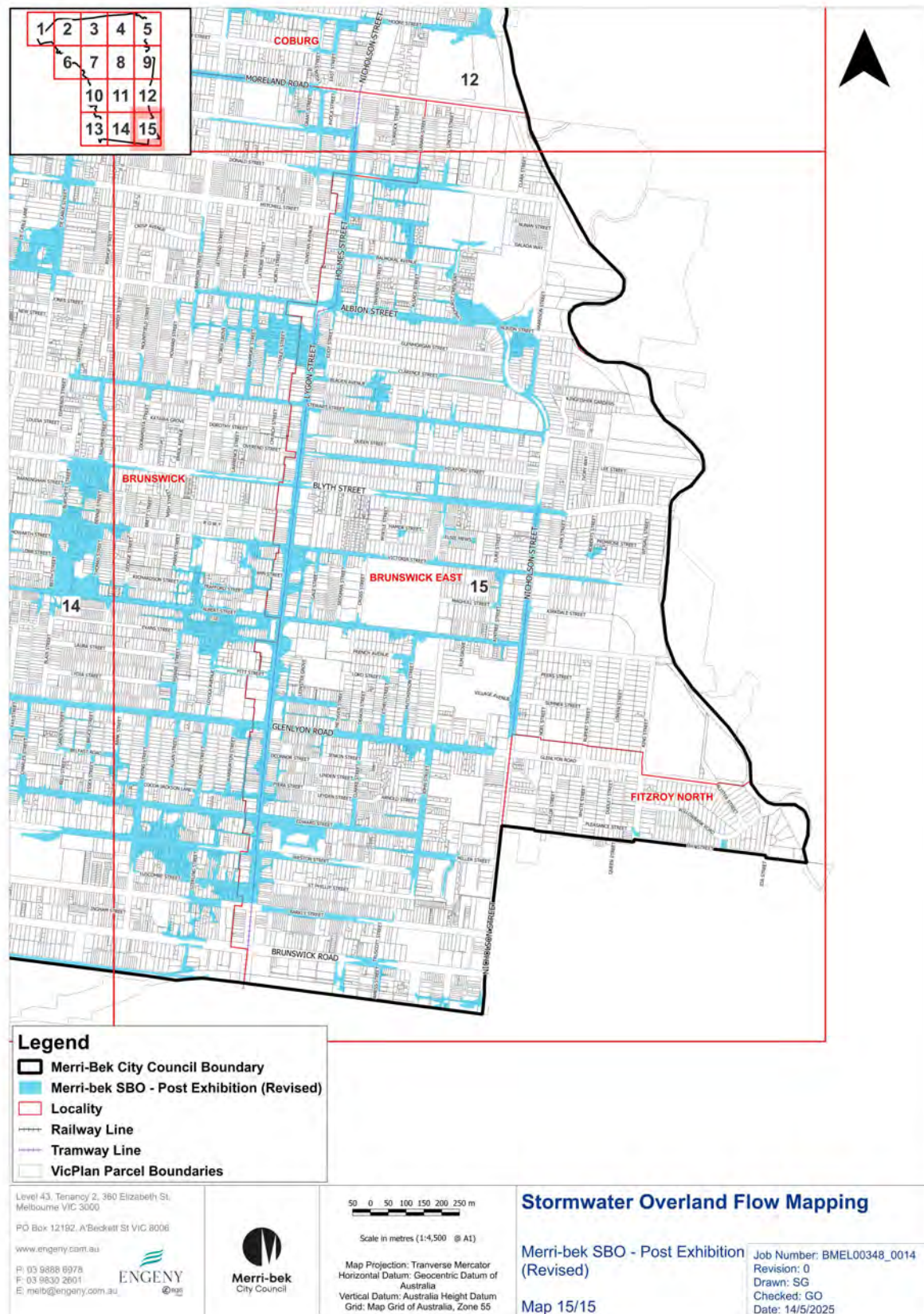


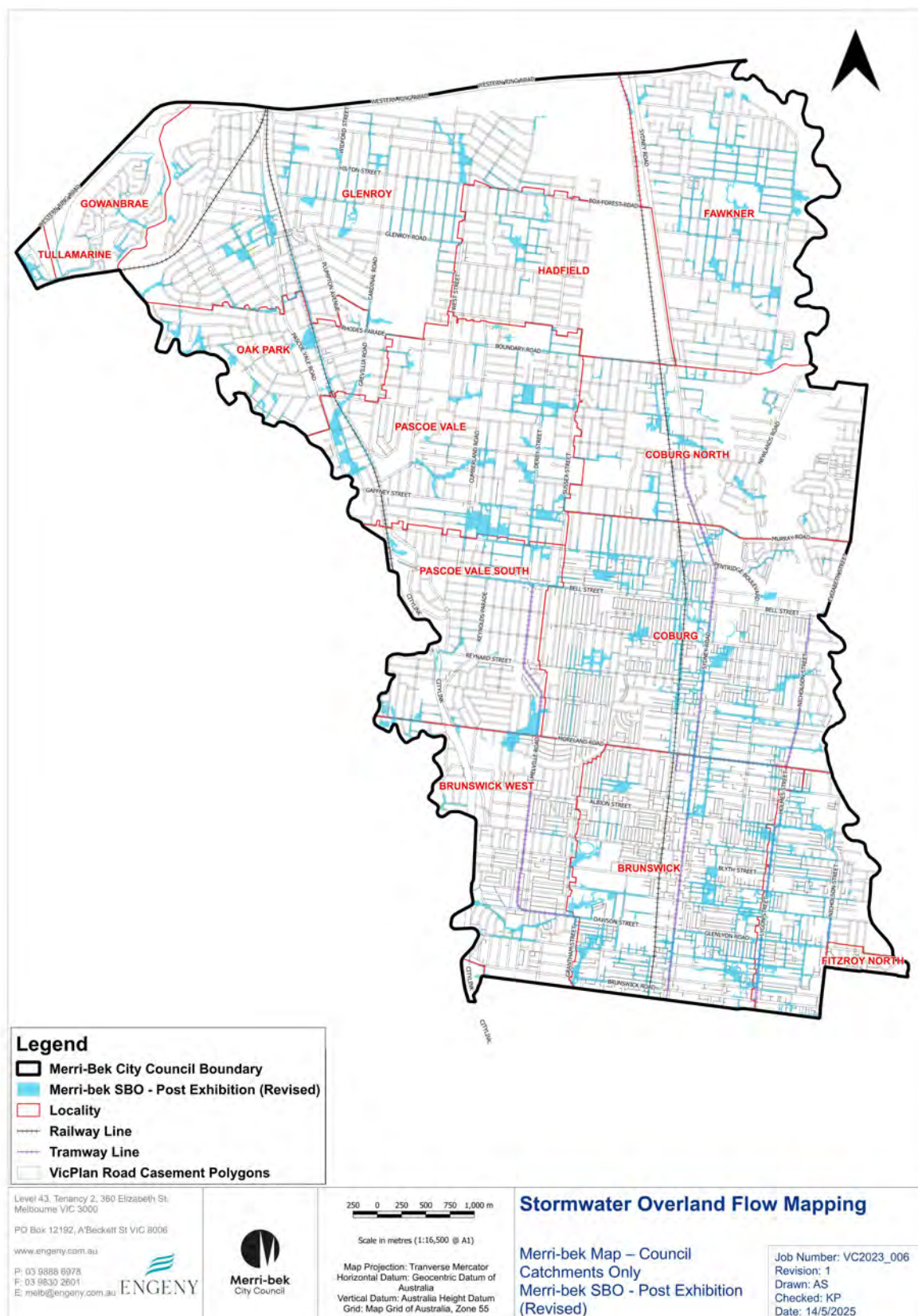












MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME

Proposed C196more

SCHEDULE 2 TO CLAUSE 44.05 SPECIAL BUILDING OVERLAY

Shown on the planning scheme map as SBO2.

COUNCIL DRAINS**1.0****Flooding management objectives to be achieved**

Proposed C196more

None specified.

2.0**Statement of risk**

Proposed C196more

None specified.

3.0**Permit requirement**

Proposed C196more

None specified.

4.0**Application requirements**

Proposed C196more

None specified.

5.0**Decision guidelines**

Proposed C196more

The following decision guidelines apply to an application for a permit under Clause 44.05, in addition to those specified in Clause 44.05 and elsewhere in the scheme which must be considered, as appropriate, by the responsible authority:

- Any comments from the local drainage authority.

MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME

31/07/2018
VC148**SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 72.03 WHAT DOES THIS PLANNING SCHEME CONSIST OF?****1.0****Maps comprising part of this planning scheme:**29/06/2023
C219more
Proposed C196more

- 1, 1DCPO, 1DPO, 1EAO, 1EMO 1ESO, 1HO, 1LSIO, 1PO, 1SBO, 1SLO
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- 3, 3DCPO, 3EAO, 3DDO, 3EMO, 3ESO, 3HO, 3LSIO, 3MAEO, 3PO, 3SBO, 3SCO
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- 14, 14DCPO, 14DDO, 14DPO, 14EAO, 14HO, 14IPO, 14PAO, 14PO, 14SBO, 14SCO
- 15, 15DCPO, 15DDO, 15DPO, 15EAO, 15EMO, 15ESO, 15HO, 15LSIO, 15PO, 15SBO

MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME

31/07/2018
VC148

SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 72.08 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1.0

Background documents

04/05/2023
G208more Proposed C196more

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
<i>A Park Close to Home</i> (Moreland City Council, December 2017)	C212more - 2.03-2; 12.01-1L
<i>Brunswick Structure Plan Reference Document</i> (Moreland City Council, 2018)	C167 - 02.03-1; 43.02s19
<i>Coburg Activity Centre Structure Plan Reference Document</i> (Moreland City Council, 2018)	C167 - 02.03-1; 37.08s1
<i>Development Guidelines for Merri Creek</i> (Merri Creek Management Committee, 2004)	C152 - 12.03-1L
<i>Edgars Creek Conservation and Development Plan, Edwardes Lake to Merri Creek</i> (Thompson Berrill Landscape Design, June 2013)	C152 - 12.03-1L
<i>Gambling in Moreland 2015-2020</i> (Moreland City Council, 2015)	C163 - 52.28
<i>Glenroy Structure Plan</i> (Moreland City Council, 13 August 2008)	C109 - 02.03-1
<i>Guidelines for alterations and additions to detached houses in heritage areas</i> (Moreland City Council, 2021)	C212more - 15.03-1L
<i>Guidelines for Fences in Heritage Areas</i> (Moreland City Council, 2021)	C212more - 15.03-1L
<i>Livable Housing Design Guidelines</i> (Livable Housing Australia, 2017)	C152 - 16.01-1L
<i>Local impacts of electronic gaming machine (EGM) gambling in Moreland</i> (Moreland City Council, April 2011)	C157 - 52.28
<i>Merri-bek City Council, Creating the Local Drainage Authority's Stormwater Map Technical Report</i> (Engeny, July 2025)	C196 - 44.05s2
<i>Moreland Activity Centre Framework</i> (Echelon Planning, February 2014)	C152 - 02.03-1
<i>Moreland Affordable Housing Strategy Action Plan</i> (Moreland City Council, September 2019)	C212more - 02.03-5; 16.01-2L
<i>Moreland Apartment Design Code</i> (Moreland City Council, September 2015)	C142 - 15.01-2L
<i>Moreland Arts Infrastructure Plan 2018-2023</i> (Hodyl + Co, February 2018)	C212more - 2.03-6
<i>Moreland Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021</i> (Moreland City Council, August 2016)	C212more - 02.03-6
<i>Moreland Heritage Nominations Study (Extent Heritage for Moreland City Council, Vols. 1-2, 2022)</i>	C208more - 15.03-1L

MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
<i>Moreland Industrial Land Strategy 2015-2030</i> (Moreland City Council, July 2016)	C158 - 02.03-6; 16.01-1L; 17.01-1L
<i>Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy 2019</i> (Moreland City Council, March 2019)	C212more - 02.03-7; 18.-2-4L
<i>Moreland Integrated Water Management Strategy 2040</i> (Moreland City Council, July 2020)	C212more - 15.01-1L; 19.03-3L
<i>Moreland Nature Plan</i> (Moreland City Council, 2020)	C212more - 2.03-2; 12.02-1L
<i>Moreland Neighbourhood Centres Strategy 2017</i> (Moreland City Council, March 2017)	C159 - 02.03-1
<i>Moreland Open Space Strategy 2012-2022</i> (Moreland City Council, 2012)	C122 - 02.01; 2.03-2; 2.03-8
<i>Moreland Tree Planting Manual for Residential Zones</i> (Moreland City Council, 2019)	C189more - 32.07s1; 32.07s2; 32.08s1; 32.08s2; 32.08s3; 32.08s4; 32.09s1
<i>Moreland Urban Forest Strategy 2017-2027</i>	C189more - 32.04s1; 32.07s1; 32.07s2; 32.08s1; 32.08s2; 32.08s3; 32.08s4; 32.09s1
<i>Moreland Vehicle Crossing (Driveway) Policy 2019</i> (Moreland City Council, July 2019)	C212more - 15.01-1L
<i>Moreland Zero Carbon 2040 Framework</i> (Moreland City Council, September 2018)	C212more - 2.01
<i>Sydney Road and Upfield Corridor Strategic Framework Plan</i> (David Lock Associates, 2014)	C134 - 43.02s18
<i>Urban Stormwater Best Practice Environmental Management Guidelines</i> (CSIRO, 2006)	C152 - 15.02-1L

7.5 NORTH WEST BUILDING PHOENIX STREET AND BRUNSWICK BATHS GYM EXPANSION OPTIONS

Director Community, Eamonn Fennessy

Cultural Development

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses the implementation of works (\$900,000) to the ground floor of the North West building in 2026/2027 to enable affordable arts use, within existing budget;
2. Endorses the re-allocation of current year funding (\$150,000) to the concept design of an expansion of the Brunswick Baths gym;
3. Refers the budget implications of this report, including the future construction costs of the expansion of the Brunswick Baths gym (currently unfunded), to the 2026-2030 budget process for consideration.

REPORT

Executive Summary

This report outlines future use options for the North West building at 33 Saxon Street and the expansion of the Brunswick Baths gym, in response to growing community demand, operational pressures, and the current state of the existing buildings.

Following further detailed assessment and scoping of a number of options, it is recommended that Council proceed with works to the ground floor of the North West building in 2026/2027 in order to enable affordable arts use. These works are achievable within existing budget allocations for the North West building. It is also recommended that Council proceed to undertake a concept design for a future expansion of the Brunswick Baths gym, factoring in a proposed future relocation of the outdoor activity zone into the 'hard yard' next door in Balam Balam Place.

The current adopted budget includes \$150,000 in the current year (2025/2026) and \$2,350,000 in 2026/2027. This report is proposing to utilise the current year funding to complete a concept design of the expansion of the Brunswick Baths gym as well as partially utilising 2026/2027 funding for the North West building works. The remaining budget implications of this report, including future construction costs of a future expansion of the Brunswick Baths gym, is being recommended for consideration as a part of 2026-2030 budget process for consideration.

Previous Council Decisions

Land adjacent to Brunswick Baths - Options for Future - 10 July 2024

That Council:

1. *Notes the information provided in this report which outlines the comparative benefits, risks, costs and community impact of use options including:*
 - a) *Expansion of Brunswick Baths Health Club*
 - b) *Destination arts venue*
 - c) *Making space (affordable arts)*
2. *Defers a decision on the future use of the North West building until early 2025, in the new Council term.*

3. *To inform this decision, receives a report in early 2025 on options and indicative costs for a future expansion of the Brunswick Baths Health Club within the current facility footprint and in particular gym operations to cater for future service growth and demand.*

Land adjacent to Brunswick Baths - Options for Future - 13 March 2024

That Council:

1. *Notes that the endorsed concept plan for the 33 Saxon Street hub identified the footprint of the North West building (fronting onto Phoenix Street) as being for potential use for future expansion of Brunswick Baths.*
2. *Acknowledges that if the North West building is not retained for future aquatics and leisure purposes, the likely best use of the site would be an arts related usage which preferably also increases activation of the site.*
3. *Commissions cost estimates for repurposing the building for arts use, and for Brunswick Baths Health Club (gym) use.*
4. *Undertakes a targeted market sounding during April 2024 to investigate if there are destination arts tenancies who can provide capital investment to repurpose and activate the building.*
5. *Receives a report in June 2024 that outlines the comparative benefits, risks, costs and community impact of Aquatics and Leisure or arts and culture usage including the options of:*
 - a) *Expansion of Brunswick Baths Health Club extension*
 - b) *Destination arts venue*
 - c) *Making space (affordable arts).*

1. Policy Context

This report aligns with the Merri-bek Council Plan 2021–2025 objectives relating to healthy, inclusive, and resilient communities.

The proposed expansion of the Brunswick Baths gym aligns with Merri-bek City Council's Aquatic and Leisure Strategy 2018–2038, which sets overarching direction for the provision of high-quality, sustainable, and accessible leisure infrastructure across the municipality.

The strategy highlights the need to respond to population growth, particularly in Brunswick and other inner-urban areas where demand for indoor health and fitness services is projected to increase significantly over the coming decades.

Key objectives of the strategy that support the proposed gym expansion include:

- Objective 1.3: Optimise the use of existing infrastructure through upgrades and redevelopment where appropriate.
- Objective 3.1: Expand indoor health and fitness services in locations with high current and projected demand.
- Objective 4.3: Progressively plan for the transition of aquatic and leisure centres away from gas toward energy-efficient alternatives.

The Aquatic and Leisure Strategy 2018–2038 recommended opportunities to expand areas that reach capacity within Brunswick Baths. The Strategy highlighted the need to monitor usage and performance of the facility and consider opportunities to do this in the short term (0-5 years). This was delayed pending Balam Balam Place development. A review of the Aquatic and Leisure Strategy will be undertaken in the latter half of 2025.

Expanding the gym within the existing Brunswick Baths footprint also supports Council's Zero Carbon Merri-bek targets by allowing for integrated design that includes electrification infrastructure such as heat pumps. In doing so, the proposal supports long-term environmental goals while addressing current operational capacity issues, safety constraints, and service demand in one of Council's highest-use leisure facilities.

The retention of the North West building for arts and community use aligns with the 2023-2030 Arts and Culture Strategy, which sets a vision for Merri-bek to be a place where creativity and culture thrive.

The strategy commits to supporting increased access to spaces and finding for artists and creatives to make, collaborate and present work. The strategy priorities of creation, connection and investment ensure that the municipality champions arts and cultural activity, fosters connection between artists, audiences and community and invests in the creative community and generates opportunities for artists and the creative sector.

2. Background

Council purchased the former school site at 33 Saxon Street Brunswick in 2010. In 2012, 800sqm of the site was annexed and subdivided to become part of the redeveloped Brunswick Baths, with the old sports hall becoming a gym and the basketball court for the Baths.

The remainder of the site was retained and temporarily activated as an affordable arts precinct known as Siteworks whilst longer term plans were considered. Once a Community Needs Assessment and Strategic Framework had been developed, plans were made to redevelop the site to provide a long-term use of affordable arts and community spaces.

The old school building to the north-west of the site (the North West building) was originally considered for demolition to maximise the amount of open space in the precinct. However, after a detailed assessment of the building condition it was determined that it was not yet at end of life, and it would be good practice from an embodied energy perspective to retain it. Retaining the building was also thought to represent an opportunity for future expansion of the Brunswick Baths facility due to its adjacency.

The concept plan for Balam Balam Place endorsed by Council at its November 2021 meeting notes the North West buildings 'potential for future Baths expansion'. During the Balam Balam Place development the building was delivered as a cold shell but remains non-operational without a certificate of occupancy.

In July 2024 Council considered a range of possible uses for the site, the benefits, risks, costs and community impact of use options including:

- a) Expansion of Brunswick Baths gym
- b) Destination arts venue
- c) Making space (affordable arts).

Council deferred a decision on the future use of the North West building until 2025, in the new Council term. To inform this decision, Council requested a report in early 2025 on options and indicative costs for a future expansion of the Brunswick Baths gym within the current facility footprint and in particular considering the need for gym operations to cater for future service growth and demand.

This report presents updated findings and financial assessments for these future use options.

3. Issues

Community impact

The current gym at Brunswick Baths provides 352 square meters of floor space for over 3,600 members. This is well below industry standards. Current demand significantly exceeds capacity, resulting in service limitations and user dissatisfaction. In July 2024 Council received a petition from approximately 400 people to strongly consider allocation of the North West building for an expansion of the gym space based on community interest.

In parallel, there is ongoing demand for accessible, affordable creative making and rehearsal spaces in Brunswick. Many artists and arts organisations have approached Balam Balam Place operators and Council to express interest in such spaces within the North West building. There is also significant need from Balam Balam Place tenant, Blak Dot Gallery, for space for printmaking and other workshops and residencies that cannot be delivered within the existing infrastructure at Balam Balam Place.

Proposed Brunswick Baths Gym Expansion

Officers explored undertaking a gym extension into the ground floor of the North West building, which is not recommended due to building compliance and title constraint issues. Brunswick Baths and the North West building sit on separate land titles, creating legal and planning complexities and limiting infrastructure integration. Additionally, the building fabric is not suitable in its current state structurally to support a gym.

While repurposing the North West building for gym expansion would offer some short-term capacity relief for existing users, it provides limited long-term value due to size limitations, structural compliance, building integrity, the above-mentioned title constraints and the high cost to upgrade and maintain.

Instead, redevelopment on the existing outdoor activity zone adjacent to the Brunswick Baths gym is identified as the preferred long-term solution to address capacity, safety, and future electrification requirements for the Brunswick Baths. Further scoping has identified an opportunity to re-locate the existing outdoor activity zone at Brunswick Baths into the hard landscaped area of Balam Balam Place (currently a 'hard yard' asphalted area that gets little use but is retained to provide crane pad access for the Baths).

The April 2025 Council Report 'Phasing Out Gas in Councils Aquatic and Leisure Centres' highlighted an opportunity to consider the requirements for Brunswick Baths to move to an all-electric facility. As part of the proposed gym expansion the spatial and structural requirements to house the heat pumps has also been considered.

High-level estimated costs for the Brunswick Baths expansion works are \$5.8 million, subject to revision once a concept design process is undertaken. The design will include a spatial allocation for future electrification infrastructure.

Proposed retention of North West building

Structural rectification works valued at \$300,000 have been undertaken to the North West building during the construction of Balam Balam Place. Officers have scoped the further works needed to bring the North West building to a habitable standard to obtain an occupancy permit and to enable its use. These works, to be undertaken on the ground floor only, include electrical wiring, installation of toilets and some other plumbing, the introduction of an external wall, and heating in two rooms. The upper floor would not be updated. The estimated costs for these works would be up to \$900,000.

Once updated, the North West building could be allocated to TPT (the operators of Balam Balam Place) as part of their Balam Balam Place management until February 2030 in line with their current lease, subject to negotiation of a variation to their contract. TPT could activate and hire the venue or its rooms out for affordable/messy arts usage, enabling community members to book through the same system as other spaces at Balam Balam Place, opening up more areas for community hire at a variety of rates, and enabling a seamless user experience across the site.

Following this initial period, Council could determine future uses of the North West building, including maintaining it within the Balam Balam Place contract, leasing it to another community group, or considering further redevelopment.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

Retaining and reusing the North West building is environmentally preferable to demolition.

Brunswick Baths currently contributes 10 per cent of Council's corporate gas emissions, primarily to enable year-round pool heating. Transitioning the facility to an all-electric operation is an important strategic priority that will require significant future investment.

A challenge with electrification of the baths is ensuring adequate, ventilated, outdoor spaces for a large volume of heat pumps on a very constrained site. Redevelopment of the gym will enable integration of heat pump infrastructure onto a structurally suitable roof and help achieve Council's zero carbon ambitions.

Legal and risk considerations

The North West building and Brunswick Baths are located on separate land titles, which presents challenges for infrastructure integration, legal compliance, and asset management. The North West building also has unresolved structural issues on the upper floor and contains known asbestos.

Human Rights Consideration

This report has been reviewed under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. No rights are negatively impacted by the proposed recommendations. A gender equity and accessibility lens has been applied in the assessment of community needs and infrastructure outcomes.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Community consultation on both the expansion of the Brunswick Baths gym and North West building has occurred through multiple avenues:

- A 2022 survey of 145 Brunswick Baths members on services offered including the gym.
- Ongoing customer feedback to the YMCA and Council regarding the gym including overcrowding concerns.
- A petition signed in 2024 by over 400 community members supporting gym expansion.

The need for affordable making and production spaces was a key community concern during the Arts and Culture Strategy consultation in 2023, particularly as rents increase and warehouses are increasingly developed for housing.

Blak Dot Gallery and TPT have identified a need on site at Saxon Street for messy making space, rehearsal and performance space and a space for artist residencies that is not being met by the new building.

A targeted engagement process will follow any Council decision to confirm implementation priorities and inform stakeholders of the endorsed direction.

Affected persons rights and interests There are no direct impacts on individual rights. Broader community stakeholders will be consulted further during implementation.

Communications A communications and engagement plan will be prepared following Council's decision, to support effective information sharing and implementation planning with affected stakeholders and service providers.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

There is currently capital works budget allocated to the North West building totalling \$2,500,000; \$150,000 in the current 2025/2026 financial year and \$2,350,000 in the 2026/2027 financial year.

The below table show the proposed indicative investment to achieve the outcomes recommended in this report:

Item	Amount (excluding GST)
2025-26 capital works program allocation (<i>Balam Balam Place North West Building - Phoenix Street</i>)	\$150,000
2026-27 capital works program allocation (<i>Balam Balam Place North West Building - Phoenix Street</i>)	\$2,350,000
Total allocated budget	\$2,500,000
<u>Proposed allocation</u>	
2025-26 capital work program (<i>Concept design for Brunswick Baths expansion</i>)	\$150,000
2026-27 capital works program (<i>works Balam Balam Place North West Building - Phoenix Street</i>)	\$900,000
Total	\$1,050,000
<u>For future budget consideration (2026-2030)</u>	
Construction costs – expansion of Brunswick Baths Gym into the outdoor training zone, including structural provision for future electrification requirements, and relocation of the outdoor activity zone to Balam Balam Place	\$5,800,000 (indicative costings)

This report is recommending to utilise \$1,050,000 of the funding currently allocated in the adopted budget (*Balam Balam Place North West Building - Phoenix Street*). The remaining implications are being recommended for consideration as a part of the 2026-2030 budget process.

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

7.6 BRUNSWICK LXRP MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade
City Development

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the power to negotiate and execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in accordance with the draft MOU at Attachment 1, including:
 - a) Negotiating future funding for Council to engage resources to support the work that will be required in responding to the design and delivery of the Brunswick LXRP, should the project proceed.
 - b) Negotiating future handover of any newly created assets for Council operation and maintenance, should the project proceed.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The Victorian Government's Brunswick Level Crossing Removal Project plans to elevate the Upfield Rail Line, removing eight level crossings between Park Street, Parkville, and Albion Street, Brunswick. Initially set for completion in 2027, the project timeline was revised in mid-2024, with level crossings now expected to be removed in 2030.

The State Government funds, designs, and delivers level crossing projects. Council's role is to advocate for the community and ensure the project delivers long-term community benefits.

To support this, LXRP has provided Council with a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which is a standard process for level crossing removal projects in Victoria. A similar MOU was completed to support the successful Coburg and Glenroy level crossing projects. The MOU has a number of purposes. From Council's perspective, a completed MOU would:

- Facilitate collaboration, allowing Council officers to provide feedback on plans, and advocate for Council's priorities for the community.
- Set out a process for the government to estimate and fund Council resources required to undertake work required during LXRP delivery.
- Ensure a structured handover and ongoing maintenance of public spaces beneath the elevated rail. This helps to ensure good design and maintenance of public spaces.

The MOU does not limit Council's ability to advocate for the best outcomes for the community. Officers engaged by Council, even if funded through the MOU, remain fully independent in representing Council and community interests.

If approved, the CEO will execute the MOU, which will enable Council to engage with project implementation more quickly when the government confirms it is ready to progress.

Previous Council decisions

Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework (LXRP) – Stage 1 – 10 July 2024

That Council:

1. *Endorses the Stage 1 of the Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework (Attachment 1).*
2. *Notes that the Chief Executive Officer will write to the CEO of the Level Crossing Removal Project to advise of Council's endorsement of the Stage 1 Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework and providing them a copy to inform future design considerations for the Brunswick level crossing removals project.*
3. *Endorses a staged approach to the completion of the Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework, with work on Stage 2 (the final stage), including further community engagement, to commence once plans for the Brunswick level crossing removals project have been released by the State Government.*
4. *Notes the community engagement detailed in Section 4 of this report and thanks the community for their participation in this engagement.*

Brunswick Level Crossing Removals Position Paper - 12 April 2023

That Council:

1. *Notes the extensive engagement program that has been carried out to seek the views of the local community about the Brunswick Level Crossing Removals Project, and the feedback that has been received through this program which is summarised in this report*
2. *Thanks the community groups, individuals, businesses and agencies that took part in the engagement program, for sharing their valuable perspectives on the project*
3. *Adopts the document titled Reshaping Brunswick (Attachment 1) as Council's advocacy position on the project subject to the following changes:*
 - a) *On page 13 of Reshaping Brunswick, at the end of the final paragraph, add the following: The Merri-bek Human Rights Policy also provides flexibility for Council to consider future needs of priority area, groups and issues and the framework of an age and lifespan lens. Older people also constitute a group whose perspective will be included in Council dealings with level Crossing Removal Project team throughout the design and delivery of the project.*
 - b) *Update Reshaping Brunswick to create an advocacy position that Council believes that three stations should be rebuilt as part of the works to this part of the Upfield Line, whilst also minimising the bulk of the project infrastructure of and any negative impacts on homes adjacent to the rail line, local amenity, sunlight, trees or heritage fabric, including:*
 - i. *Adding to page 18 under the heading "What we ask of the Department of Transport and Planning" A commitment to the retention of the current number of 3 stations.*
 - ii. *Adding to page 18 under the heading "What we ask of Level Crossing Removal Project" two additional dot points: Retention of 3 stations on this section of the Upfield Line and Minimisation of visual bulk of station and platforms.*
 - iii. *Deleting the diagram on page 19.*
 - iv. *Making any other updates to the paper to clarify this advocacy position.*
 - c) *On page 22 of Reshaping Brunswick under the heading "Step 1: Over the next 12 months", include disability, seniors, and residents' groups in the list of stakeholders to work with to develop a shared vision and key moves for the revitalisation of Sydney Road.*

- d) *On page 25 of Reshaping Brunswick, under the heading “What we ask of the Department of Transport and Planning” include after “long term actions”, with key priorities as below:*
- i. *Insert a new dot point as follows: Install temporary separated bike lanes prior to the Upfield bike path being closed for construction. There is no safe or practical north/south alternative, therefore making temporary separated bike lanes a priority for the safety of all cyclists displaced from the Upfield line including school age and younger children in childcare and kindergarten. A higher risk Sydney Rd or backstreets of construction and congestion is not a safe alternative. Separated bike lanes means that solutions will need to be found for delivery for premises without rear access, assessment of needs and strategy for people with restricted mobility reliant on parking access along Sydney Rd, and stops for replacement buses.*
 - ii. *From “As a minimum, upgrade key Sydney Road tram stops now before the works start so that they are accessible to people with a disability before the only other form of accessible public transport is disrupted.” delete “As a minimum.”*
- e) *One page 26 of Reshaping Brunswick under the heading “What we ask of the Level Crossing Removal Project”, add to the end of bullet point 5 Merri-bek Age Friendly Reference Group, Brunswick Residents Network and other community, disability, aged and residents groups.*
- f) *On page 29 of Reshaping Brunswick under the heading “What we ask of the Level Crossing Removal Project”, add the following additional dot point:*
- Guarantee that work with higher levels of noise does not occur between 10pm and 7am.*
- g) *On page 35 of Reshaping Brunswick:*
- i. *Under the heading “What we ask of the Level Crossing Removal Project”, add Consult the council’s Disability Reference Group about public transport access during the construction phase, and access to the new stations as part of the design phase.*
 - ii. *Under the heading “What we ask of the Department of Transport and Planning”, add the dot points Provide a Disability Access Plan and advertise this via disability, seniors groups and State Government and Council media and Provision of free taxi vouchers for those with a disability who are impacted*
 - iii. *Under the heading “What we ask of Public Transport Victoria”, add a new dot point: Increase service levels of trams on Sydney Road, Lygon Street and Melville Road; East-West bus routes; and Upfield Train Replacement Buses both in evenings as well as daytime, to help accommodate increased passengers and mitigate the impact of traffic delays.*
- h) *On page 57 of Reshaping Brunswick add the additional dot points:*
- i. *Conduct a safety audit at crossing intersections for pedestrians and cyclists; and*
 - ii. *Carry out a Safety Audit at pedestrian and cyclist crossings a month after the removal of the boom gates to ensure that the crossings are safe.*
 - iii. *On page 58 of Reshaping Brunswick add the additional dot point: Increase the frequency of Upfield Services post completion of project, by duplication of Upfield line, not by shunting of trains near Coburg, and increasing the transport disadvantage and car reliance for northern Merri-bek residents.*

4. *Writes to and seeks meetings with the relevant state government Ministers to highlight Council's position and seek their response to the Council and community aspirations for the project set out in Reshaping Brunswick.*
5. *Endorse the Council commitments set out in Reshaping Brunswick, including the development of a new Urban Design Framework for Brunswick that takes account of the elevated rail, a localised Traffic Impact Assessment, and a partnership approach to the revitalisation of Sydney Road.*

Elevated Rail Through Brunswick - Council's Response to State Government Project - 7 December 2022

That Council:

1. *Notes the work to identify initial issues and opportunities (captured in Attachment 1) presented by the removal of 8 level crossings and the elevation of the rail line in Brunswick, as announced in September 2022 by the State Government.*
2. *Endorses the approach to community engagement outlined in this paper, to seek the views of the Merri-bek community in relation to this major project, including as stakeholders in the Community Engagement process Disability Advocacy Groups such as Disability Resources Disabled Motorist Australia, Pedestrian Groups Walk on Moreland, and Older Persons Advocacy groups.*
3. *Notes that the findings from this engagement will form the basis for a position paper outlining the community's vision and priorities for this project, both in its delivery phase, and in its outcomes, and that this position paper will form the basis for advocacy to the State Government throughout their delivery of the project*
4. *Notes the concerns and issues raised by community members at a public meeting held on Sunday 13 November 2022 at Brunswick Town Hall attended by 24 people, as outlined in the document circulated on 7 December 2022.*
5. *Notes the large community meeting held by Brunswick Residents Network on Monday 5 December 2022 attended by over 50 people, demonstrating the significant community interest in this project and the need for meaningful community consultation.*
6. *Acknowledges the growing community concern about the possibility of two new stations instead of three, and seeks information from the Level Crossing Removal Project to assist community understanding and inform Council's advocacy position.*
7. *Endorses the establishment of a Brunswick – Upfield Rail Corridor Roundtable co-chaired by Cr Panopoulos, Mayor and Cr Tapinos, and a Government MP to be convened as required to address specific thematic needs, with a flexible membership that brings together local community members and relevant experts at key points to explore issues as the development of the Upfield Corridor Community Vision progresses.*
8. *Requires that nominees seeking to participate in the Brunswick – Upfield Rail Corridor Roundtable must be able to demonstrate:*
 - a) *Strong community networks and linkages or willingness to build these connections;*
 - b) *An ability to represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of the community;*
 - c) *A willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and unbiased manner;*
 - d) *An ability to look beyond personal interests for the benefit of the community and residents of the City of Merri-bek;*
 - e) *A demonstrated commitment to participative and consultative processes; and*
 - f) *Endorsement by their own organisation (if applicable).*

Notice of Motion - Brunswick Level Crossings Removal Consultation Process –
9 November 2022

That Council:

1. *Advocates to the State Government that the Brunswick Level Crossing Removal project should proceed under the standard planning process with notification and review and a planning panel which enables members of the community to make submissions.*
2. *Notes it will receive a report in December 2022 responding to a Notice of Motion raised in October 2022 relating to the elevated rail project and the preparation of an Upfield Corridor Vision.*
3. *Receive a further report in early 2023 seeking to address the following issues:*
 - a) *How Merri-bek Council will liaise with relevant community organisations, the Level Crossing Removal Project and the Department of Transport to ensure effective and ongoing community engagement.*
 - b) *An outline of timelines, especially for the closure of the Upfield Shared Path and recommendations for alternative routes.*
 - c) *Implications for movement and safety on Sydney Road in the light of increased numbers of cyclists and an increased number of buses given that the Upfield Shared Path and the Upfield Train Line will be closed.*
 - d) *Plans for how people with mobility issues will access public transport during the closure of the Upfield Train Line.*
 - e) *In consideration of safe cycling options, If protected lanes are recommended, proposals around the management of deliveries to businesses and dwellings without rear lane access, and disability access.*
 - f) *Protection of heritage areas, open space, trees and community gardens.*
 - g) *Storage of Level Crossing Removal Project and Department of Transport equipment during the construction phase.*
 - h) *Noise attenuation and noise reduction during construction and the hours during which noisy construction is likely to occur.*
 - i) *Strategies to maintain reliable public transport service to commuters north of the proposed works, e.g. Will train service still connect between Coburg and Upfield Stations.*
4. *Organises and hosts a public meeting at Brunswick Town Hall, inviting the participation of LXR and Department of Transport, with the purpose and opportunity for presentation and information by LXR, Department of Transport and Council, and community questions and comments. A date for the meeting to be proposed in the February 2023 report if not held prior to this.*

Notice of Motion - Elevated Rail and the Upfield Corridor Vision – Brunswick –
12 October 2022

That Council:

1. *Welcomes the announcement of the elevation of the Upfield line in Brunswick removing 8 level crossings from Albion Street in Brunswick to Park Street in Parkville and write to the Premier Dan Andrews, the Minister for Transport Infrastructure, Jacinta Allan thanking them for the investment in Brunswick and offering to collaborate and work together with the LXR to realise the best possible community outcome from the removal of the crossings.*

2. *Receives a report about developing a Strategic Plan for the Upfield Corridor in consultation with the local community which includes the following:*
 - a) *An Upfield Corridor Community Vision for the land beneath the elevated rail including opportunities for more open space, cycling paths, tree plantings, urban sports infrastructure, public art, increased amenity, and more pedestrianised spaces. Identification of council and state-owned land within the corridor; and, in particular adjacent to the railway which could be incorporated into the community vision.*
 - b) *A Strategy to protect and interpret the railway's cultural and historical objects, materials and buildings of the Upfield line with a focus also on social history, identifying the people who worked on the railway line and finding interpretive methods to tell their story.*
 - c) *A Strategy to identify the future population needs, including but not limited to community facilities and public realm improvements with more activation, safety-measures, open-space and parklets; where possible, more pedestrianisation and beautification of walkways, laneways, and small streets; including an assessment and costing of streetscape improvements and further pedestrianisation and beautification works on (i) Breese Street and Anstey Precinct (ii) Saxon Street and (iii) Wilson Avenue, when construction works are completed.*
 - d) *A Strategy to increase street plantings and green open space in the corridor recognising the increased future population growth and high-density development requiring mitigating against the heat island affect –refers the importance of future planning in the corridor to the 'Open Space Review' and the review of 'A Park Close to Home'*
 - e) *Recommendation for the most effective forms of community engagement to:*
 - i. *help build Council's advocacy position in the early stages of the project*
 - ii. *identify a list of key stakeholders for early engagement*
 - iii. *consider the establishment of a Reference Group*
3. *Acknowledges that, while the elevation of the railway line Albion Street, Brunswick, to Park Street, Parkville, is welcome, urges the Victorian Government to take the opportunity to duplicate the Upfield Line beyond Gowrie Station, to enable the much needed increased services along the length of the line.*

1. Policy context

The project is a major infrastructure investment in the heart of Brunswick that will create new open spaces and community assets and transform the way people move around. This project intersects with numerous Council plans and policies.

2021-25 Council Plan

The relevant themes are:

- Moving and living safely
- Vibrant spaces and places
- An environmentally proactive Council.

Reshaping Brunswick

Council undertook extensive community consultation on the Brunswick level crossing in 2022 and 2023, to prepare for the original delivery timeframe. The summary report *Reshaping Brunswick* was the result of hundreds of conversations with the people of Brunswick in 2022 and 2023. The Brunswick community described a corridor of leafy, cool, green, biodiverse, usable spaces, precincts and paths that work for people of all ages, stages, backgrounds, abilities and interests. They also wanted the project to have a galvanising impact on broader revitalisation, to address longstanding local problems, and to create better connected, better managed and more equitable ways of moving around in the broader transport network.

Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework – Stage 1

Stage 1 of the Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework was endorsed by Council in July 2024 in response to the announcement of the project. It includes concept plans for reimagining streets that terminate at or run parallel to the rail corridor and that could be upgraded alongside the project. The concept plans demonstrate opportunities for increased tree planting to reduce the urban heat island effect, new open spaces for residents and visitors, and active transport connections to the future cycling and pedestrian paths beneath the elevated rail line.

Other relevant plans:

- Moving Around Merri-bek (2024)
- Merri-bek Open Space Strategy (2024)
- Urban Heat Island Effect (UHIE) Action Plan 2016-2025 and Cooling the Upfield Corridor 2018-2029
- Urban Forest Strategy 2017-2027
- Integrated Water Management Plan 2040

2. Background

In September 2022, the Victorian Government announced plans to elevate the Upfield Rail Line to remove eight level crossings between Park Street, Parkville, and Albion Street, Brunswick (the project). Initially, these level crossings were set for removal by 2027; however, in mid-2024, the timeline for removal was revised to 2030.

In October 2024, the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) released proposed station locations and commenced its first phase of community consultation; a report summarising this process is pending. A revised project timeline was also provided (subject to change):

- 2025-26 – Site investigations and planning
- 2027-28 – Release of early concept designs, LXRP-led community consultation, and further consultation on refined designs
- 2029 – Early works begin
- 2030 – Major construction, level crossings removed, and new stations open
- 2031 – Community spaces open

Council's role in this project is one of advocacy, working to maximise the long-term benefits for the community. While the project is funded, designed, and delivered by the State Government through the LXRP, Council represents community interests and provides feedback to the State. In April 2023, following an extensive community engagement process, Council adopted Reshaping Brunswick, its position paper on the project.

The municipality has already seen two successful level crossing removal projects, one in Coburg (between Bell Street and Moreland Road) and another in Glenroy. These projects have now been completed with new open spaces and community infrastructure handed over to Council for ongoing management.

3. Issues

Purpose of the MOU

The MOU is designed to foster a collaborative relationship between Council and LXRP, supporting regular meetings between officers and the sharing of information. This creates the most effective platform for Council officers to advocate for Council's advocacy outcomes, and to have input on design, technical and other advice in the best interests of the community.

Impact on advocacy outcomes

The MOU will not impact Council's ability to advocate for the community in relation to the project.

Reshaping Brunswick is Council's current advocacy position in relation to the Brunswick level crossing removal project. It welcomes the level crossing, and outlines approximately 120 requests, covering infrastructure and open space design, transport and access improvements, and managing construction impacts on residents, businesses, and movement throughout Brunswick. These requests are based on extensive community engagement and reflect the community's priorities and expectations. This work may be updated once the State government confirms the outcomes of its community engagement and the final location of stations.

Future maintenance of assets

The MOU provides a framework for Council and LXRP to collaborate on the management and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm improvements delivered by LXRP within the municipality.

A key function of the MOU is to facilitate the structured handover of assets to Council at project completion. With the necessary experience and workforce, Council is well-placed to maintain these assets to a high standard for the benefit of the community.

Without an MOU, responsibility for maintaining the area beneath the elevated rail would remain with the State Government and its leaseholder, Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM), with rail operations and safety as the main considerations.

Additionally, in the absence of an MOU, open space design may be driven by MTM's need to minimise maintenance requirements rather than maximising functionality and community benefit. This would significantly undermine Council's objectives for Reshaping Brunswick.

The MOU's collaborative approach has already proven successful in the Coburg and Glenroy level crossing removal projects, ensuring assets were handed over in good condition. This included replacing failed plantings, removing graffiti, topping up playground tan bark, refreshing line markings, and repairing cracked concrete, avoiding immediate maintenance costs to Council.

Confidentiality and limitations on public announcements

The existence of the MOU, its purpose of fostering collaboration and its framework for funding Council resources and handing over assets is public. The full MOU remains a confidential document. Neither the MOU nor any confidentiality requirements prevent Council or its delegated officers from advocating strongly for the outcomes the community wants from this project. Council is also free to comment on any information about the project once the LXRP releases the information into the public domain.

Overall, it is considered the benefits of signing the MOU and being able to influence the project outweigh potential limitations as a result of confidentiality requirements.

Human Rights consideration

The implications of this report have been considered in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, including the right to freedom of expression (Section 15), which encompasses the freedom to seek, receive and share information. The Charter allows for lawful limitations on rights where these are reasonable and proportionate. Potential confidentiality obligations arising from the MOU are considered appropriate, as they relate to information still under development and do not prevent future opportunities for public engagement once plans are more advanced and shared publicly by the LXRP.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Community consultation and engagement are not appropriate given the confidentiality requirements of the MOU.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and resources implications

If the MOU is executed, Council will need to dedicate some resources to support project delivery – to attend meetings, provide technical information, arrange Council permits, and so on. The MOU provides a mechanism for the LXRP to fund these resources, with the workload and funding to be determined when the project is ready to recommence.

As a result, the impact of the MOU should be cost- and budget-neutral for Council.

7. Implementation

Subject to Council's decision, Council officers will finalise the MOU in accordance with Attachment 1, to be executed by the CEO. The final signed MOU will be forwarded to the CEO of the LXRP for execution. Delegation is sought for the CEO to make and accept minor amendments that don't change the underlying intent of the MOU, in the event they are needed.

Action to implement the MOU would commence on the guidance of LXRP (if the project proceeds in 2028, this might begin in the 2026-27 financial year).

Attachment/s

1	LXRP and Merri-bek Draft Brunswick MOU	D25/403516
	<i>Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.</i>	
2	Draft letter to Merri-bek CEO on Brunswick MOU	D25/403518
	<i>Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.</i>	

7.7 MAIN STREET AND O'HEA STREET INTERSECTION RECENT CRASH HISTORY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade

City Design and Economy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the findings of the recorded crash review at the Main Street and O'Hea Street intersection, where there have been seven crashes recorded since July 2015, six of which involve a person walking or riding.
2. Endorses minor infrastructure upgrades to the intersection including road narrowing, and 'zebra' line-marking and associated signage, subject to approval from the Department of Transport and Planning.
3. Advocates to the relevant State Government agencies for improvements to the O'Hea Street level crossing for people riding bikes.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The intersection of Main Street and O'Hea Street in Coburg has been a source of road safety concern for over ten years, particularly for people walking and riding. The intersection is adjacent to the Upfield Line level crossing and has the O'Hea Street two-way bike path on its south side.

Concerns were raised about the intersection recently by community members through consultation on a proposed extension to the O'Hea Street bike path in April 2024. Following this consultation, Council resolved to receive a report investigating the recent crash history at the intersection and identifying opportunities for improvement.

An assessment of the available crash data from the site shows that Main Street has been a 'hot spot' for crashes along O'Hea Street, with seven crashes recorded at the intersection over the past ten years. Six out of seven of those crashes involved a person walking or riding.

Officers have considered a number of options to make improvements to the intersection, noting significant constraints in the proximity to the rail crossing, as well as the presence of a bus route on Main Street. Officers recommend improving line-marking and signage to give unambiguous priority to people walking at the site, which are the changes that Council can make to improve safety. Officers also recommend further advocacy to relevant State government stakeholders to make improvements to the level crossing to address core safety issues for people riding bikes.

Previous Council Decisions

O'Hea Street Bike Lane Extension – 12 June 2024

That Council:

...

4. *Receive a report on the number of crashes at the Main Street / O'Hea St intersection which recommends further steps to make this intersection safer for cyclists, skaters and pedestrians.*

...

1. Policy context

Moving Around Merri-bek Strategy (2024)

The Moving Around Merri-bek Strategy was adopted at the March 2024 Council Meeting. The Strategy seeks to ensure all actions impacting the council's transport network contribute to objectives aligned to the values of Safe, Accessible, Sustainable, Healthy, Liveable, and Inclusive. Investigating safety improvements to the O'Hea Street and Main Street intersection contributes to delivering on the following components of Moving Around Merri-bek (2024):

- Create streets where everyone feels safe.
- Reduce the frequency and severity of crashes on our roads.
- Create a transport system in Merri-bek that allows everyone to meet their daily needs and to fully participate in our community.
- Create streets and public spaces that encourage physical activity and socialisation amongst local communities.
- Improve access to shops, services and employment for our local community.
- Work to make our streets and public spaces are safe for all people and inclusive of all genders, backgrounds, and abilities.

Council Plan 2021-2025

The Council plan sets out Council's and community's vision for the future. Key objectives and strategies related to this report include:

Strategic Objective 2: To contribute to the health, safety, and security of everyone living in our diverse community and to increase safe, accessible, physically active and enjoyable ways to get around Merri bek, especially via walking, cycling and public transport:

- 2.1 Build safe, accessible and high-quality bike and pedestrian infrastructure to create links between areas of high pedestrian and cycling demand
- 2.2 Scope and implement suburb based active transport (bike and pedestrian) improvements (prioritising Fawkner, Gowanbrae, Hadfield, Oak Park, Pascoe Vale and Glenroy)
- 2.5 Facilitate substantially increased use of active transport in the community through targeted programs which include a focus on children, young people, families and older people
- 2.6 Collaborate with the community to improve pedestrian and cycling infrastructure on a case-by-case basis

2. Background

The intersection of Main Street and O'Hea Street in Coburg has been the focus of road safety concerns for a number of years. The intersection is a T-intersection, with O'Hea Street running east-west and Main Street intersecting to the south. It currently features a raised threshold across Main Street to manage vehicle speeds at the intersection, a rail level crossing to the east, a two-way off-road bike path on either side, and a footpath, shown in Figure 1 below. The intersection is also used by the Route 527 bus and provides road connection to the signalised intersection of Bell Street, Main Street, and Hudson Street. The bike path and footpath are generally well used, particularly by families and students commuting to Coburg North Primary School and Coburg High School.



Figure 1 Site context

The road safety concerns typically relate to conflicts between people walking and riding east-west on O’Hea Street and vehicles entering or exiting Main Street. Over the past ten years, there have been multiple efforts made to improve road user safety at the intersection. These include:

- Installing a raised threshold in 2019 to manage vehicle speeds and make it more comfortable for people crossing
- Removing the right-turn only lane from O’Hea Street at Main Street in 2019
- Installing a speed hump on the west approach on O’Hea Street in 2019
- Writing to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and VicTrack in 2020 and 2024 to request improvements be made to the level crossing to allow people on bikes to cross on the south side of the level crossing
- Writing to DTP in 2024 to request DTP to fully signalise the level crossing, providing safe north-south crossing points on both sides of the Upfield Line
- Requesting support and permission from DTP in 2024 to install ‘zebra’ line marking across the raised threshold to give people walking clear priority at the crossing
- Unsuccessfully advocating for O’Hea Street to be included in the Coburg Level Crossing Removal Project

Whilst there has been some reduction in the frequency of crashes occurring at the site since 2019, road safety concerns, particularly for people walking and riding at the intersection, persist.

An extension to the bike path from Sussex Street to Irvine Street is scheduled to be constructed this financial year, and this project is anticipated to increase the volumes of people walking and riding on the O’Hea Street paths. Through the community consultation process about the proposed extension in April 2024, safety concerns for people walking and riding along the existing O’Hea Street path at the Main Street intersection were raised again. As a result, Council resolved to receive a report on the crash history of the site and further recommendations to mitigate the safety issues.

Additionally, Council has received funding from the TAC for safety analysis of all 15 of the priority crossings along the existing O’Hea Street bike path. This project is just beginning, however the Main Street intersection has been excluded from the project, as it has unique challenges which are discussed below.

3. Issues

Crash history

An analysis of the recorded crash history along O’Hea Street between Sussex Street and Sydney Road for the past 10 years has been undertaken by officers. Figure 2 below shows a map of recorded crashes along the corridor between July 2015 and June 2023. Notably, the highest concentration of crashes is at the Main Street intersection, where a total of seven crashes have been recorded through DTP’s Road Crash Information System (RCIS). Of those seven crashes, six involved a person walking or riding. Only crashes where police or emergency services have attended, or been made aware of the crash, are included in this database, so the actual number of crashes in this location may be higher than what is shown. Officers are also aware that near misses occur at this location, as we regularly receive customer requests relating to this site.



Figure 2 Heat map of recorded crashes on O’Hea Street between July 2015 and June 2023. Source: DTP 2025.

Crash trends

Based on the above analysis, as well as reviewing police reports of the recorded crashes, some trends have been identified in the crashes at the Main Street and O’Hea Street intersection. Five out of the seven crashes recorded at the intersection were very similar in nature. In these instances, a person was riding eastbound on the bike path towards the railway line and collided with a north-bound vehicle while crossing over Main Street.

Unclear priority

This trend highlights a potential issue with the existing layout of the intersection, as there appears to be confusion and uncertainty about which road users have priority at the crossing.

The crossing is not a priority crossing, so northbound vehicles do not have to give way to people walking across the crossing. However, according to the Victorian Road Rules, all vehicles turning from O’Hea Street onto Main Street, heading southbound, must give way to all people walking across the crossing. As the westbound bike lane is in front of the ‘STOP’ line, northbound vehicles must give way to people riding westbound. But there is no eastbound bike lane provided on this side of the road, so northbound vehicles are not expected to give way to people riding eastbound. This is further confused, as the crossing is coloured yellow, which is generally used for shared path crossings, where people walking and riding have priority.

Constraints on making significant improvements to the crossing

A simple solution would be to convert the existing raised threshold into a shared priority crossing, giving people walking and riding priority to cross at all times. This would be consistent with the other 15 crossings along the O’Hea Street bike path. However, the main factor that has led to the inconsistent existing layout is the fact that this intersection is adjacent to the Upfield Line level crossing, and currently people riding bike eastbound are not able to cross the rail line on the south side of O’Hea Street.

Level crossing

In order for the crossing over Main Street to be made into a priority crossing, people riding bikes in both directions would need to be able to continue riding over the railway line. For people riding westbound, there is a currently a dedicated bike lane that is sufficient for this purpose. However, for people riding eastbound, they are expected to cross the road further west at Service Street where there is no protection or priority, and then ride along the north of O’Hea Street, before making a second, unprotected crossing back to the path on the east side of the rail line, as shown in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3 Designated paths of travel for people on bikes across the rail crossing

As this is an undesirable, indirect, and not particularly safe movement, many people riding bikes opt to continue eastbound on the bike path and ride the wrong way on the bike lane over the railway line or use the pedestrian level crossing. Below in Figure 4 is a screenshot from Google Maps, showing a person on a bike riding the wrong way on the bike path and bike lane. This is an indication that the current infrastructure arrangement is not meeting the needs of the people using the facility.



Figure 4 Person on bike riding the wrong way on the O'Hea Street bike path

It is understood that the reason for this indirect designated path for people on bikes may relate to VicTrack's design standards restricting the use of bikes on pedestrian level crossings. Council has previously sought to work with VicTrack (the land and rail infrastructure owner) and Metro Trains Melbourne (the rail authority) to develop a design solution that would allow eastbound riders to legally and safely cross the rail line on the south side of the street.

Officers will continue to advocate to state agencies to allow an at-grade bike crossing in this location, but acknowledge this may not be successful. Other advocacy considerations should include removal of the O'Hea Street level crossing at some point in the future.

Restricting vehicle movements at the intersection

Another potential solution to significantly reduce crash risk at the Main Street intersection would be to either fully or partially restrict vehicle movements in and out of Main Street at O'Hea Street. This would separate people walking from vehicle traffic and would remove any conflicts with vehicles for westbound people on bikes. However, the issues with eastbound people on bikes discussed above would remain.

This option is currently not possible, as the Route 527 bus uses Main Street. The 527 bus route is relatively indirect, and it may be that this route could be reviewed if the State government proceeds with a northern suburbs bus network reform.

Additionally, the traffic signals at the intersection of Main Street and Bell Street are a significant generator of traffic. Restricting traffic movements through the north of Main Street would have to be considered in the context of the signalised intersection at Bell Street and Main Street. Both of these options are likely to be longer term considerations.

Short term recommendations

Acknowledging the significant constraints, there are some smaller improvements that could be pursued in the short term. The proposed treatments are shown in Figure 5 below.



Figure 5 Proposed short term intersection improvements

It is recommended that Council continue to seek permission from DTP to install zebra line-marking and associated signage across the Main Street crossing. This would provide unambiguous priority for people walking across the intersection. It should be noted that this would not resolve the issues for people riding bikes eastbound, who would continue to not have priority to cross the intersection while riding. A road safety audit may also be required.

The crossing could be further improved by looking at opportunities to narrow the northbound lane of Main Street. This could either be done with line marking, kerb build outs, or potentially with in-road tree pits or low-level garden beds (subject to feature and level surveys, overland water flows, drainage infrastructure, and swept path analysis and any other consideration raised through detailed design). It is recommended that officers investigate this, and if suitable, deliver the works from Council's annual Road Safety program.

Long term recommendations

Officers recommend a number of longer-term advocacy solutions to fully resolve the issue. These are:

- Advocate to state government, VicTrack, and MTM to allow people on bikes to use the pedestrian level crossing at O'Hea Street
- Continue to advocate for full signalisation of the intersection, including the Upfield shared path crossing on the east side of the rail line
- Continue advocating for DTP to deliver bus reform in the area. If Route 527 is reformed and no longer uses Main Street, investigate a partial or full road closure at Main Street

Other options considered and not recommended

Officers also explored an additional option to improve safety of all road users in the area, without changing any of the existing designated paths of travel. Figure 6 below shows a design treatment that includes:

- Zebra line-marking on existing raised threshold for pedestrian priority at all times
- Maintaining westbound bike movements
- Installing new priority crossing west of Service Street for people riding eastbound to cross O’Hea Street



Figure 6 Alternate option (not recommended)

This option would improve safety for people walking at Main Street and would provide a safer and more desirable option for people riding eastbound to cross to the north of O’Hea Street. However, it is likely that people riding eastbound would still prefer to stay on the south side of O’Hea Street, as this would avoid crossing the road a second time east of the rail line.

It is also not guaranteed that the proposed priority crossing would be supported by DTP and Victrack given its proximity to the level crossing, as there may be potential for traffic to queue back into level crossing while waiting for people to make the crossing.

Officers also considered formalising the raised threshold on Main Street as a priority crossing for people riding and walking by making it a yellow priority crossing with give way line-marking and signs. This could be done cost-effectively using line-marking and signage to meet the standards, without addressing the issue of eastbound people on bikes crossing the rail line. This would give unambiguous priority to all people walking and riding at the intersection, regardless of direction.

However, this would result in a situation where people riding eastbound would arrive at the rail line with no legal place to ride further. While it is noted that this is already happening regularly, by formalising this, there is a risk to Council for facilitating potentially unsafe movements at the level crossing.

Given the issues with these two options, officers do not recommend pursuing either approach at this stage.

Community impact

The recommendations of this report are intended to contribute towards improving safety and liveability of the streets surrounding the Main Street and O’Hea Street intersection. Before any changes are made to the street, all impacted residents and businesses will be notified of the proposed changes, and have an opportunity to have any concerns heard.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

Transport emissions are the second largest source of emissions in Victoria and are set to become the largest source in the coming years.

Reducing transport emissions and the effects of climate change is a key focus of the transport strategy. Council aims to reduce transport emissions by providing infrastructure that enables people to use zero emission transport modes such as walking and cycling, by supporting our community to switch to electric vehicles, by advocating to the State Government for improvements to public transport infrastructure and services, and by supporting increased densities in activity centres and around transport hubs.

Improving important active transport connections, such as along the O’Hea Street bike path, will provide opportunities for more people to choose low and zero emission transport modes for their local trips and support community efforts to reduce their transport emissions.

Economic sustainability implications

Improving the safety of all road users at the O’Hea Street and Main Street intersection will make the site more attractive and accessible to more people. As such, it is expected that the improvements will positively impact the local businesses on O’Hea Street.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, and the assessment has found that the recommendation will not have any adverse impacts any persons human rights. Specifically, the right to freedom of movement (section 12) is expected to be improved for people, particularly those walking in the area.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Previous community consultation

In April 2024, we held community engagement on proposed extension of the O’Hea Street bike path between Sussex Street and Irvine Street. Through this round of consultation, we asked respondents about how they felt about the existing bike path on O’Hea Street. Approximately 15% of respondents specifically mentioned concerns related to the Main Street intersection, and 33% mentioned concerns about drivers not giving way at the side street crossings in general.

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person’s rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views. The recommendations of this report are not expected to directly affect any persons rights.

Communications

Before any proposed changes are made, residents and businesses nearby the works will be notified via letter of the upcoming works.

5. Officer declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and resources implications

The recommendation in this report includes minor capital works, predominantly comprised of line-marking and new signs. It is anticipated that this would cost up to \$20,000. Whilst this hasn't been specifically forecast for in the 2025-26 capital works program, it will be able to be delivered with the existing Transport – Road Safety budget designated to mitigate speeding and road safety issues.

Additionally, the officer time required to advocate to the relevant bodies for improvements will be covered with existing resources.

7. Implementation

Subject to Council's decision, officers will follow up with DTP to get in principle support for the zebra crossing line-marking and signs. If a road safety audit is required by DTP, officers will commission this, implement any recommendations of the audit, and deliver the works.

Officers will begin discussions again with DTP, VicTrack and MTM to better understand why the crossing can't be adapted to allow for people on bikes to use it and discuss potential outcomes.

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

7.8 COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEW

Director Business Transformation, Sue Vujcevic

Governance and Strategy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses the proposal to establish the following Advisory Committees and reference groups to support the delivery of its strategic directions and objectives, together with relevant Terms of References as provided in Attachment 1:
 - a) Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience Advisory Committee.
 - b) Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion Advisory Committee; supported by the following Reference Groups:
 - i) Gender Equality Reference Group
 - ii) LGBTIQ+ Reference Group (established as part of the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan)
 - iii) Disability Reference Group
 - iv) Older Persons Reference Group.
 - c) Liveability Advisory Committee; supported by a Strategic Transport Reference Group.
 - d) Merri-bek Arts Advisory Committee
 - e) First Peoples Advisory Committee.
2. Initiates a public engagement process to invite applications for membership for the newly established Council Advisory Committees.
3. Receives a report at its October 2025 Council meeting detailing the outcomes of the application process and appoint members and Councillors accordingly.

REPORT

Executive Summary

Council is committed to putting the community and its customers first.

The Community Engagement Policy was adopted by Council on the 9 December 2020, superseding Council's Community Engagement and Public Participation Policy 2018. It supports Council's integrated strategic planning and reporting framework required under the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and meets Council's legislative requirements for community engagement which is a key focus for local government.

Council's Advisory Committees are an important network of stakeholders who are regularly engaged to provide detailed feedback on Council's operations and decisions that may affect specific communities. Council's Advisory Committees play a key role in providing early advice to Council about significant strategies and policies that impact the community.

The outcome of the Advisory Committee Review seeks to establish five Advisory Committees, each aligned to a Strategic Direction in the Council Plan 2025–2029, to ensure:

- advice is aligned with Council's key priorities;
- governance is streamlined and efficient;
- engagement compliments the requirements of the Act; and
- committees reflect good governance and responsible resource management.

Previous Council Decisions

Review of Council's Advisory Committees – 11 August 2021

That Council:

1. *Note the findings of a recent review undertaken of Council's Advisory Committees.*
2. *Endorse the proposal to establish the following Advisory Committees by November 2021:*
 - a) *Sustainable Transport Advisory Committee*
 - b) *Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee*
 - c) *Human Rights and Inclusion Advisory Committee*
 - d) *Moreland Arts Advisory Committee*
3. *Endorse the proposal for Council officers to review Reference Groups and Working Groups with a view to refreshing or establishing these by December 2021.*
4. *Endorse that Council officers implement process improvements to enable better quality coordination of Advisory Committees.*

1. Policy Context

The Advisory Committee review enhances Council's commitment to integrated strategic planning and community engagement, as required under the Act.

The establishment of five Advisory Committees, each aligned to a Strategic Direction within the draft Council Plan 2025–2029, to ensure advice is aligned with Council's key priorities, directions and increases Council's strategic oversight.

2. Background

Council's current Advisory Committees and Reference Groups have played an important role in advising on key policies, emerging issues and investments. The current model was developed to align with the themes included in Council Plan 2021 – 2025, to effectively assist Council in achieving its planned objectives.

The existing Advisory Committees and Reference Groups structure consists of the following:

- Human Rights and Inclusion Advisory Committee
- Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee
- Merri-bek Arts Advisory Committee
- Sustainable Transport Advisory Committee
- First Nations Advisory Committee
- Gender Equality Reference Group
- LGBTIQ+ Reference Group
- Disability Reference Group
- Older Persons (Age Friendly) Reference Group
- Affordable Housing Reference Group
- Heritage and Local History Reference Group.

3. Issues

Council officers have undertaken a review of the current Advisory Committees and Reference Groups to assess their alignment with the draft Council Plan 2025–2029. The review identified a clear opportunity to streamline and strengthen the advisory framework to better reflect contemporary governance expectations and legislative requirements.

While existing structures have served their intended purpose, feedback and legislative reforms point to the need for a more focused and strategic model. The introduction of the *Local Government Act 2020* marked a significant shift in Council operations, particularly in how Councils engage with communities. Unlike the 1989 Act, the new Act mandates the adoption of a Community Engagement Policy, requiring Councils to engage on key statutory matters (such as the Council Plan, Financial Plan, Asset Plan and major policies). This ensures engagement is now carried out through structured, fit-for-purpose mechanisms.

Notwithstanding the above, Council's Engagement Policy provides that Advisory Committees play a key role in providing early advice to Council about significant strategies and policies that impact the community.

Council seeks to align its advisory structure with the five strategic directions of the draft Council Plan, ensuring that community and expert input remains high quality, targeted and strategically integrated.

It is recommended Council establish five Advisory Committees, each aligned to a Strategic Direction in the Council Plan 2025–2029, to ensure advice is aligned with Council's key priorities; governance is streamlined and efficient; engagement complements the requirements of the Act; and committees reflect good governance and responsible resource management.

The revised Committees will provide community-informed and expert advice on each strategic direction; operate under clearly defined Terms of Reference aligned to Council's objectives; avoid duplication of statutory engagement under the Community Engagement Policy; and enable broad representation through purpose-driven engagement.

This structure supports more targeted and integrated decision-making, reduces administrative burden, and increases Council's strategic oversight.

Proposed Structure:

a) Strategic Alignment and Integration

Each Committee will focus on one of the five strategic directions, ensuring coordinated advice that supports cross-disciplinary approaches.

Committees will help inform initiatives that span multiple policy areas and objectives.

b) Efficient and Effective Governance

Limiting to five Committees avoids fragmentation and supports deeper, more meaningful engagement.

Reduces duplication and administrative costs while enhancing impact.

Committees will draw on sector expertise, community insights and stakeholder input to advise, monitor progress, and support implementation of key Council initiatives.

Based on the draft Council Plan 2025–2029, it is recommended Council establish the following five Advisory Committees to support delivery of its strategic directions and objectives:

1. Theme: Care for Nature and Climate Resilience

Proposed Committee: Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience Advisory Committee

Focus: Advise on biodiversity, greening, water management, climate adaptation, emissions reduction and circular economy initiatives. This committee may include local environmental groups, climate experts and community representatives to ensure strong community engagement and technical input into Council's environmental strategies.

Replaces existing committees, reference and working groups:

- Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee

2. Theme: Healthy and Inclusive Communities

Proposed Committee: Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion Advisory Committee

Focus: Guide actions on public health, mental wellbeing, active living, social connection, accessibility and equity. Membership may include health professionals, community service providers, representatives from diverse cultural and demographic groups, and people with lived experience of disability or disadvantage.

Replaces existing committees, reference and working groups:

- Human Rights and Inclusion Advisory Committee

It is further recommended that Council retain the following existing reference groups to deliver priorities under this theme:

- Gender Equality Reference Group
- LGBTIQ+ Reference Group
- Disability Reference Group
- Older Persons Reference Group

Retaining these reference groups is highly valuable, as they ensure Council's decisions, services and initiatives are shaped by the real-life experiences of those they impact most.

Their insights help Council respond to current and emerging community needs, amplify underrepresented voices, and promote inclusion and fairness across all areas of work. This lived experience is not only vital for meaningful engagement but is also recognised as best practice in inclusive local government across Victoria.

3. Theme: Beautiful and Liveable City

Proposed Committee: Liveability Advisory Committee

Focus: Provide advice on urban planning, affordable and social housing, public realm improvements, transport accessibility and placemaking. This committee may bring together architects, urban planners, housing advocates and residents to ensure projects enhance liveability and inclusivity.

Replaces existing committees, reference and working groups:

- Sustainable Transport Advisory Committee
- Affordable Housing Reference Group
- Heritage and Local History Reference Group

However, it is recommended to retain and transition the Sustainable Transport Advisory Committee into the Strategic Transport Reference Group and place it under the new Liveability Advisory Committee.

By doing so, the transport reference group can focus more closely on providing specialised community insights and lived experience relating to transport needs, while benefiting from strategic alignment with related areas such as land use, sustainability, accessibility and public space planning. This transition promotes more coordinated, holistic advice that reflects how transport interacts with other key urban factors, enhancing Council's ability to plan effectively and inclusively.

In addition, as a reference group rather than a standalone committee, the transport group can be more agile and engaged in continuous dialogue with both the strategic oversight committee and the community, ensuring that lived experience and diverse perspectives remain central to transport-related policy and project development within the broader urban planning context.

4. Theme: Thriving Economy and Culture

Retain existing Committee: Merri-bek Arts Advisory Committee

Merri-bek Arts Advisory Committee to continue focussing on Merri-bek's role as a vibrant creative and cultural destination within Melbourne, enhancing local community cohesion and inclusion. The Committee advises Council on annual arts and creative industry priorities, fosters community engagement and participation through diverse networks, and provides recommendations on acquisitions for the Merri-bek's Art Collection. It also serves as a vital channel for reflecting the community's artistic interests and perspectives to Council and its staff.

5. Theme: Engaging and Responsible Council

An overarching Advisory Committee is not recommended due to legislative responsibilities and expert guidance available through Audit and Risk Committee as well as established policies and best practice guidelines.

However, it is recommended to retain the existing committee:

- First People Advisory Committee

Council continues to retain the ability to establish short-term working groups or reference groups under each committee as needed for specific projects, without diluting the strategic focus of its Advisory Committee structure.

Working groups and reference groups for specific projects, can also serve as an opportunity to ensure proper and/or targeted representation and advice is available (as required) on specific topics and projects.

Administrative improvements have been identified, particularly regarding quorum requirements, the ability to convene meetings if the Councillor Chair is unavailable and setting a maximum tenure for membership. In particular, the Co-Chair model within the First Nations Advisory Committee has proven effective and is recommended for continuation.

These considerations will be incorporated into new Terms of Reference, which will be finalised in consultation with convenors. These changes are intended to enhance the effectiveness, flexibility, and clarity of our advisory structures moving forward.

Community impact

The outcomes of the Advisory Committee Review will enable a more focused contribution from the various Committees and improved engagement between council and the community.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

The Advisory Committee Review will enable the Committees to contribute and support Council's climate emergency and environmental sustainability directions.

Economic sustainability implications

The Advisory Committee Review will enable the Committees to contribute and support Council's economic sustainability directions.

Legal and risk considerations

The Advisory Committee Review is in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and particularly Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

Advisory Committees, the community and those affected by decisions and actions will continue to have the opportunity to contribute to decision making and participate in the process.

4. Community consultation and engagement

The *Local Government Act 2020* empowers Councils with the authority to establish committees as needed to support their governance functions. As the intention of this review is to ensure that Council Advisory Committees are strategically aligned with the Council Plan - which has already undergone extensive community consultation - additional community consultation is not considered necessary for this process.

Affected persons rights and interests

There are no adverse impacts on the rights and interests of affected persons in relation to this report.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The outcomes of this review have no financial or resources implications as they are contained within the existing budget allocations.

7. Implementation

Pending Council endorsement of the Advisory Committee structure and Terms of Reference, officers will commence the recruitment process for external members to the Advisory Committees which will then be presented to Council in October 2025 for endorsement and confirmation of appointments.

Attachment/s

- 1 [!\[\]\(693fcb3caaca16f960792dd4ef78f66d_img.jpg\)](#) Proposed Terms of Reference - Advisory Committees 2025 D25/402523



Terms of Reference for Advisory Committees and Reference Groups

1. Classification	This Terms of Reference applies to all Advisory Committees and Reference Groups established by Council.
2. Delegation	Advisory Committees and Reference Groups have no formal delegation. Their role is to provide advice to: (a) the Council; or (b) a Delegated Committee; or (c) a member of Council staff who has been delegated a power, duty or function of the Council.
3. Accountability	The Advisory Committees are accountable to Merri-bek City Council. Reference Groups are accountable to their Convenor. This is the Council officer responsible for coordinating each Reference Group.
4. Term	The Advisory Committees and Reference Groups are established by Council resolution dated 13 August 2025 and will sunset on 30 June following a General Election.
5. Role and Responsibilities	The specific role and responsibilities of each Advisory Committee and Reference Group are detailed in Attachments A and B.
6. Council Membership and Chairperson	Advisory Committees established by Council will be chaired by a Councillor as appointed in accordance with Council Governance Rules. If the Councillor is an apology and unavailable to attend a meeting, they may nominate an Acting Chairperson from the Committee (that is not a member of Council staff), for that meeting only. The Chairperson is a standing Member of the Committee. Reference Groups may be chaired by a Councillor or alternatively they can be chaired by a Council officer or a community member.
7. Community Membership	In accordance with the Council resolution, the Members appointed to each Advisory Committee and Reference Group are detailed in Attachment A.

	A community member may not serve more than two consecutive Council terms on an advisory committee. or a reference group. Extraordinary appointments of members due to vacancies are made via a recommendation contained in the Governance Report, if there is a waiting list of eligible candidates from the initial expression of interest process or following the calling of a new round of expressions of interest, where no waiting list applies. Guests may be invited to observe meetings or to make a presentation to meetings in accordance with the Terms of Reference.
8. Role of Staff Member(s)	Council officers will provide a support role to each Advisory Committee and Reference Group. Council officers may participate in meetings but must not actively influence the discussions and recommendations of the Committee. or Group. Council administration will appoint appropriately skilled Council officers to provide secretariat support, including minute-taking and other administrative functions, to each Advisory Committee and Reference Group. This may also include: (a) Preparation of an agenda for each meeting in liaison with the Chair; (b) Preparation and distribution of all papers required for each meeting; and (c) Notification to all other external parties or invitees who are required to attend any meeting for specific agenda items. The officer support function provided by Council's administration for each Advisory Committee and Reference Group is detailed in Attachments A and B.
9. Meeting Frequency	Times and dates of meetings for the Advisory Committee and Reference Group shall be determined at the discretion of the Chairperson and/or Convenor, after seeking the views of all other Members of the Committee or Group. Unless otherwise determined by the Chairperson, Advisory Committees and Reference Groups will generally meet on a quarterly cycle. Less or additional meetings may occur subject to approval of the Chairperson.
10. Notice and attendance of Meetings	Agendas, meeting minutes and any reports will be circulated ten (10) days prior to the meeting, wherever possible, in a suitable format. The meeting Agenda shall be determined by the relevant officer in consultation with the Chairperson.

	Members may request items to be included on the agenda by advising the relevant officer at least fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled meeting. Inclusion of the items on the proposed agenda shall be at the discretion of the Chairperson, based upon their judgement as to whether the item is consistent with the specific scope and core responsibilities of the Committee or Group. An Advisory Committee or Reference Group Member shall endeavour to advise the relevant Officer of non-attendance at any meeting. Any Member of an Advisory Committee or Reference Group unable to attend three (3) consecutive meetings shall notify the Chairperson in writing as to their availability to continue as a member. Where this provision has not been met, the Chairperson will deem the member resigned from the Advisory Committee or Reference Group. Meetings may be conducted via electronic means such as Teams or in a combination of in person attendance and via electronic means (known as a hybrid meeting), with the consent of the Chairperson. In the event that an Advisory Committee is required to make an urgent recommendation to Council on a matter, and it is not practical to convene a meeting, the committee may seek member endorsement of a matter via the conduct of an online poll of all members. Responses must be received from more than 50% of the current membership, to consider the committee's position on endorsing a matter.
11.Quorum	(a) A quorum is the majority (more than half) of the current Members of an Advisory Committee or Reference Group which must include either the Chairperson or Acting Chairperson. (b) If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the time appointed for the commencement of the meeting, the meeting shall lapse. If a quorum fails after the commencement of the meeting, the meeting shall be rescheduled. (c) If a meeting has not commenced, those members remaining present may hold general discussions, but cannot consider the agenda items of the rescheduled meeting within 14 days. (d) A committee member attending a meeting via electronic means is considered part of the Quorum. (e) Business that is unfinished at the completion of a meeting may, at the discretion of the Chairperson, be referred to the next meeting. (f) A quorum for a reference group is a minimum of 4 members which must include either the Chairperson or Acting Chairperson.

12.Code of Conduct	All Members of an Advisory Committee and Reference Groups are expected to comply with the following expectations in order to ensure safe, respectful and effective conduct of meetings: (a) Prepare for each meeting and be active participants. (b) Regularly contribute to discussions during meetings, provide advice and opinions on topics of discussion and respond to Council requests for input or feedback. (c) Treat others with respect, dignity and courtesy always. Harassment, intimidation, abuse or any behaviour deemed offensive or hurtful will not be tolerated. Any Member displaying these behaviours will be asked to stop immediately. Should this continue, the person can be asked to leave the meeting. Council, at its discretion, will take appropriate action in the event of gross misconduct by an Advisory Committee or Reference Group Member. (d) In the first instance of conflict between Members, any complaint should be brought to the Chairperson, who can bring the parties together to seek a resolution. Where the dispute involves the Chairperson, the issues will be brought to the Council primary contact officer. Mediation through an agreed mediator can be arranged with the consent of all parties.
13.General Conflicts of Interest (COI)	A well-established system for identifying, disclosing and managing a conflict of interest (COI) increases Merri-bek City Council's public accountability and reduces the risk of corruption, misconduct and bias in Council's operations and decision-making processes. All Members will approach the declaration of conflicts of interests with the following principles: (a) <u>Obligations and good practice</u>: Council, and Advisory Committees and Reference Groups of Council, must comply with statutory obligations under relevant legislation in a manner which is supported by good governance practice. (b) <u>Public interest</u>: COIs must be avoided wherever possible. Where a conflict exists, it must be declared and managed in the public interest. (c) <u>Real, potential or perceived</u>: COIs exist whether the conflict is real, potential, or perceived. (d) <u>Transparent and accountable</u>: The process for declaring and managing COIs is transparent, accountable and consistent with the Victorian Directors' Code of Conduct.

	(e) <u>Culture of integrity</u> : Council and Advisory Committees and Reference Groups of Council must foster and lead a culture of integrity. Members are supported to raise their own COIs and to speak up if they believe another Member may have an undeclared conflict.
14. Specific Conflict of Interest	(a) The Chairperson is responsible to manage all declared conflicts of interest at each meeting. Conflicts of interest may be raised at the commencement of the meeting in response to an Agenda item, where this cannot be anticipated, upon the conflict of interest being realised/presented. (b) All Members have a duty to place the public interests above their private interests when carrying out their official duties, role and functions or in representing the Merri-bek City Council. (c) All Members are individually and collectively responsible to consider their personal interests in the context of Agenda items and discussions at each meeting. (d) At the time indicated on the Agenda, Members with a conflict of interest must declare their real, potential or perceived conflict of interest and the matter in which the conflict arises. (e) At the time for discussion of that item, those Members with a conflict of interest must excuse themselves from the meeting for the duration of the discussion and must abstain from communicating on that matter with any Members of the meeting thereafter. (f) Where there is no Agenda or where the matter raising the conflict could not be anticipated, Members with the conflict of interest must declare a real, potential or perceived conflict of interest as soon the matter arises, in an effective manner. (g) Where a Member has excused themselves from the meeting as a result of a real, potential or perceived conflict of interest, they must not participate in the discussion of that matter which has come before the Advisory Committee or Reference Group for deliberation, decision, or where a decision will be made by a Member of staff acting under delegation. (h) Any and all declared conflicts of interest will be recorded in the Minutes of the Meeting by the meeting secretariat. (i) Where there are no Minutes kept of the meeting, the declared conflict of interest will be recorded in a Meeting record and provided to the Governance team to be registered and managed accordingly.

	(j) The meeting Minutes or record will also reflect the duration of the discussion and whether the Member excused themselves from the Meeting.
15. Confidentiality	(a) Advisory Committee and Reference Group Members must not release information that the Member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .
16. Member Support	(a) Members will be provided with the resources, facilities and support reasonably required for them to be effective in their role. (b) Members will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses that are bona fide expenses, have been reasonably incurred in the performance of their role and are reasonably necessary for the Member to perform this role.
17. Reporting Requirements	(a) Meeting minute records and reports of Advisory Committees (only) will be presented to Council for noting and inclusion on the public record. (b) Written reports of Advisory Committees must include any disclosures of conflicts of interest and record whether the person who disclosed a conflict of interest was excused from the Meeting for the relevant discussion. (c) There are no such formal reporting requirements for Reference Groups although reporting to Council and the public may occur on an as needs basis.
18. Transparency Requirements	In order to maintain transparency of Advisory Committee operations, the following information will be published on Council's website in respect of each Advisory Committee: (a) The Terms of Reference (b) The names of all Members (c) Reports of Committee activities (in Agenda/Minutes of Council Meetings) There are no such transparency requirements for Reference Groups although relevant information may be published on Council's website on an as needs basis.
19. Compliance	All Members of the Advisory Committees and Reference Groups must comply with the requirements of Council's Governance Rules and Framework for Advisory Committees and Reference Groups.

20.Review	These Terms of Reference for Advisory Committees and Reference Groups will be reviewed every 4 years, at the beginning of each new Council term, or as otherwise directed by Council.

Attachment A. Details of each Advisory Committee

Name	Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience Advisory Committee
Role and responsibilities	The role of the Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience Advisory Committee is to share information and collaborate to enhance the collective impact of Council and community-led actions for a flourishing and climate resilient Merri-bek by improving wildlife and nature connectivity, greening and cooling for healthier streets and public realm and engaging in meaningful climate action. The Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience Advisory Committee is also responsible for: • providing a forum for information sharing, networking, and collaboration between Council and community groups engaged in fostering local responses to the climate and ecological crisis • advise on biodiversity, greening, water management, climate adaptation, emissions reduction and circular economy initiatives • assisting Council, community groups, and individuals to successfully engage and empower the local community, organisations, and businesses • assisting in collecting information to measure (and share) collective impact • supporting continuous learning and improvement • bringing up issues of community concern that Council should know about or take a role in addressing.
Membership	This Advisory Committee is made up of: • 1 Councillor, who is the Chairperson • 10 community Members • 1 representative invited from each of the following organisations:, CERES, Climate Action Merri-bek (CAM), and Neighbours United for Climate Action (NUCA)
Current Members	The current Members are: • Cr xxx (Chairperson) • Community Members: • Organisational representatives: ➢ CERES ➢ Climate Action Merri-bek (CAM) ➢ Neighbours United for Climate Action (NUCA)

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Draft May 2025

Council Officer Support	Council officer support is provided by: • Zero Carbon Campaigns Lead – Primary contact for Members and Agenda preparation / Minute Taker

Name	First Peoples Advisory Committee
Role and responsibilities	The role of the First Peoples Advisory Committee is to provide input and advise on the implementation of the <i>Statement of Commitment to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities in the City of Merri-bek</i> and associated commitments to First Peoples. The Committee plays a key role in advancing self-determination – the rights of First Peoples to make decisions about their lives, communities, and futures — and in strengthening respectful relationships between Council and First Peoples. The Committee is responsible for: • advising on Council policies, strategies, and plans that affect First Peoples • identifying issues, barriers, and opportunities impacting First Peoples in Merri-bek • promoting visibility, cultural integrity, equity, and inclusion of First Peoples • supporting advocacy, partnerships, and projects that reflect First Peoples' priorities • collaborating with other Advisory Committees and stakeholders to ensure First Peoples' voices are central to decision-making
Membership	This Advisory Committee is made up of: • 1 Councillor, who is the Co-Chairperson • 8 First Peoples Community Members, one of whom will Co-Chair • 1 representative from 3 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (proposed organisations Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage, Aboriginal Corporation; Aboriginal Community Elders Service. Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and Ballerit Mooroop Corporation) Note: First Peoples Advisory Committee members will be paid \$100 per meeting to recognise the multiple responsibilities First Nations people have to their cultural obligations both through their work roles and wider community responsibilities. It also acknowledges and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members' cultural knowledge, advice and guidance.

	The Community Co-Chair will receive a higher sitting fee to reflect the increased responsibilities and standing of this role
Current Members	The current Members are: • Cr xxx • Community Members: Organisational representatives: <i>to be confirmed</i>
Council Officer Support	Council officer support is provided by: • Unit Manager Community Development and Social Policy – Primary contact for Members • Social Policy Officer – Agenda preparation / Minute Taker

Name	Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion Advisory Committee
Role and responsibilities	The role of the Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion Advisory Committee is to provide input and advice to Council to be an inclusive organisation, support accessible facilities, inclusive services and promotes community wellbeing, and connection for all ages, abilities, genders, and cultures. This work is guided by the Human Rights Policy and associated action plans. The Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion Advisory Committee will provide information, and advice on the following: • strategies, programs, and initiatives which increase access, inclusion, and participation of people from priority groups in the community • providing a structure through which the views and interests of the Merri-bek community can be articulated for the attention of Council and its staff on human rights and inclusion matters • considering and endorsing recommendations from relevant reference groups to put forward for Council endorsement • drawing on and sharing the expertise of specialists, as appropriate. The Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion Advisory Committee will take advice and recommendations from the following reference groups: • Gender Equality Reference Group • LGBTIQ+ Reference Group • Disability Reference Group • Older Persons Reference Group
Membership	This Advisory Committee is made up of: • 1 Councillor, Co-Chairperson with a Community Member • 12 Community Members • 2 representatives from the First Peoples Advisory Committee • 1 representative from up to 3 not for profit/community organisations working to prioritise access, inclusion and equity each of the following organisations: to be confirmed

Current Members	The current Members are: • Cr xxx (Chairperson) Community Members: First Peoples Advisory Committee representatives: to be confirmed Organisational representatives: not-for-profit/community organisations with a focus on equity, access and inclusion: to be confirmed
Council Officer Support	Council officer support is provided by: • Manager Community Wellbeing and Coordinator Community Development and Inclusion – Primary contact for Members • Coordinator Community Development and Inclusion – Agenda preparation / Minute Taker

Name	Merri-bek Arts Advisory Committee
Role and responsibilities	The role of the Merri-bek Arts Advisory Committee is as the principal consultative body advising and assisting Council to make a lively and inclusive Merri-bek where the economy supports local business and industry growth, celebrates artistic and creative expression, and connects the community through vibrant cultural experiences. . The Merri-bek Arts Advisory Committee is also responsible for: • developing and advising Council on annual priorities relating to the arts and creative industries • encouraging community involvement through networks and promotes participation in the arts across Merri-bek • making recommendations to Council regarding acquisitions for the Merri-bek Art Collection • providing a structure through which the views and interests of the Merri-bek community can be articulated for the attention of Council and its staff • contributing to the development and future review of Council's Arts and Culture Strategy and subsequent policies and plans • acting as a representative of the Merri-bek Arts Advisory Committee on grant assessment and programming panels
Membership	This Advisory Committee is made up of: • 1 Councillor, who is the Chairperson • 10 community Members • 1 representative from Next Wave
Current Members	The current Members are: • Cr (Co-Chairperson) Community Members: Brunswick Mechanics Institute management representative:
Council Officer Support	Council officer support is provided by: • Unit Manager Arts and Culture – Primary contact for members, Agenda preparation / Minute Taker

Name	Liveability Advisory Committee
Role and responsibilities	The role of the Liveability Advisory Committee is to develop, promote, and advise Council on urban planning, affordable and social housing, urban design improvements and placemaking and the Transport Strategy. The Liveability Advisory Committee is also responsible for: • advising Council on priorities, processes, and programs • facilitating partnerships and developing opportunities among Council, the community and transport agencies, providers, and operators • identifying key strategic transport, land use, affordable and social housing, urban design improvements and placemaking opportunities • providing a consultative forum and link to a wider network of community transport and urban planning organisations • promoting community support for the implementation of projects and programs • generating discussion on and evaluating transport policies and initiatives as they impact upon urban planning, affordable and social housing, urban design improvements and placemaking and the Transport Strategy. The Liveability Advisory Committee will be supported by, and will also convene the following working group: • Strategic Transport Reference Group
Membership	This Advisory Committee is made up of: • 1 Councillor, who is the Chairperson • 12 community Members
Current Members	The current Members are: • Cr xxx (Chairperson) Community Members: • Organisational representatives: <i>to be confirmed</i>
Council Officer Support	Council officer support is provided by: • Manager City Design and Economy – Primary contact for Members

	• Administration and Project Support Officer – Agenda preparation / Minute Taker

Attachment B. Details of each Reference Group

Name	Disability Reference Group
Role and responsibilities	The role of the Disability Reference Group is to collaboratively advise council of current and emerging needs of people with disability in the community: The Disability Reference Group is also responsible for: - contributing to development, and implementation of relevant Council policies, strategies, and plans. For example, the Disability Action and Inclusion Plan - assisting council to ensure the perspectives and lived experiences of people with disability are considered in Council services, programs and projects - promoting knowledge, visibility, equality and inclusion of people with disability in the community - assisting to identify opportunities for advocacy, projects and partnerships that reflect the needs of people with disability in the community - informing, consulting and collaborating with relevant Advisory Committees on issues relating to people with disability - participating in event planning, consultation processes, and other forms of engagement relating to relevant issues.
Membership	This Reference Group is made up of: - Councillor/s where nominated to Chair 9 community Members
Current Members	The current Members are: - Councillor/s: <i>subject to Council resolution</i> - Community Members: <i>subject to Council resolution</i>
Council Officer Support	Council officer support is provided by: Disability Planner – Primary contact for Members and Agenda preparation / Minute Taker

Name	Gender Equality Reference Group
Role and responsibilities	The role of the Gender Equality Reference Group is to collaboratively advise Council of current and emerging gender equality issues in the community. The Gender Equality Reference Group is also responsible for: • contributing to development, and implementation of relevant Council policies, strategies, and plans. For example, the Gender Equality Community Action Plan • assisting council to ensure the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of gender are considered in Council services, programs and projects • promoting knowledge, visibility, equality and inclusion of all genders in the community • assisting to identify opportunities for advocacy, projects and partnerships for gender equality in the community • informing, consulting and collaborating with relevant Advisory Committees on issues relating to gender equality • participating in event planning, consultation processes, and other forms of engagement relating to relevant issues.
Membership	This Reference Group is made up of: • Councillor/s where nominated to Chair • 9 community Members, one of whom will Chair
Current Members	The current Members are: • Councillor/s: <i>subject to Council resolution</i> • Community Members: <i>subject to Council resolution</i>
Council Officer Support	Council officer support is provided by: • Social Policy Officer-Human Rights and Wellbeing – Primary contact for Members and Agenda preparation / Minute Taker

Name	LGBTIQA+ Reference Group
Role and responsibilities	The role of the LGBTIQA+ Reference Group is to collaboratively advise council of current and emerging needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer and Asexual and Aromantic communities. The LGBTIQA+ Reference Group is also responsible for: • contributing to development, and implementation of relevant Council policies, strategies, and plans. For example, the LGBTIQA+ Action Plan • assisting council to ensure the perspectives and lived experiences of LGBTIQA+ community Members are considered in Council services, programs and projects • promoting knowledge, visibility, equality and inclusion of LGBTIQA+ communities • assisting to identify opportunities for advocacy, projects and partnerships that reflect the needs of LGBTIQA+ communities • informing, consulting and collaborating with relevant Advisory Committees on issues relating to LGBTIQA+ communities • participating in event planning, consultation processes, and other forms of engagement relating to relevant issues.
Membership	This Reference Group is made up of: • Councillor/s where nominated to Chair • Community Members (number to be confirmed)
Current Members	The current Members are: • Councillor/s: subject to Council resolution • Community Members: subject to Council resolution
Council Officer Support	Council officer support is provided by: • Social Policy and Projects Officer – Primary contact for Members and Agenda preparation / Minute Taker

Name	Older Persons Reference Group
Role and responsibilities	The role of the Older Persons Reference Group is to collaboratively advise council of current and emerging needs of older people in the community: The Older Persons Reference Group is also responsible for: • contributing to development, and implementation of relevant Council policies, strategies, and plans. For example, the Living and Ageing Well Framework • assisting council to ensure the perspectives and lived experiences of older people are considered in Council services, programs and projects • promoting knowledge, visibility, equality and inclusion of older people in the community • assisting to identify opportunities for advocacy, projects and partnerships that reflect the needs of older people in the community • informing, consulting and collaborating with relevant Advisory Committees on issues relating to older people • participating in event planning, consultation processes, and other forms of engagement relating to relevant issues.
Membership	This Reference Group is made up of: • Councillor/s where nominated to Chair • 10 community Members
Current Members	The current Members are: • Councillor/s: <i>subject to Council resolution</i> • Community Members: <i>subject to Council resolution</i>
Council Officer Support	Council officer support is provided by: • Living and Ageing Well Lead – Primary contact for Members and Agenda preparation / Minute Taker

Name	Strategic Transport Reference Group
Role and responsibilities	The role of the Sustainable Transport Reference Group is to develop, promote, and assist Council to develop and implement a new Transport Strategy. The Sustainable Transport Advisory Committee is also responsible for: • advising Council on priorities, processes, and programs • facilitating partnerships and developing opportunities among Council, the community and transport agencies, providers, and operators • identifying key strategic transport and land use opportunities • providing a consultative forum and link to a wider network of community transport organisations • promoting community support for the implementation of projects and programs • generating discussion on and evaluating transport policies and initiatives as they impact upon the Transport Strategy and its implementation.
Membership	This Advisory Committee is made up of: • 1 Councillor, where nominated to Chair • 12 community Members • 1 representative invited from each of the following organisations: Bicycle Network, Victoria Walks, Public Transport Users Association, Merri-bek Bicycle Users Group and Walk-on Merri-bek.
Current Members	The reference group is made up of: • Councillor/s subject to Council resolution • Community Members: <i>subject to Council resolution</i> • Organisational representatives: <i>to be confirmed</i>
Council Officer Support	Council officer support is provided by: • Unit Manager Transport Planning – Primary contact for Members • Strategic Transport Lead – Agenda preparation / Minute Taker

7.9 DRAFT ASSET PLAN FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow

Capital Works Planning and Delivery

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Asset Plan 2025-2035, provided as Attachment 1 to this report, for the purpose of community exhibition.
2. Invites feedback on the draft Asset Plan 2025-2035 for the public exhibition period, from 15 August 2025 until 12 September 2025.
3. Makes the draft Asset Plan 2025-2035 available on the Council website and hard copies available at the three civic centres and all libraries.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires Council to develop, adopt and maintain a 10-year Asset Plan for maintenance, acquisition, disposal and management of Council-managed assets. A review of the Asset Plan must be completed by 31 October in the year following a General Council election.

Council's \$1.9 billion portfolio of assets has been built up progressively over many decades. Assets such as roads and drainage provide the building blocks of our way of life, while others add to the quality of life by facilitating recreation, arts, culture, health and educational activities. Our assets are also integral to us achieving our zero carbon, water management and social inclusion goals, and support local business and economic development.

The Act requires the Asset Plan to be developed and reviewed through deliberative engagement process in accordance with Council's engagement policy. The draft Asset Plan has been developed in line with Council's deliberative engagement practices and have drawn from the engagement outputs from the deliberative panel formed as a part of the Council Plan and Community Vision review.

Previous Council Decisions

There have been no previous Council decisions on the draft Asset Plan.

1. Policy Context

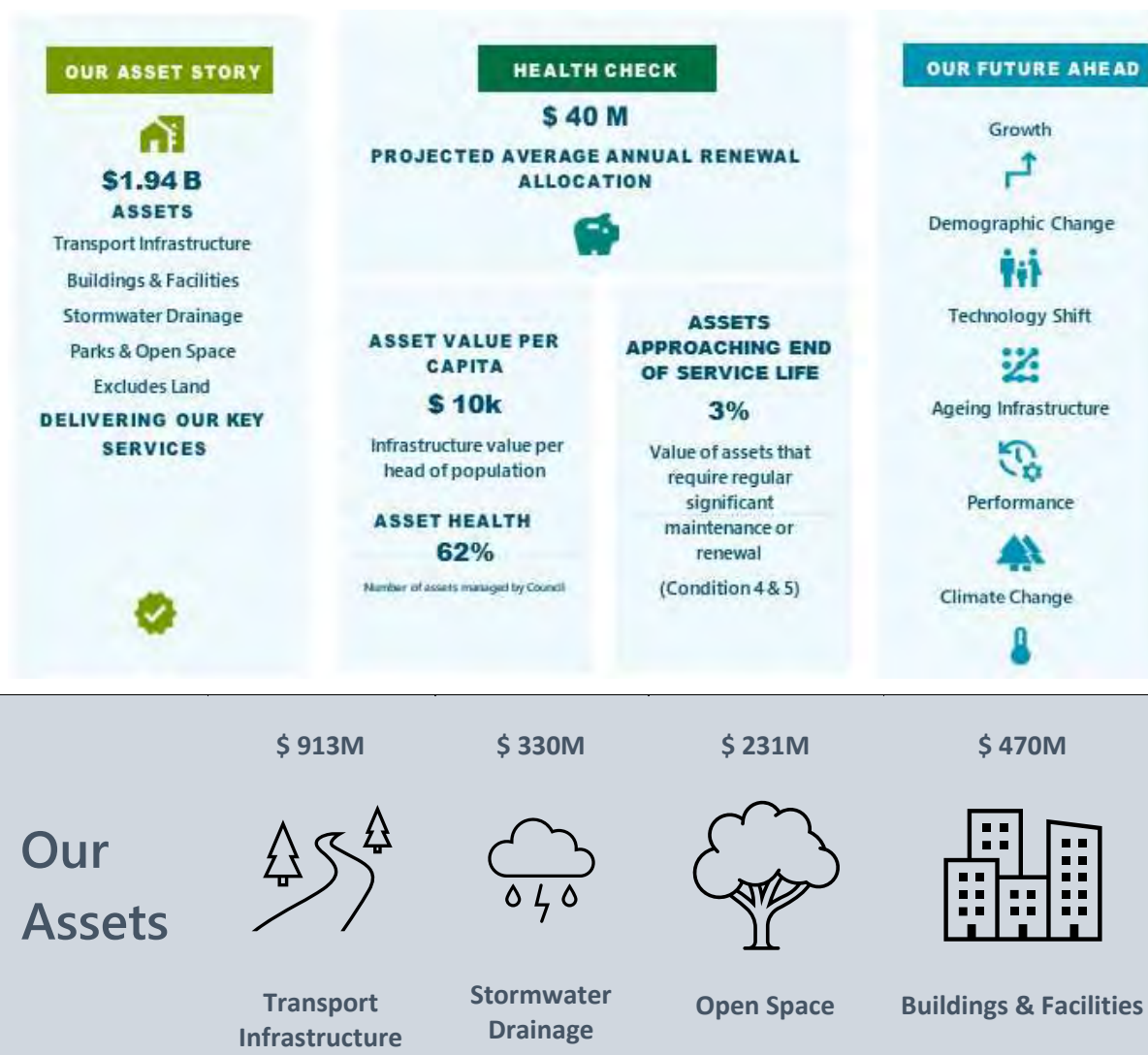
The draft Asset Plan is integrated with the broader Council planning framework that aligns closely with the Community Vision, Council Plan and the draft Long Term Financial Plan. These alignments ensure that the asset management decisions support our overall strategic objectives and are compliant with legislative requirements.

2. Background

Pursuant to Section 92 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Council must develop, adopt and keep in force an Asset Plan in accordance with Council's deliberative engagement practices. The plan must encompass information on maintenance, renewal, expansion, acquisition, disposal and decommissioning of assets for which Council is responsible. Council must review the Asset Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices and adopt the Asset Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election.

The draft Asset Plan (**Attachment 1**) covers Transport Infrastructure, Buildings & Facilities, Stormwater Infrastructure and Open Space.

Below is a snapshot from the draft Asset Plan summarising the current state of Council's infrastructure assets.



3. Issues

Community impact

The draft asset plan is an overarching document that lays a strategic framework for how Council's financial investment decisions are made to provide optimum level of service to the Community by the utilisation of Council's physical assets.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

The scope of capital projects included in the draft Asset Plan for each asset class will account for both emissions abatement and climate adaptation.

Emissions reduction is achieved by building projects incorporating costs for sustainable design to promote energy efficiency and use of green energy. Use of recycled materials in construction and minimising demolition also reduce the carbon footprint of our asset programs and create opportunities around the circular economy.

Climate risk considerations impact significantly on the design of assets. For example, rather than replace like-with-like, officers will review drainage capacity as drains are replaced to accommodate more severe storm events and reconsider selection of materials based on their performance at higher temperatures given the hotter summers we're experiencing. These challenges are reflected in the forthcoming Climate Risk Strategy which will work hand-in-hand with the Asset Plan.

Economic sustainability implications

The Asset Plan is a key document that sets a strategic framework for financial investment decision making to provide optimum level of service to the community by utilisation of assets. The life cycle model of asset from acquisition through to disposal/renewal and inclusion of maintenance costs is a representation of how sustainable our asset management practices are.

Legal and risk considerations

The draft Asset Plan is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*. Whilst there are no significant risks associated in adopting the reviewed Asset Plan, there are reasonable risks if an Asset Plan is not reviewed, such as non-compliance with the requirements of the Act and lack of strategic framework guiding financial investment decisions for asset sustainability.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. The adoption of the draft Asset Plan does not violate the Victorian Human Rights Charter.

For the Asset Plan as a whole, a Gender Impact Assessment is not deemed required. However, it is noted that for some asset categories, strategies guiding their prioritisation and scoping and individual category asset management plans will need to be developed with the insights gained through Gender Impact Assessments.

4. Community consultation and engagement

The draft Asset Plan has been developed in line with Council's Deliberative Engagement practices and has drawn from the engagement outputs from the deliberative panel formed as a part of the Council Plan and Community Vision review.

Section 5 of the draft Asset Plan (**Attachment 1**) provides details of the community engagement approach and outcomes of the engagement in relation to Asset Plan.

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person's rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views.

The development and public exhibition of the draft Asset Plan has not affected any persons' rights and interests to the best knowledge of Council officers.

Communications

Assuming Council resolves to proceed to exhibition for the draft Asset Plan it will be made available online for community to provide comment and feedback. In addition, physical copies of the plans will be located at customer facing Council facilities to make the draft available to the community to read and provide feedback. Officers will also use social media to make sure that draft reaches as many members of the community as possible. Officers will respond to enquiries from any residents seeking to engage in languages other than English or through a discussion rather than written feedback.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The adoption and implementation of the draft Asset Plan has no direct financial and resource implications. The plan sets out the financial projection in capital and maintenance cost in each asset classes, which is in accordance with the draft Long Term Financial Plan. The Asset Plan, once adopted, must be reviewed by 31 October in the year following a general election of the Council. The cost to achieve the 31 October 2029 milestone will depend on the level of engagement to be undertaken and additional technical support provided and would mostly be incurred in 2028/29 and therefore considered as the 2028/29 budget is prepared.

7. Implementation

This Council report is seeking resolution to exhibit the draft Asset Plan for community feedback over a period of 4 weeks. After the public exhibition period, Council officers will review all feedback received and recommend subsequent changes to the Asset Plan. The proposed final Asset Plan and summary of community feedback will be reported to Council at the October 2025 Council Meeting.

Attachment/s

- 1 [↓](#) Merri-bek Draft Asset Plan D25/397787



Batam Batam Place, Brunswick.

Draft Asset Plan

2025-2035



Assets for
our community

Planning for
the future

Information in
your language



Italian	Italiano
Arabic	العربية
Greek	Ελληνικά
Urdu	اردو
Nepali	नेपाली
Turkish	Türkçe
Simplified Chinese	中文
Spanish	Español
Vietnamese	Tiếng Việt
Hindi	हिंदी

Acknowledgement Placeholder Council's Engagement Team to review and replace image

Acknowledgement of Country

Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek. We pay respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging, as well as to all First Nations communities who significantly contribute to the life of the area.

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1. Our City at a Glance

Merri-bek is a vibrant and diverse community in Melbourne's north, experiencing steady population growth. It is proudly multicultural, with a rich mix of languages, cultures, and backgrounds that contribute to the unique character and inclusive spirit of the area.

The council area stretches from **Brunswick** in the south to **Fawkner** and **Gowanbrae** in the north. Our local economy is powered by **retail, healthcare, education, manufacturing**, and the **creative industries**.

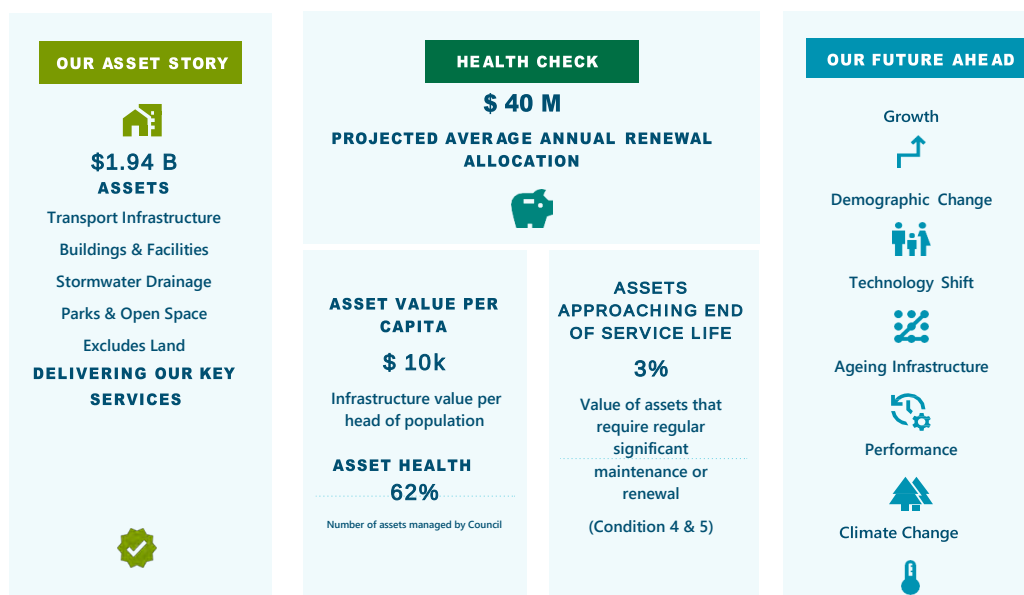
Merri-bek City Council looks after over **\$1.94 billion worth of community assets** that help make our neighbourhoods great places to live. These assets include roads, pathways, buildings and facilities (including libraries and aquatic centres), drainage and open space.

These assets support everything from getting around safely to spending time outdoors to accessing services and community spaces. Council is committed to managing these shared assets responsibly making sure they are safe, accessible, and ready to meet the needs of our growing and changing community.

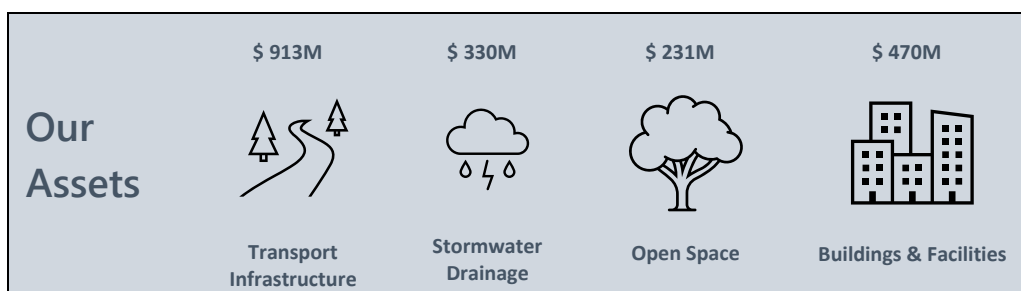
In addition to these community assets, Council owns and manages fleet, equipment and miscellaneous assets which enable services to be provided to the community. The management of these assets are outside the scope of this plan.

2. Our Assets Story on a Page

Our assets are the things you can see or use when you're out and about in the municipality that play an integral role in supporting the effective delivery of services and public amenity. Heritage, new built and natural plus all the things that belong to all of us that help make life better and richer for each of us.



	Community Services	Waste and Recycling	Parks and Recreation	Libraries and Learning	Infrastructure and Planning	Arts and Culture
Delivering our key services	Support for families, youth, older adults, and people with disabilities	Bin collection, hard rubbish, and recycling programs	Maintenance of parks, playgrounds, and leisure facilities	Access to library resources, digital tools, and community programs	Management of roads, footpaths, and urban development	Public art programs, galleries, and community cultural events



Our Plan

Council to review/update

Long Term Decision Making - Balancing community needs with responsible spending - Optimising available funding to reduce long term risk - Transparency in allocating funding to individual programs - Prioritising New, Upgrade and Renewals with the focus on future needs	Financial Planning - Average annual capital expenditure = \$85 M - Infrastructure value per capita = \$10.4K - Infrastructure spend per capita = \$455	Challenges and Opportunities - Ageing infrastructure nearing end of life - Rising community expectations and population growth - Rate capping and limited external funding - Opportunity to improve resilience, data accuracy, and performance-based decision making	Strategic Improvement Initiatives - Deliberative Community Engagement - Implementation of AMS for asset data and lifecycle management - Standardised asset condition assessments across asset classes - Integration of climate resilience, accessibility, and equity into asset planning - Continuous improvement aligned with ISO 55000 and Local Government Act 2020

3. Introduction

3.1 Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this Asset Plan (the Asset Plan) is to provide a framework for Council's commitment to best practice asset management and provide principles for sound asset investment decision making.

The Asset Plan for Merri-bek City Council outlines a comprehensive strategy for managing public assets over the next decade and beyond, ensuring sustainable stewardship for current and future generations. It is intended to be a public facing document which informs the community on how Council will manage community assets to achieve the Council Plan objectives and Vision.

The plan details how we will optimise capital and maintenance requirements, balance new assets and growth with current infrastructure to deliver services in line with evolving community needs and expectations. Our aim is to support consistent, evidence-based decision-making, engage community and Council in asset management performance reporting, improve links between costs and levels of service, articulate our challenges and risks all of which will result in more informed community engagement and best use of Council assets in the interest of the community.

The Asset Plan addresses the challenges of balancing economic, social, cultural, and environmental factors within a constrained budget.

This asset plan also includes Council's assessment of the maturity of our approach to asset management, and provides an action plan to address gaps in our systems and processes where needed.

The Asset Plan provides expenditure forecasts that will guide future maintenance, renewal programs, and capital projects, impacting long-term financial planning and annual budgets.

Compliance with the Local Government Act

Council has prepared this Asset Plan in compliance with *Victoria's Local Government Act 2020* which requires all councils to prepare integrated, long-term, and transparent asset plans to achieve the best outcomes for the community with a 10 year horizon.

Council's Strategic Planning

Our Asset Plan is integrated within the broader Council planning framework. It aligns closely with:

- Community Vision: Reflecting our long term aspirations.
- Council Plan: Outlining short to medium term priorities.
- Financial Plan: Ensuring financial sustainability.

This alignment ensures that asset management decisions support our overall strategic objectives and are compliant with legislative requirements.

Council's Deliberative Engagement

In line with Council's Communication Engagement Policy, we will engage with our community in relation to decisions that affect asset and service delivery.

What is asset management?

A systematic process to guide the planning and design, creation and acquisition, maintenance and operations, renewal, and disposal and rationalisation of assets to balance available funds with community needs.

Why is asset management important?

Our community expects assets to be provided to a standard that ensures public safety, amenity and accessibility and to support the delivery of quality services and programs. [Our community also expects that Council's asset when passed on to the next generation will be regarded as a positive legacy.](#)

We need to balance delivering what our community needs and expects with what our community can afford.

Over time, our community needs and expectations are bound to change with demographics, climate and technology constantly evolving.

With a finite budget for investment in assets, a planned and measured approach to asset management is necessary to ensure a fair and fiscally prudent long-term financial plan.

Council to Update



"Our Region is dedicated to informed decision-making, leveraging the best available evidence and engaging the community. We prioritise transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in our processes, ensuring that all decisions are well-founded and reflect the community's needs and perspectives."

Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor



Note: Placeholder Quotes from Mayor and CEO to be revised prior to public exhibition

"We are creating a long-term investment plan for our assets to ensure they are fit-for-purpose, delivering necessary services that meet community expectations and are affordable for ratepayers."

Cathy Henderson, Chief Executive Officer

3.2 Our Community and Population

Merri-bek City Council, located in Melbourne's inner-northern suburbs, encompasses a diverse and dynamic community. As of 30 June 2024, the estimated resident population was **191,747**, reflecting steady growth over recent years. The area is characterised by its multiculturalism, with over one-third of residents born overseas and more than 140 languages spoken at home. The age distribution is relatively young, with a significant proportion of residents aged between 25 and 34 years. Looking ahead, the population is projected to reach approximately **222,733** by 2036, indicating a continued upward trend in growth.



Economically, Merri-bek boasts a robust and diverse local economy. The municipality's Gross Regional Product (GRP) stands at **\$8.43 billion**, supported by **16,456** local businesses. Key employment sectors include health care and social assistance, retail, education, and manufacturing. The area provides **52,735** local jobs, with **110,518** employed residents, underscoring its role as a significant employment hub in the region.



In response to ongoing growth and development, Merri-bek City Council has implemented strategic plans to guide sustainable urban development and economic prosperity. The Council's Economic Development Action Plan 2024–2027 outlines initiatives to support local businesses and attract investment. Additionally, the Council is engaging in urban revitalisation projects, such as the "Revitalising Coburg" initiative, aimed at transforming central Coburg into a vibrant, mixed-use precinct.

3.3 Our Assets

The assets owned and operated by our Council across four (4) asset portfolios totalling over **\$1.94 Billion** in replacement costs as at 30th June 2024.

The mix of infrastructure is detailed in the diagram below as a percent of the total replacement value. These infrastructure assets support nearly every aspect of our day-to-day activities. They keep us safe, healthy, connected, and employed. Maintaining existing infrastructure is just as important as building new infrastructure.

The distribution of Council asset portfolio by asset category and replacement value is shown below.

\$1.94 BILLION	Replacement Cost (\$M)	Asset Health (% Remaining life)	Average Condition
Buildings and Facilities	\$471	71%	1.48
Parks and Open Space	\$ 231	42%	2.40
Stormwater Drainage	\$330	59%	1.78
Transport Infrastructure	\$913	64%	1.65
SUB-Total	\$1,944	62%	1.70
Land	\$1,611	Not applicable	Not applicable
TOTAL	\$ 3,556		

Notes:

1. *Transportation consists of roads, kerbs, bridges, weirs, culverts, and pathways*
2. *Land itself is not a depreciable asset, as it does not deteriorate over time in the same way that built assets do. While the structures and improvements on land (e.g., buildings, roads, footpaths) are subject to depreciation and are accounted for within the relevant asset categories in this plan, the underlying land is excluded from depreciation calculations and hence does not form any further part of this plan.*
3. *The above figures do not include any valuation of trees or other vegetation.*
4. *Condition rating: 0 - excellent, 5 - aged*

4. Strategic Context

4.1 Strategic Alignment

Commentary around Council Vision and mission statement to reflect what is adopted in the 2025 Council Plan to be added once Council Plan is finalised.

The Asset Plan supports these objectives by ensuring that the management, renewal, and development of Council's assets are proactively planned and prioritised to deliver the infrastructure and services needed to realise these goals.

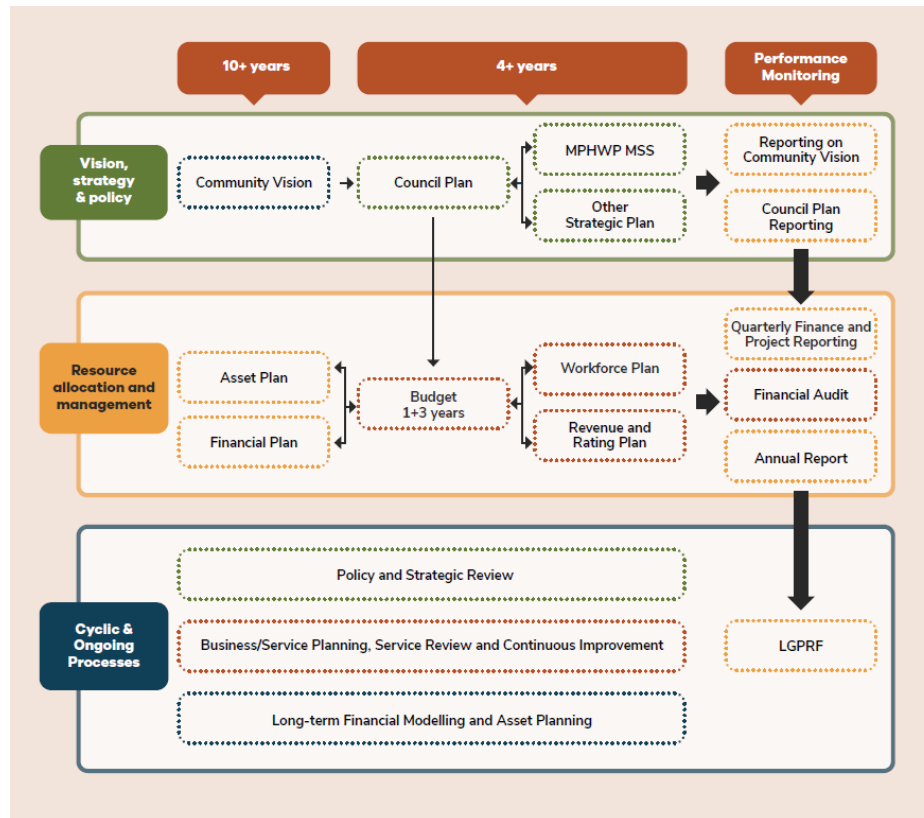
This integrated approach ensures that asset management is not undertaken in isolation but is embedded within Merri-bek's broader strategic direction. By aligning asset investment and service delivery with Council's long-term aspirations and immediate priorities, the Asset Plan plays a critical role in enabling Merri-bek to deliver sustainable, equitable, and resilient outcomes for its community, now and into the future.

4.2 Integrated Planning

Under the Local Government Act (Victoria) 2020, Council is legislatively required to establish a suite of Strategic Management Plans, which guide Council's future planning, asset management and financial sustainability.

The Council Plan, Asset Plan, and Financial Plan are integrated under the Victorian Local Government Act 2020 to ensure that strategic objectives, service delivery, and long-term infrastructure investment are aligned and financially sustainable, supporting informed decision-making that meets both current and future community needs. This integration supports long-term decision making by ensuring that asset maintenance, renewal, and investment are planned in line with available funding and community priorities, enabling Council to manage resources responsibly and deliver services effectively.

An overview of these strategic management plans and how they support their delivery is shown below.



Strategic Planning Document	Role	Horizon & Review Cycle
Community Vision	Our community's aspirations and priorities for the future of Merri-bek City Council	10 Years
Council Plan	Details the Objectives and Goals to aim for to achieve the Community Vision with a 4-year delivery focus	4 years
Asset Management Policy	Sets the principles for consistent and appropriate asset management practices, processes and systems across the portfolio and sets the strategic intent for the sustainable management of Council's assets	Current practice and 4 Yearly Review
Asset Plan (this document)	Details the Strategic Actions and Asset Management Indicators that provide for Deliberative Community Engagement in line with the Victorian 2020 regulation.	10 years of scenario planning with engaged Review - sign off by Council every 4 years
Financial Plan	Council's Financial Plan detailing the Capital Works Plan, Income and Funding Sources and Local Government Financial metrics.	10 years outlook and Annual Review
Workforce Plan	Outlines how we will manage our resources and budgets to deliver projects	4 years
Annual Business Plan + Budget	Outlines how we will manage our resources and budgets to deliver projects	1-2 years
Individual Asset Class Plans	For each major class – Transport, Buildings, Open Space and Stormwater Drainage, it details the funding need for maintenance and capital for a range of service levels	10-20 years and with a comprehensive update every re-valuation cycle.

4.3 Asset Management Planning

Council takes a lifecycle management approach to asset management planning, considering the resourcing requirements to operate, maintain, rehabilitate and renew assets to meet service level requirements and asset useful life expectancy.

Taking a lifecycle approach ensures we get the best possible return on our asset spending. This considers the costs of an asset over its useful life that is from the time a new asset is built or acquired to the time it is replaced or disposed of. This approach allows us to get the most out of our assets by meeting required levels of service in the most cost effective way.

Council's Asset management practices are also governed internally by the Asset Management Policy, the Asset Plan and supporting documents, strategies. The whole process is supported by enablers such as technology, data, processes and people and is informed by key corporate and strategic documents. Council's Asset Management Framework is outlined below.

4.4 Lifecycle approach to asset management

1. Planning and design

When identifying asset requirements that meet service delivery needs over the long term, whole-of-life costs and other factors such as affordability, equity, accessibility, maintainability and the environment are considered.

2. Creation and acquisition

Before constructing, expanding, upgrading or acquiring a new asset, alternative service delivery solutions are considered such as leasing or strategic partnerships. Any new build should align to an endorsed management plan or strategy and is supported by a life cycle cost that informs the Financial Plan for long term maintenance and renewal needs.

3. Maintenance and operations

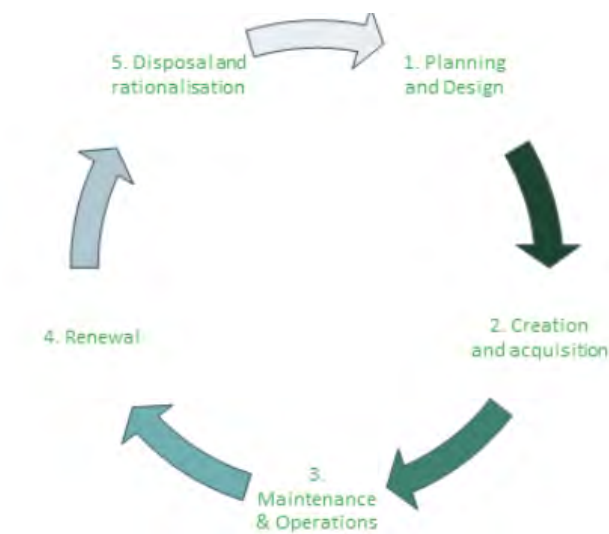
Each asset's operations are monitored consistently over its useful life. A program of planned condition assessments, maintenance and servicing is undertaken to minimise ongoing costs and the risk of asset failure and to ensure the asset remains operational, safe and compliant, and meets current maintenance levels of service.

4. Renewal and Upgrade

Existing assets are replaced as they approach their intervention state– that is, they no longer support the required level of service delivery. Prioritisation of such works is based on criticality of the service and associated assets.

5. Disposal and rationalisation

Where an asset no longer directly supports the required level of service delivery, decommissioning or rationalisation of the asset to reduce lifecycle costs is considered as part of long-term financial planning.



5. Our Community's Role

We are committed to engaging with our community and ensuring transparency in our decision-making by providing opportunities to provide input into decisions that affect asset and service delivery.

In compliance with the Local Government Act 2020, we seek feedback from the community at key points in the decision-making process to ensure we provide services and assets that are sustainable and available for future generations.

Our stakeholders

- › The community
- › The Council
- › User groups
- › Community groups

5.1 Community Workshop Details

Council hosted three sessions with the deliberative panel throughout February 2025. Details of each workshop can be found in the table below:

Session	Location	Agenda	Objectives
Session 1 20/02/2025	Coburg Town Hall	• Welcome and introductions • Overview of deliberative process • Council's role and planning process • Q&A with Council staff	• Build understanding of Council's functions • Introduce the deliberative process • Connect panel members and staff
Session 2 22/02/2025	Coburg Town Hall	• Review Council Plan and Community Vision • Explore key values and aspirations • Discuss community priorities for 2035	• Understand current and future community needs • Identify shared values and vision for Merri-bek • Begin developing community priorities
Session 3 23/02/2025	Coburg Town Hall	• Refine Community Vision and Priorities • Prepare presentations • Present advice to Councillors	• Finalise recommendations • Present vision and priorities to Council • Promote community ownership and input

5.2 Council's community engagement principles

These guiding principles are applied at key points in our asset management planning process in line with our commitment to a best practice contemporary approach to community engagement.

1. We will enable the community to provide meaningful input into decision-making.
2. We will be clear about the objectives of engagement and the opportunities to influence decision-making.
3. We will be respectful of all community members including residents, True Custodians, Council officers and Councillors.
4. We will provide accurate, timely and accessible information.
5. We will provide inclusive engagement opportunities for all community members, including those considered hard to reach.
6. We will provide multiple opportunities for the community to participate.
7. We will consider the needs and interests of all people in the decision-making process.

8. We will inform the community of the final decision and how their input was considered.
9. We will review and evaluate the effectiveness of the community engagement.
10. We will plan, resource and report on our engagement processes properly.

5.3 How we engage with our community

Merri-bek City Council is committed to inclusive, transparent, and ongoing community engagement. Engagement is guided by our Community Engagement Policy and the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020, including deliberative processes that inform strategic plans such as the Council Plan, Financial Plan, and Asset Plan.

We use a wide range of engagement methods to reach people across all ages, backgrounds, and abilities, including:

- **In-person activities** such as pop-ups, workshops, and focus groups
- **Online platforms**, especially Conversations Merri-bek, where residents can complete surveys, post ideas, or participate in discussions
- **Translated materials** and targeted outreach to priority groups such as multicultural communities, older adults, young people, people with disability, and the LGBTIQ+ community
- **Community Panels**, including youth and adult representatives, to provide in-depth input into key strategies
- **Advisory committees and champion networks** that support ongoing dialogue between Council and the community

This inclusive approach ensures our asset planning reflects the community's needs, values, and aspirations helping us deliver infrastructure that supports a safe, vibrant, and sustainable city for all.

5.4 What did the Community tell us

Merri-bek City Council has engaged extensively with the community between 2020 and 2025 through workshops, surveys, pop-ups, and online engagement. Many residents contributed to shaping Council's priorities, including through the deliberative panel workshops held in February 2025.

Participants reflected the diverse makeup of Merri-bek, including people from all suburbs, cultural backgrounds, age groups, and abilities. Engagement activities were inclusive and accessible, with translated materials and targeted outreach to underrepresented groups.

The key themes emerging from the consultation include:

- Maintaining and renewing infrastructure such as roads, footpaths, and public spaces
- Enhancing access to safe, inclusive and well-maintained community facilities
- Increasing investment in sustainable transport options and improved accessibility
- Prioritising green and open spaces, tree canopy, and climate resilience
- Ensuring transparency in decision-making and equitable access to information and services

This feedback has informed Council's strategic planning and underscores the importance of investing in community assets that are safe, sustainable, and responsive to future needs.

6. How We Manage Our Assets

6.1 Our Assets Support Our Services

Council provides a range of important and valued services to support the community to be a place for all. t

Our assets are valuable and tangible physical elements within the region that are essential for delivering these services effectively and enhancing public well-being. These assets, both heritage and new, built and natural, belong to all our communities and contribute to provide opportunities for current and future generations to work, live, play and thrive in a safe and habitable environment. Over time, these assets degrade through natural wear and tear, malicious damage or obsolescence. Balancing our ratepayer dollars to ensure these assets are maintained to their fullest potential is integral to our long-term financial sustainability.

Why is asset management important?

Our community expects assets to be provided to a standard that ensures public safety, amenity and accessibility and to support the delivery of quality services and programs.

We need to balance delivering what our community needs, what our community expects and what our community can afford.

Over time, our community needs and expectations are bound to change with demographics, climate and technology constantly evolving.

With a finite budget for investment in assets, a planned and measured approach to asset management is necessary to ensure a fair and fiscally prudent long-term financial plan.

What assets are covered in this plan?

For the purposes of this Asset Plan 'assets' refers to the portfolio of public assets that Council is responsible for managing. To make it easier for our community to understand what these assets are, we have grouped them according to their services they provide and the functions they belong to in the table below.

Transport Infrastructure	Stormwater Drainage	Open Space	Buildings & Facilities
The infrastructure needed for movement, within or beyond our city and as part of our day-to-day activities, whether by vehicle or bike or as a pedestrian.	The infrastructure we need to direct stormwater run-off, mitigate flooding and improve water quality in line with EPA standards.	The locations and environments we frequent while enjoying the natural surroundings or engaging in recreational and leisure activities.	The locations and areas we utilise when accessing community services or participating in recreational, cultural, or social activities.
Includes roads and streets, bridges, footpaths, trails, roundabouts, speed humps and traffic management devices	Includes swales, drains and pipes, pits, sedimentation ponds, dams, wetlands, gross pollutant traps and water-sensitive urban design elements.	Includes parks and gardens (trees, flower beds, fences, gates), playgrounds, waterways, sports fields, public furniture and amenity assets (seats, barbecues, pergolas, shade sails)	Includes town halls, leisure and aquatic centres, sports pavilions, stadiums, libraries, community centres, maternal health and other buildings that house community services, public toilets and shelters.

6.2 How Our Assets Support Community Needs

Our assets exist to support the delivery of Council services and public amenities that, in turn, support our community's social and economic needs.

When making decisions about renewal or maintenance of our assets and/or prioritising our new asset investments, we always undertake life cycle analysis and what the appropriate levels of service for an asset prior to setting budgets.

6.3 Prioritisation of Works

Asset management decisions are informed by a set of guiding principles that reflect community expectations and the intended function of each asset.

In practice, service delivery is shaped by the following factors:

- **Availability** – The extent to which the service can be accessed when required
- **Quality** – The performance or condition of the asset in delivering its intended function
- **Risk** – The likelihood and consequence of asset failure or service interruption
- **Accessibility** – The ability for all community members to use the asset or service
- **Comfort** – The general user experience and satisfaction with the service

These considerations help guide decisions about how assets are maintained, renewed, or upgraded. For example, assets that support high levels of community use or critical services are typically prioritised for more regular maintenance and earlier renewal. Conversely, assets that support lower-priority services may be managed to a lower standard where appropriate.

This framework helps ensure that available budgets are directed where they provide the most benefit to the community and where risks can be most effectively managed.

6.4 Our Asset Response to Gender Impacts Assessment (GIA)

Merri-bek City Council is committed to advancing gender equality across its policies, programs, and services. In line with the Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic), the Council undertakes Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) to ensure that decisions consider the needs and experiences of people of all genders and promote fair, inclusive outcomes.

Council's commitment to gender equity is embedded in its planning, workforce practices, and service delivery. Through the implementation of the **Gender Equality Action Plan 2022–2025**, Merri-bek is actively working to remove barriers to participation, enhance workforce diversity, and foster a culture of respect and inclusion.

Gender considerations are integrated into strategic planning processes, including asset management, to ensure that public infrastructure and services are accessible, safe, and equitable for everyone in the community. Ongoing community engagement, supported by advisory structures such as the Gender Equality Reference Group, helps to inform and strengthen the Council's approach to gender equality across all areas of work.

By embedding GIAs into its decision-making and continually reviewing progress, Merri-bek aims to build a more equitable and inclusive city for current and future generations.

In asset management planning, our gender equity considerations include:

- Designing public spaces, buildings, and infrastructure to be safe, accessible, and inclusive for all genders and abilities.
- Applying Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) to major asset projects and service planning, in line with the Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic).
- Supporting equitable access to community, recreation, and cultural facilities across Merri-bek's diverse population.
- Addressing barriers to participation through inclusive design, location, service delivery and crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).
- Engaging with the community to understand diverse needs and reflect these in asset priorities and investment decisions.

7. The State of Our Assets

Merri-bek City Council delivers a wide range of services that rely on a diverse and significant portfolio of physical assets. Understanding the current condition, service performance, costs, and risks associated with these assets is essential to ensure we can plan, prioritise, and invest responsibly to meet the needs of our growing and diverse community.

To support more effective management, assets are grouped into asset classes based on their characteristics, usage, and service requirements. Assets within each class are assessed on a regular cycle—typically every 3 to 5 years—to determine their condition, that is their remaining useful life. These condition assessments help identify which assets require renewal to function effectively.

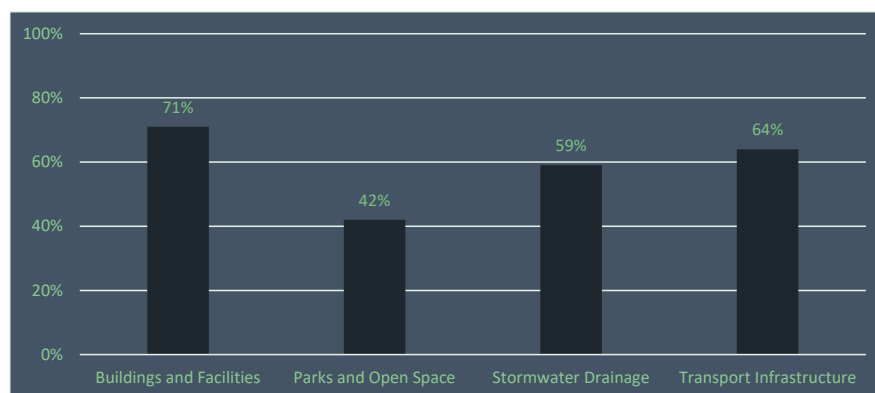
Underground drainage assets, however, present unique challenges. Because they cannot be readily inspected, their condition is typically estimated based on their age. Renewal of these assets is therefore prioritised based on performance indicators such as capacity, failure rates, spot checks using pipe cameras, or service complaints.

This Asset Plan provides a high-level overview of the current state of Council's assets and their long-term sustainability. More detailed information, including service levels, intervention thresholds, condition monitoring, and future financial sustainability considerations, is available in individual Asset Management Plans for each class.

When assessing asset performance, Council not only considers the current condition but also adopts a long-term perspective to protect asset value, maintain service delivery, and minimise the financial burden on future generations.

This section presents the projected performance of Merri-bek's \$1.94 billion asset portfolio over the next 10 years.

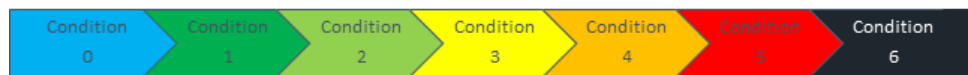
Asset Health is a measure of the remaining useful life of the asset portfolio. The figure below displays the current asset health by asset class.



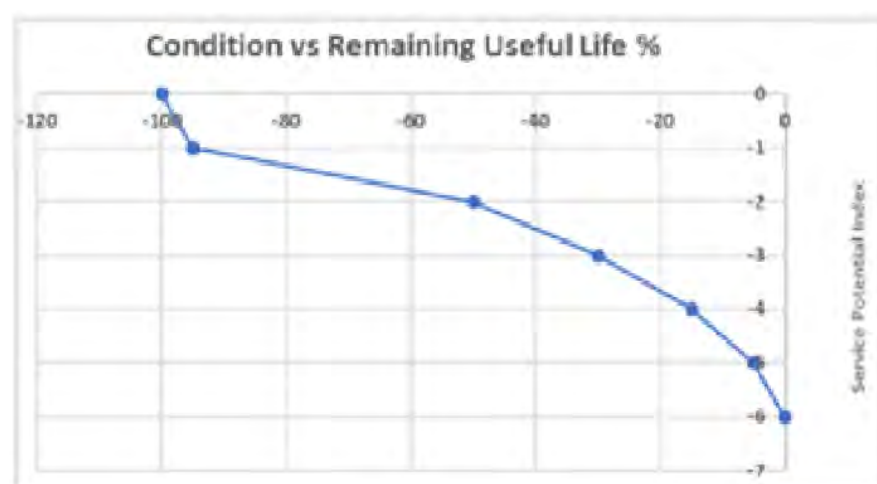
Asset Health (% Remaining life) by Asset Class as at 30th June 2024

Further commentary on the Asset Health of Council's Parks and Open Space Assets is provided in Section 9.4.

The condition for all asset classes is reported using a 0 to 6 rating system as shown below:

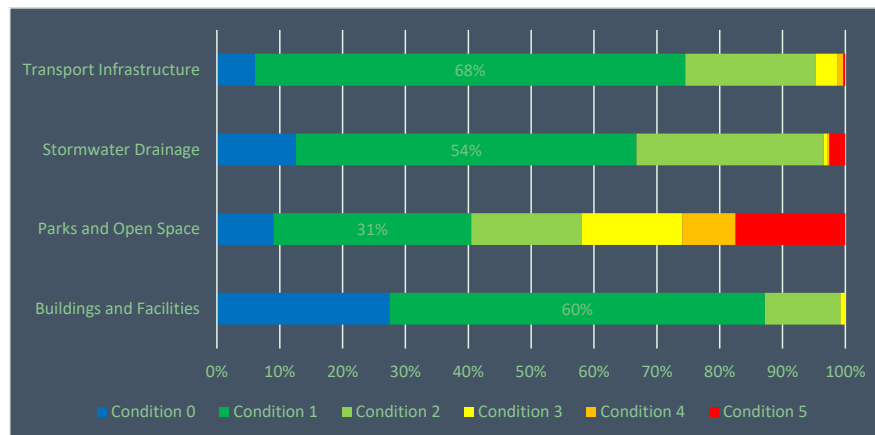


- Condition 0 – as new
- Condition 1 – very good, requiring minimal maintenance
- Condition 2 – good, requiring some maintenance
- Condition 3 – moderate, requiring increased maintenance
- Condition 4 – fair, requiring regular maintenance
- Condition 5 – aged, requiring significant maintenance
- Condition 6 – not functional



Asset Condition Assessment Rating

Within each asset class, there is a distribution of assets from a new to an aged condition. The current distribution is illustrated in the figure below:



*No assets in condition 6

Condition distribution as percent of replacement cost as at 30th June 2024

8 . Funding for the Future

To ensure responsible and sustainable stewardship of our assets, we are committed to balancing our community's needs and aspirations with what is affordable for ratepayers.

Making decisions about funding our assets requires ongoing balancing of service levels, risk and the need to adequately maintain and renew assets. Our aim is to achieve long-term asset sustainability.

8.1 Integration with the Financial Plan

Merri-bek City Council's Asset Plan is developed in alignment with Council's long-term Financial Plan to ensure responsible management of community resources. Forecasts for asset renewal, maintenance, and new investment are embedded within financial planning to support sustainable service delivery. This coordinated approach enables Council to balance infrastructure needs with available funding, plan for future demand, and minimise financial risks. By integrating asset management and financial strategies, Merri-bek can maintain the value and performance of its asset portfolio while ensuring decisions today do not compromise the wellbeing of future generations.

8.2 Our asset investment strategies

Merri-bek City Council takes a strategic and long-term approach to managing and investing in community assets. Our investment decisions are guided by the need to provide sustainable, inclusive, and high-quality infrastructure that supports service delivery and meets the evolving needs of our growing and diverse community. Asset investment is closely linked to financial planning, risk management, and community engagement to ensure resources are used effectively and responsibly.

Council's asset investment approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- Sustainable development through environmentally responsible design and construction practices.
- Financial sustainability by aligning asset investment with the 10-Year Financial Plan and future service needs.
- Community-driven priorities shaped through engagement and consultation with Merri-bek's diverse community.
- Strategic property management to maximise the long-term value and use of Council-owned land and buildings.
- Lifecycle and risk-based planning to optimise asset performance, manage risks, and extend asset life.

8.3 Asset investment categories

For the purposes of this Asset Plan, our asset spending is categorised in a way that helps us to plan our budgets and track how we spend our money on assets and services.

Expenditure Type	Asset Management Activity	Description
Recurrent	Maintenance	Scheduled work to keep assets operating at the required level of service, or reactive work to repair defects and ensure that assets meet their service life and don't require early renewal.
	Operations	Recurrent expenditure that is required to use an asset such as utility costs, audit and inspection programs, cleaning or fees paid to other organisations.
Capital	Renewal	Works on assets that are at the end of life that restore their ability to deliver or facilitate the delivery of the desired service
	Upgrade	Works that increase the quality of the existing service that can be delivered through an existing asset.
	New	Works that generate an asset that can provide a service that does not currently exist.

8.4 Lifecycle investment profile

A detailed breakdown of what we expect to spend on each asset function over the next 10 years is outlined within individual asset class profiles under section 9 – Asset Class Detail. The table below summarises the adopted 10-year expenditure by asset class for 2025-2035:

Asset Class	Renewal \$,000	Upgrade/New* \$,000	Maintenance \$,000	Total \$,000
Transport Infrastructure	171,408	34,529	59,868	265,805
Buildings & Facilities	168,611	95,921	40,759	305,291
Stormwater Drainage	23,717	58,323	3,809	85,849
Parks & Recreation	49,818	49,833	97,903	197,554
Total Over 10 Years	413,554	238,606	202,339	854,499

**Includes major projects funding*

9. Asset Class Detail

9.1 Transport Infrastructure

What assets are included?

Sealed roads, unsealed roads, footpaths, kerbs and car parks.

What does our work involve?

Recurrent	Renewal	Upgrade and Growth
- Maintenance and repairs to roads such as patching potholes, crack sealing and path grinding - Operational servicing such as street sweeping, vegetation management and weed spraying	- Resurfacing of existing roads - Road reconstruction or major patching of road failures - Replacement of sections of existing pathways to an equivalent standard	- New constructed and gifted assets by developers - Road safety improvements such as installation of crash barriers, intersection upgrades, etc. - Traffic calming treatments such as construction of roundabouts, installation of speed humps, etc - Extension of existing pathway network to address gaps in connectivity - Network improvements to better cater for cyclists

How is funding prioritised?

This funding allocation is informed by strategic modelling analysis that predicts the deterioration of our Transport assets and the impact of various renewal funding scenarios on future asset condition.

How much do we plan to spend over the next 10 years?

Projected expenditure 2025-2035:

Projected Expenditure (\$,000)											
Expenditure Type	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
Maintenance	5,419	5,536	5,656	5,780	5,907	6,038	6,172	6,310	6,452	6,598	59,868
Renewal	23,405	14,462	15,666	17,224	17,369	16,464	16,560	16,65	16,752	16,849	171,408
Upgrade/New	5,610	3,230	3,080	5,041	2,871	2,905	2,922	2,939	2,956	2,973	34,529
Total	34,434	23,228	24,402	28,045	26,147	25,407	25,654	25,905	26,160	26,420	265,805

**Includes major projects funding*

What are the future challenges and opportunities?

Changing population	Increased freight task	Climate change	Legislation and compliance
The increased demand on local roads and their connections with State government and Collector roads due to population growth and increased dwelling density	The increased deterioration of our road network due to an increased number of heavy vehicles and increased gross loadings	- The lack of availability of sustainable transport options, including public transport - The increased risk of damage to our transport assets due to more frequent and more extreme weather events - The need to consider resilience in the design and construction of new assets	- The need to ensure compliance with the <i>Road Traffic Act 1961</i> - The need to meet the requirements of our Road Management Plan - The need to ensure clarity on which roads we are responsible for

- Upcoming major projects for Transport are available for viewing in Council's Annual Budget document,



9.2 Buildings & Facilities

What assets are included?

Buildings, structures, stadiums and facilities..

What does our work involve?

Recurrent	Renewal	Upgrade and Growth
- Minor repairs to building components due to failure, vandalism, etc. - Unblocking drains, service checks, carpet repairs, etc. - Safety, compliance, and condition inspections	- Major structural repairs - Replacement of roof or wall cladding - Replacement of bathrooms and kitchens	- Building extensions - Sustainability improvements (e.g. PV systems, water harvesting and reuse systems, etc.) - Construction of a new building to cater for increased or changing demand - Replacement of amenities with DDA compliance and to meet raised community requirements

How is funding prioritised?

This funding allocation is informed by strategic modelling analysis that predicts the deterioration of our Buildings assets and the impact of various renewal funding scenarios on future asset condition.

How much do we plan to spend over the next 10 years?

Projected expenditure 2025-2035:

Projected Expenditure (\$,000)											
Expenditure Type	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
Maintenance	3,793	3,852	3,913	3,975	4,038	4,103	4,169	4,236	4,305	4,376	40,759
Renewal	4,886	7,389	11,675	31,765	26,920	17,337	19,524	17,194	15,802	16,118	168,611
Upgrade/New	3,430	4,505	10,686	12,089	7,895	11,558	13,016	11,463	10,535	10,746	95,921
Total	12,109	15,746	26,274	47,829	38,853	32,998	36,709	32,893	30,642	31,240	305,291

*Includes major projects funding

What are the future challenges and opportunities?

Changing population	Financial	Climate change	Legislation and compliance
• The need to improve access for all genders and abilities and other underrepresented communities • The need to meet diverse and often competing community demands and expectations for facilities	• The need to maximise the use of existing facilities and to manage assets that are surplus to needs • The unplanned maintenance liabilities associated with facilities that community groups are no longer able to manage	• The increased risk of damage to our buildings and facilities due to more frequent and more extreme weather events • The challenge of ensuring we meet our target of net zero	• The need to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation such as in relation to accessibility, fire safety, occupational health and safety, etc. • The need to ensure buildings are provided in line with the National Construction Code.

*Refer Recreation Infrastructure Plan

Upcoming major projects for Buildings are available for viewing in Council’s Annual Budget document.



9.3 Stormwater Infrastructure

Council to review/update

What assets are included?

Retaining basins, bio-retention ponds, pipes, pits and box culverts.

What does our work involve?

Recurrent	Renewal	Upgrade and Growth
- Pit cleaning - Pipe cleansing and removal of debris, sediment, etc. - Removal of litter from Gross Pollutant Traps - Programmed inspections	- Replacement of pits and pipes - Periodic renewal of sediment from bio-retention ponds	- Replacement of pipes with a higher hydraulic capacity - Extension of the stormwater drainage network - Installation of stormwater quality improvement devices, such as rain gardens, litter traps, etc. - Stormwater harvesting initiatives

How is funding prioritised?

This funding allocation is informed by strategic modelling analysis that predicts the deterioration of our stormwater assets and the impact of various renewal funding scenarios on future asset condition.

How much do we plan to spend over the next 10 years?

Projected expenditure 2025-2035:

Projected Expenditure (\$,000)											
Expenditure Type	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
Maintenance	354	360	367	372	378	384	390	396	402	408	3,809
Renewal	3,138	2,200	1,911	2,412	2,822	2,116	2,180	2,245	2,312	2,382	23,717
Upgrade/New	8,471	8,300	6,577	10,415	3,698	4,938	3,973	3,979	3,984	3,988	58,323
Total	11,963	10,860	8,855	13,199	6,898	7,438	6,543	6,620	6,698	6,778	85,849

**Includes major projects funding*

What are the future challenges and opportunities?

Development density	Ageing infrastructure	Climate change	Environmental sustainability
• The need to upgrade the capacity of our existing drainage network to mitigate flooding due to increased volumes of stormwater run-off caused by continued urban consolidation • The need to implement stormwater quality improvement initiatives to protect receiving waterways affected by continued urban consolidation	• The need to upgrade some of our older drainage assets that are currently under capacity to improve flood immunity • The need to deal with more frequent and extreme flooding events • The ability to fund the timely renewal and upgrade of drainage assets that are in poor condition	• The projected reduction in current level of service with respect to flood protection and accessibility due to more frequent and more extreme weather events that lead to more flooding	• The increased need to provide infrastructure for the capture, treatment and reuse of stormwater to enable us to make use of stormwater run-off as a sustainable resource

Upcoming major projects for Drainage are available for viewing in Council's Annual Budget document.



9.4 Open Space

Council to review/update

What assets are included?

Playgrounds, play equipment, sportsgrounds, park furniture, fences, lighting, irrigation and other assets typically found within open space areas.

What does our work involve?

Recurrent	Renewal	Upgrade and Growth
- Hazard/defect inspections - Mowing, vegetation/weed control - Garden bed maintenance - Litter collection and cleaning - Graffiti removal	- Replacement of playground equipment - Replacement of park furniture - Rejuvenation or replacement of entire playing courts or sports fields to an equivalent standard	- Playing court extension - Replacement of playground equipment to a higher standard - Development of a new park or reserve

How is funding prioritised?

This funding allocation is informed by strategic modelling analysis that predicts the deterioration of our Open Space assets and the impact of various renewal funding scenarios on future asset condition. Council also purchases appropriate sites to create more open space, and installing new open space assets as part of its Parks Close to Home Program.

As noted in Section 4, the overall health of Council's Parks and Open Space assets is currently rated at 42%, which is significantly lower than the health ratings of other infrastructure asset groups. This lower rating is, in part, due to the nature of these assets—being exposed to outdoor conditions and typically having shorter life expectancies compared to other infrastructure types.

While they may show signs of ageing sooner, it is important to recognise that these assets exist in generally low-stress environments. They are often located within well-maintained landscapes, surrounded by mature trees, lush vegetation, scenic views, and expansive open areas. These positive contextual features, however, are not reflected in the asset health assessment.

Despite the 42% health rating, the assets remain functional and do not present any risk to public safety. The community continues to use and enjoy these spaces, demonstrating an ongoing acceptance of the condition of these assets within their broader natural setting.

How much do we plan to spend over the next 10 years?

Projected expenditure 2025-2035:

Projected Expenditure (\$,000)											
Expenditure Type	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
Maintenance	8,706	8,880	9,123	9,365	9,620	9,883	10,154	10,433	10,721	11,017	97,903
Renewal	6,350	4,057	7,974	4,667	2,670	4,583	4,555	6,305	4,327	4,327	49,818
Upgrade/ New	7,674	7,770	8,042	7,510	3,610	5,601	5,568	7,707	5,289	5,289	49,833
Total	22,730	20,707	25,139	21,542	15,900	20,067	20,277	24,445	20,337	20,633	197,554

*Includes major projects funding

What are the future challenges and opportunities?

Changing population	Open space provision	Participation trends	Environmental sustainability
- As population density rises, particularly in activity centres and infill developments, demand for accessible and high-quality open space has intensified. Smaller private open spaces (e.g., courtyards or balconies) place greater reliance on public open space to meet residents' recreation, wellbeing, and social needs. - Increased development funds which allow the creation of new or upgraded open spaces that cater to a wider demographic enhances community cohesion and supports health and wellbeing across all ages and backgrounds	- In many parts of the city, acquiring new land for parks is prohibitively expensive or physically unfeasible due to built form and private ownership; some neighbourhoods are underserved, with limited open space within safe walking distance, while others enjoy better access and larger reserves - Repurposing underutilised road reserves, drainage corridors, or railway easements into pocket parks or linear greenways can improve access.	- The traditional park user has changed — people increasingly engage in informal recreation such as yoga, dog walking, or group fitness rather than structured sports, placing new types of demands on space - Designing parks with adaptable zones (e.g., moveable furniture, open lawns, shaded courts) accommodates a broader range of activities. - Demand for more inclusive, accessible, gender-responsive, and culturally appropriate spaces. Requiring GIAs, DDA compliance to meet diversity needs.	- Enhancing tree canopy cover, integrating raingardens and wetlands, and promoting native planting improves microclimate, reduces heat, and supports biodiversity. - Implementing environmentally sensitive maintenance regimes (e.g., reducing mowing frequency, using recycled water) can lower costs and environmental impact. - Community expectations for environmentally sustainable spaces (e.g. zero waste events, composting toilets).

Upcoming major projects for Recreation & Open Space are available for viewing in Council's Annual Budget document.



10. Monitoring and Improvement Plan

Asset planning is not a set and forget process. It needs to be flexible to ensure our assets and levels of service are responsive to changes in population and demographics and the ongoing challenge of climate change, can capitalise on emerging trends and opportunities, and continue to meet agreed requirements as priorities change over time.

Asset Plan reviews and updates

This Asset Plan will be formally reviewed and updated every four years in line with the new Council term to provide opportunities for the new Council to make any required changes.

Intermediary reviews may be undertaken to provide the opportunity to reflect improvements achieved, major financial decisions made, the consideration of any relevant external factors, or changes to long-term capital works programs to ensure it is responsive to our available financial resources over time.

Reporting

Our Asset Management Plans have a life of four years in line with the council election cycle. They are fully reviewed and updated within two years of each council election. They are also reviewed during the annual budget planning process and updated to recognise any material changes in service levels or resources available to provide those services as a result of budget decisions.

Reporting on service levels and other performance measures is undertaken as part of our Annual Report.

Continuous Improvement

We acknowledge that significant annual expenditure is required to manage and maintain our existing infrastructure. This highlights the importance of maintaining high-level skills and practices to ensure services are delivered economically and sustainably and Council is committed to continuously working to improve our knowledge, skills and operational practices in line with sector-wide best practice.

The financial analysis and projections in this Asset Plan are based on existing data, processes, systems, and standards. Council is committed to identifying ways to achieve a more robust evidence base and analysis and to improving our practices to achieve this. One of the keys to this will be engaging with our community to establish optimised service levels that are affordable over the long term.

APPENDIX 1: LONG TERM INVESTMENT PLAN

Renewal Expenditure based on Proposed LTFP										
Projected Renewal Expenditure (\$,000)										
Asset Class	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
Transport Infrastructure	23,405	14,462	15,666	17,224	17,369	16,464	16,560	16,656	16,752	16,849
Building & Facilities	4,886	7,389	11,675	31,765	26,920	17,337	19,524	17,194	15,802	16,118
Stormwater Infrastructure	3,138	2,200	1,911	2,412	2,822	2,116	2,180	2,245	2,312	2,382
Parks & Recreation	6,350	4,057	7,974	4,667	2,670	4,583	4,555	6,305	4,327	4,327
Total	37,779	28,108	37,226	56,068	49,781	40,500	42,819	42,400	39,193	39,676

Upgrade & New Expenditure based on Proposed LTFP										
Projected Renewal Expenditure (\$,000)										
Asset Class	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
Transport Infrastructure	5,610	3,230	3,080	5,041	2,871	2,905	2,922	2,939	2,956	2,973
Building & Facilities	3,430	4,505	10,686	12,089	7,895	11,558	13,016	11,463	10,535	10,746
Stormwater Drainage	8,471	8,300	6,577	10,415	3,698	4,938	3,973	3,979	3,984	3,988
Parks & Recreation	7,674	7,770	8,042	7,510	3,610	5,601	5,568	7,707	5,289	5,289
Total	25,185	23,805	28,385	35,055	18,074	25,002	25,479	26,088	22,764	22,996

Maintenance Expenditure based on Proposed LTFP										
Projected Renewal Expenditure (\$,000)										
Asset Class	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
Transport Infrastructure	5,419	5,536	5,656	5,780	5,907	6,038	6,172	6,310	6,452	6,598
Building & Facilities	3,793	3,852	3,913	3,975	4,038	4,103	4,169	4,236	4,305	4,376
Stormwater Drainage	354	360	367	372	378	384	390	396	402	408
Parks & Recreation	8,706	8,880	9,123	9,365	9,620	9,883	10,154	10,433	10,721	11,017
Total	18,272	18,628	19,059	19,492	19,943	20,408	20,885	21,375	21,880	22,399

Addressing Climate Change through Upgrade and New Expenditure

A significant portion of Council's annual upgrade and new asset expenditure is dedicated to addressing the impacts of climate change. This investment focuses on building resilience and reducing emissions across several key areas:

- **Drainage infrastructure:** Upgrades include increasing pipe sizes and expanding the underground drainage network to manage higher flood levels associated with more intense and frequent rainfall events.
- **Aquatic centre efficiency:** Works are being undertaken to reduce Council's reliance on gas heating at aquatic centres, transitioning to more sustainable energy solutions.
- **Sustainable building design:** New buildings and major upgrades incorporate climate-resilient design features such as solar panels, thermal insulation, passive heating/cooling, and environmentally responsible materials.

The table below outlines the amount of the annual upgrade and new asset expenditure that is directly attributed to climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

Expenditure on Climate Change Initiatives Included in Long Term Investment Plan (\$,000)										
	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	2030-2031	2031-2032	2032-2033	2033-2034	2034-2035
Climate Change Initiatives	6,879	5,836	6,308	9,104	4,494	5,739	5,653	5,354	5,179	5,231

APPENDIX 2: KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Terminology	Description
Infrastructure Assets	Stationary systems forming a network and serving whole communities where the system as a whole is intended to be maintained indefinitely by continuing replacement and refurbishment of its components, e.g. roads, facilities, footpaths, drains, parks.
Capital Expenditure	Expenditure for new infrastructure and for the renewal or upgrade of existing assets that enhances the service potential of the assets.
Maintenance	Expenditure that is incurred to ensure that the asset continues to provide its pre-determined service capacity and quality and achieves its expected useful life. Maintenance expenditure is of a regular and ongoing nature.
Long Term Financial Plan	A Financial Plan based on a Service Level Target that produces a year-by-year forecast of the investment needed in capital renewals, capital upgrades, new infrastructure and ongoing maintenance.
Lifecycle Indicator	Planned 10-year LTFP / Desired 10-year LTFP costs (maintenance, renewal, upgrade and new expenditure for desired service level). Recommended target = 85-115%.
Asset Health	Asset Health refers to the remaining life expectancy and serviceability of the asset portfolio
Intervention Level	A physical state of an asset defined by its condition, capacity or functionality at which Council will determine a treatment action.
Gender Impact Assessment (GIA)	A requirement under Victoria's Gender Equality Act 2020, a GIA assesses how a policy, program or service may affect people of different genders to ensure equitable, inclusive outcomes in public decision-making.

7.10 DRAFT MERRI-BEK CITY COUNCIL 10-YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN 2025-2035

Director Business Transformation, Sue Vujcevic

Finance Management

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft 10-year Financial Plan 2025-2035, at Attachment 1 to this report, for the purpose of community exhibition.
2. Invites feedback on the draft 10-year Financial Plan 2025-2035 for the public exhibition period, from 15 August 2025 until 12 September 2025.
3. Makes the draft 10-year Financial Plan 2025-2035 available on the Council website and hard copies available at the three civic centres and all libraries.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires each Council to prepare a Financial Plan covering a minimum period of 10-years following each Council election. The draft 10-year Financial Plan 2025-2035 (the draft Financial Plan) covers the periods 2025-26 to 2034-35.

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement of the draft Financial Plan (shown at **Attachment 1**) for public exhibition to receive community feedback.

The draft Financial Plan is one of a number of integrated documents that have been developed to provide a robust and transparent system of financial management aligned to the longer-term aspirations for Merri-bek and as expressed in the newly refreshed Community Vision and Council Plan.

The draft Financial Plan is an important document as it sets out broadly how Council can fund essential services and projects in coming years. The draft Financial Plan is a decision-making tool to identify Council's current and projected financial capacity to meet Council's future needs in providing services and facilities to the community based on the goals and aspirations of the draft Council Plan. The long-term outlook for Council displays prudent financial management.

Previous Council Decisions

Nil.

1. Policy Context

In accordance with section 91 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must:

- a) Develop, adopt and keep in force a Financial Plan for at least the next 10 financial years in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices.

The Financial Plan must be prepared in accordance with Council's deliberative engagement practices by 31 October in the year following a general election.

2. Background

The draft Financial Plan looks at the assumptions and budget parameters that have been applied to the 4-Year budget and extends these out into years 5 to 10 in order to give a long-term view of Council's financial viability and outcomes.

Each year the 10-Year Financial Plan will be reviewed and updated to reflect the circumstances of Council at the time, and any proposed changes will be considered for adoption by Council as a part of the annual budget process.

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, and in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy, Council is required to prepare the Financial Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices in future years.

The draft Financial Plan is included as **Attachment 1** to this report.

3. Issues

The preparation of a 10-year Financial Plan generates improved information to guide Council's decisions about the need, timing and priority of proposed expenditure. Key financial indicators are also used to monitor Council's long-term financial sustainability are in line with established benchmarks.

The draft Financial Plan seeks to ensure we have the financial capacity to continue to provide service levels which meet the needs of our community in a financially sustainable way by:

- Maintaining a modest operating surplus over the life of the Financial Plan whilst spending on renewal and upgrade of community assets.
- Striving to continually improve the way that we deliver our existing and future services and proactively seeking out savings without affecting service delivery levels to the community.
- Monitoring our asset condition data and prioritising the renewal of community infrastructure and facilities.
- Addressing the increasing costs, environmental impacts and potential service changes to council waste services. This includes the investigation of a transition to a four-bin service to reduce waste to landfill and improve the quality of recyclables.
- Monitoring and planning for the ongoing demand for new infrastructure driven by growth, changes in demographics, and increasing community expectations via the development of a comprehensive and evidence driven Asset Management Plan that is discussed and supported by the community.
- Saving for significant investment in placemaking projects (such as the Coburg library and piazza project). Placemaking projects capitalise on a community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and wellbeing'.
- Saving for the 'Parks close to home' strategies that will utilise a large proportion of the broader open space reserve funding to fill open space gaps across Merri-bek. Not only creating and improving access to open space in the area but ensuring new parks and locations are sought opportunistically each year.
- Saving for significant investment in aquatic projects including the Coburg Leisure Centres redevelopment. Upgrading and maintaining Aquatic and Leisure Facilities as outlined in the Moreland Aquatic and Leisure Strategy. Unlike general building infrastructure, Council's six facilities aquatic infrastructure have a life cycle of approximately 50 years and significant ongoing investment is required. Investment in this strategy reinforces Council's commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of residents by providing infrastructure and services that support good health outcomes;
- Maximise external contributions in relation to Development and Open Space Contributions Reserve.
- Ensuring that our debt and interest profile remains at a level that is low enough to guarantee our capacity to service and repay this debt into the future.

- Operating within the key financial indicators and benchmarks to ensure we maintain a sound financial position.
- Advocate strongly within the sector to secure funding where possible and strive to increase sustainable opportunities to diversify Council's revenue base.

In summary, Merri-bek Council is committed to ensuring the responsible and the maximum allocation of funds to initiatives to progress the ongoing and future needs of the local community.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Council launched its engagement program in November 2024 with consultation on the Budget 2025-2029 where over 40 ideas were submitted and over 1,000 people participated. Earlier this year deliberative engagement commenced to realise the Community's vision for the future of Merri-bek.

Deliberative workshops were held over 3 days in February on the Community Vision and priorities for strategic plans. Over 60 residents, representative of the Merri-bek community, refreshed our Community Vision and provided an insight into what is important to the Merri-bek community.

Councillors also participated in three workshop sessions during January to May to formulate and consolidate Council Plan priorities to inform all other strategic documents. A review and analysis was also undertaken of all significant community engagement projects undertaken by Council in the last 4 years.

The draft Community Vision and draft Council Plan 2025-2029 was out for community consultation from 25 June 2025 to 22 July 2025. The next stage of the engagement process involves the draft Asset Management Plan and draft 10- Year Financial Plan to go on public exhibition from 15 August 2025 until 12 September 2025.

Submitters have the opportunity to talk about their feedback directly with Council on the draft Community Vision and draft Council Plan at a session to be held 29 July 2025.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

Costs associated with the preparation of the draft Financial Plan, including the cost of public exhibition, are funded from the 2024-25 operating budget allocations.

7. Implementation

Subject to Council's decision, the draft Financial Plan will be placed on public exhibition period from 15 August 2025 until 12 September 2025. Submissions will be invited via Conversations Merri-bek online portal and in writing for the 28 days.

Following consideration of feedback received through the public exhibition process, a final Financial Plan will be presented for Council consideration for adoption at the Council Meeting on Wednesday 8 October 2025.

Attachment/s

- 1 [🔗](#) Draft 10-year Financial Plan (2025-2035) D25/231913



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1. Introduction

1.1 Executive summary

The 10-year Financial Plan (The Plan) is a key strategic document that sets out 10-year financial projections based on a set of assumptions, known at the time of developing this plan. It is designed to reflect the financial impacts of providing the current service levels and our program of capital works.

The Local Government Act 2020 stipulates a requirement for all Victorian councils to prepare and endorse a 10-year financial plan following each general election, aligning with the Community Vision, Council Plan and other strategic plans of Council.

The Plan is a strategic document that does not override the Annual Budget process and/or decisions in relation to timing of expenditure but will assist to provide information that is crucial to long-term decision making.

The Plan also aligns with the financial management principles within the Local Government Act 2020; alongside Council's financial objectives we apply to our financial planning, control and management as follows:

1. **Adopting a balanced budget** – by adopting a balanced unrestricted result, this ensures that each financial years' expenses are fully funded by an identified funding source (including savings via the reserves)
2. **Fund existing service levels** – ensure that the current services levels that Council provides continues to be fully funded when preparing budgets and making financial decisions
3. **Fund infrastructure renewals** – the funding allocated to annual capital works programs is to remain at greater than \$1.30 for every \$1 of depreciation, this ensures existing infrastructure assets are being maintained and kept up with the pace of consumption (depreciation) of these assets
4. **Victorian Auditor-General Office (VAGO) measures** – maintain an average low-risk for the seven indicators used by VAGO to measure financial sustainability
5. **Financial sustainability** – the capacity to meet the agreed service and infrastructure needs of the community and absorb foreseeable changes and unexpected shocks into the future (both short and long term).

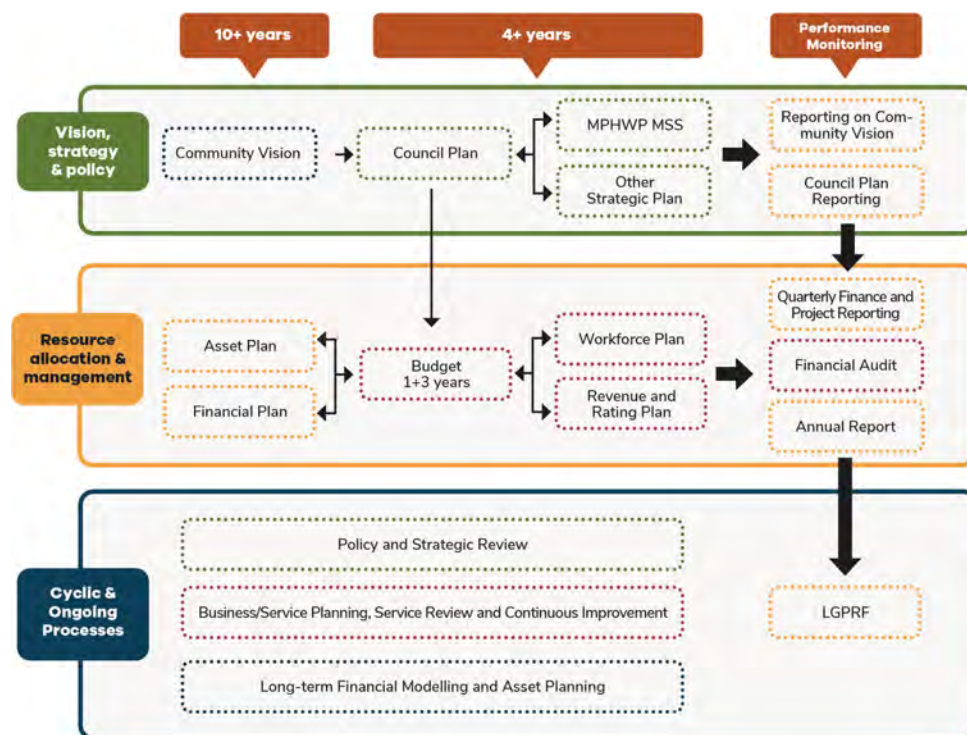
The Plan as proposed indicates that Council is able to maintain the above five financial objectives for the next 10-years.

2. Legislative Requirements & Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

2.1 Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) addresses planning and financial management requirements including development of strategic planning, budgeting and annual reporting documents. At each stage of the integrated planning and reporting framework there are opportunities for community and stakeholder input. This is important to ensure transparency and accountability to both residents and ratepayers.

The diagram below depicts the integrated planning and reporting framework that applies to local government in Victoria.



2.3 Strategic Planning Principles

The Plan provides a 10 year financially sustainable projection regarding how the actions of the Council Plan may be funded to achieve the Community Vision. The Plan is developed in the context of the following strategic planning principles:

- a) Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.
- b) The Plan addresses the Community Vision by funding the aspirations of the Council Plan. The Council Plan aspirations and actions are formulated in the context of the Community Vision.
- c) The Plan statements articulate the 10-year financial resources necessary to implement the goals and aspirations of the Council Plan to achieve the Community Vision.
- d) Council's strategic planning principles identify and address the risks to effective implementation of The Plan.
- e) The Plan allows for the strategic planning principles of progress monitoring and reviews, to adapt to changing circumstances.

2.4 Financial Management Principles

The Plan demonstrates the following financial management principles:

- a) Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions are managed in accordance with Council's financial policies and strategic plans.
- b) Management of the following financial risks:
 - The financial viability of the Council (refer to Section 3.3 Financial Policy Statements).
 - The management of current and future liabilities of the Council. The estimated 10-year liabilities are disclosed in section 4.2 Balance Sheet projections.
 - The beneficial enterprises of Council (where appropriate).
- c) Financial policies and strategic plans are designed to provide financial stability and predictability to the community.
- d) Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position (refer to section 4 Financial Statements).

2.5 Engagement Principles

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires Victorian councils to develop their key strategic plans through deliberative engagement practices (as outlined in their community engagement policy). Our Community Engagement Policy defines deliberative engagement as *providing our community with sufficient time and information to enable critical reasoning, and consideration of options as part of a decision-making process*.

To develop our 10-year Financial Plan, we undertook the following engagement activities:

- Community consultation on Council Budget 2025-2029 – including over 40 Community Budget Ideas submitted, 1,060 people participated in the Budget Ideas voting, and 196 submissions to the Draft Council Budget 2025-29 (November'24, April-May'25);

- 3-day deliberative workshop on Community Vision and priorities for strategic plans - over 60 residents, representative of the Merri-bek community, refreshed our Community Vision and provided an insight into what is important to the Merri-bek community. This insight helped to guide our Council Plan 2025-29, Health and Wellbeing Plan, 10-year Financial Plan, and 10-year Asset Management Plan (February'25);
- 3 workshop sessions for Merri-bek Councillors to formulate and consolidate Council Plan priorities, which inform all other strategic documents (January-May'25);
- Review and analysis of Context report, a summary report of all significant community engagement projects Council undertook in the last 4 years;

Following endorsement the final engagement step is:

- Community feedback submitted on the Draft 10-year Financial Plan – submissions to be provided via Conversations Merri-bek online portal and in writing for 28 days (August'25);

The Financial Plan, including any revisions, will be presented to the Council meeting on 8 October'25 for adoption

2.6 10-year Asset Plan Integration

Integration to the Asset Plan is a key principle underpinning Council's strategic financial planning. The purpose of this integration is to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery in terms of the plans and the effective management of Council's assets into the future.

The Asset Plan identifies the operational and strategic practices that will ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner. The Asset Plan and associated asset management category plans provide council with a sound base to understand the risk associated with managing its assets for the community's benefit.

2.7 Revenue and Rating Plan Integration

Integration to the Revenue and Rating Plan is another key strategic financial planning principle. The Revenue and Rating Plan provides the framework for the setting of fees and charges, statutory charges, rates, and other Council income sources. It also documents assumptions regarding the levels of non-controlled revenues that the Council expects to generate over the 4-year period covered by the Plan, such as grants, subsidies, and contributions.

Additionally, it defines the amounts of rates to be generated either through a uniform rate, or from different ratepayer/property classes through municipal charges, differential rates, service rates and charges, and special rates and charges (where they have been adopted).

3. Financial Plan Context Setting

3.1 Challenges that may impact our financial sustainability:

There are a range of challenges Council continues to face which may affect future assumptions in The Plan and Councils financial sustainability, these include:

- **Rate capping** – Victorian councils are subject to rate capping, which sets the maximum percentage limit that the total income received from rates can increase annually. Rate capping provides substantial financial challenges to Council's long term financial sustainability and continues to restrict Councils ability to raise revenue to maintain service delivery levels and invest in community assets.
- **Population growth** – While population is estimated to be 191,747 currently and forecast suggest population will grow to 222,733 by 2036. The current financial plan assumes service levels remain the same and has not allowed for change/expansion in service delivery.
- **Cost shifting from Federal and State Governments** – Cost shifting from State or Federal Government is a continuous challenge and happens when these higher levels of government reduce funding or stop providing certain services but still expect Councils to fund the gap or provide those services; as a result, local governments have to pay for them instead. Also, over time, when financial contributions received from the State or Federal government do not increase in line with the real cost of providing services, Council is then required to bridge the gap in funding using rating income and/or needing to reprioritise funding away from providing important services to the community.
- **Aged Care Reforms** -The move from the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) to the Support at Home program creates financial pressure for local governments, mainly because funding will shift from guaranteed block payments to individualised client-based funding. This means councils will have less predictable income and must compete with other providers for clients, which could make some services harder to sustain. On top of that, councils face extra costs for upgrading digital systems and training staff, all while dealing with uncertainty around when the changes will take effect.
- **Developer contributions** - If the Minister for Planning of Victoria does not approve the proposed amendments to the Merri-bek planning scheme to introduce a new open space levy and new Development Contributions Plan, Council will face significant detrimental financial impacts. Without these mechanisms, we'll have limited ability to secure funding from new developments to support essential new infrastructure - such as parks, community facilities, and local roads, which are all needed to accommodate population growth. Any shortfall will lead to budgetary strain and would compromise the quality and sustainability of urban development within the municipality.
- **Significant capital works projects** – The Plan has allowed for the construction of the \$60 million Coburg library and piazza project (completion expected by November 2029). While the next significant capital works project is not confirmed, the assumptions is to save for the next potential project is likely to take place in the next 10-15 years, such as Coburg Leisure Centre redevelopment.
- **Capital works program** – There are some capital projects with allowance made only for feasibility or investigation works in the next 4-years but not implementation. These

unfunded projects include, but are not limited to, McDonald Reserve – stage 2, Coburg basketball stadium and Pascoe Vale Outdoor Pool.

- **Maintaining existing assets** – Council manages \$2.8 billion of essential community assets. According to the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (IPWEA), 1 in 10 of all local government assets across the nation needs significant attention, and 3 in every 100 assets may need to be replaced. We know Council is investing significantly year-on-year on the capital works program in comparison to other local governments. The goal of asset renewal is to bring the asset back to its “as-new” condition or a state where it can provide the same level of service as when it was first build. While our indicators show that we sit within a low risk for asset renewal year-on year, we know we have ageing infrastructure and that each individual asset is not being maintained to this level.
- **Changes in regulations, legislation or policy** – many changes in regulation or policy imposed by the state or commonwealth lead to additional, unplanned costs being incurred. Even when Council is fully supportive of such a change, it becomes increasingly difficult to implement in the rate capped environment.
- **Climate change and increase in extreme weather events** - as the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events increase, the need for investment in climate change adaptation and mitigation is increasing. Climate change affects all areas of Council's operations – from planning to parks and recreation, maintaining assets and delivering much loved community services. The most substantial financial impacts are anticipated in infrastructure. Damage from extreme weather will likely result in asset damage, reduce the useful life of infrastructure, and increase the cost and frequency of repairs and renewals. Additional investment will be required to upgrade assets to be climate-resilient and maintain service levels. Embedding climate risk into planning, asset management, and decision-making processes will also require investment in supporting staff capability and systems development to respond to new challenges.
- **Global uncertainty** – events, global affairs and policy changes that occur outside of Council's sphere of influence can impact on Council operations.

3.2 Understanding our operating surplus

Our operating surplus (accounting surplus) is calculated as our total revenue received less our total operating expenditure and on face value, the operating surplus looks like Council is generating a significant surplus each year. However, it is important to note that the operating surplus does not convert to immediately available cash to Council. Surplus funds are used to fund important community infrastructure projects like the recently completed Fawkner Leisure Centre redevelopment or Balam Balam Place, Brunswick.

Significant amounts of surplus are restricted by legislation and must be used for future infrastructure investment.

To calculate the underlying result, you need to remove key revenue items such:

- **Capital grants** – this is funding that is tied to the capital works program and cannot be used to fund the day-to-day operations of Council
- **Contributions** – this is funding received from developers that is tied and cannot be used to fund the day-to-day operations of Council.

Following this, Council then calculates the unrestricted result. This is the net funding result after considering:

- **Rates funded capital works program** – this is Council's contribution to the capital works program;
- **Loan repayments** – this is the principal component of our loan portfolio;
- **Transfers to and from reserve** – this is essentially used like a saving account for key projects and is governed by the *Financial Reserves and Capital Management Policy*.

3.3 Victorian Auditor-General Office (VAGO) financial sustainability measures

Indicator	How is it calculated?	What does a low risk mean?
Net result (%)	Net result/Total revenue	A positive result indicates a surplus, and the larger the percentage, the stronger the result.
Adjusted underlying result (%)	Adjusted underlying surplus/Adjusted underlying revenue	A ratio of greater than 5% indicates that Council is generating strong surpluses to fund operations (the ordinary course of business).
Liquidity (ratio)	Current assets/Current liabilities	A ratio of greater than 1.0 indicates that Council has no immediate issues with repaying short-term liabilities as they fall due.
Internal financing (%)	Net operating cash flow/Net capital expenditure	This measures the ability of Council to finance capital works from generated cash flows. The ratio looks at whether Council's cash flow from the current year can fund the current year's capital works program.
Indebtedness (%)	Non-current liabilities/own-sourced revenue Non-current liabilities / (Total revenue – contributions – grants)	A ratio of less than 40% indicates that there is no concern over the ability to repay debt from Council's own-source revenue.
Capital replacement (ratio)	Cash outflows for property, plant and equipment/Depreciation	A ratio higher than 1.5 indicates that there is low risk of insufficient spending on asset renewal
Renewal gap (ratio)	Renewal and upgrade expenditure/depreciation	More than 1.0 indicates low risk of insufficient spending on existing asset base. It is the comparison of the rate of spending on existing assets through renewing, restoring, and replacing existing assets with depreciation.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	10-year average	Projections										Trend
				2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	+/-
VAGO indicators (green = low risk, orange = medium risk, red = high risk)														
Net result	Net result / total revenue	1	14.5%	15.4%	11.4%	12.6%	12.3%	13.2%	16.1%	16.1%	15.9%	15.6%	16.1%	+
Adjusted underlying result	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / adjusted underlying revenue	1	12.4%	11.5%	9.1%	10.9%	11.2%	13.2%	13.7%	13.8%	13.5%	13.2%	13.8%	+
Liquidity (Working Capital)	Current assets / current liabilities	1	2.61	2.03	2.24	2.34	2.30	2.36	2.60	2.77	2.92	3.18	3.41	+
Internal financing	Net operating cash flow / net capital expenditure	1	124.0%	95.3%	135.8%	120.6%	93.6%	117.2%	134.3%	129.4%	129.4%	141.0%	143.3%	+
Indebtedness	Non-current liabilities / own source revenue	1	5.0%	5.9%	4.8%	3.8%	8.1%	6.7%	5.8%	4.8%	3.9%	3.3%	2.7%	+
Capital replacement	Cash outflows for property, plant and equipment / depreciation	1	1.64	2.15	1.30	1.52	1.96	1.61	1.57	1.65	1.65	1.51	1.52	-
Asset renewal	Asset renewal & upgrade expenditure / depreciation	1	1.37	1.87	1.07	1.16	1.60	1.48	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	-
Other indicators														
Unrestricted cash	Unrestricted cash / current liabilities	2	-59.3%	-50.9%	-42.7%	-48.7%	-40.6%	-45.2%	-67.6%	-77.3%	-72.7%	-74.8%	-72.8%	+
Loans and borrowings	Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	3	5.7%	6.7%	5.5%	4.3%	9.9%	8.1%	6.6%	5.5%	4.5%	3.4%	2.7%	+
Loans and borrowings	Interest and principal repayments / rate revenue		1.9%	7.4%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%	2.0%	1.6%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	0.8%	+
Rates concentration	Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue	4	75.4%	75.2%	75.9%	76.1%	75.4%	75.4%	75.3%	75.3%	75.2%	75.2%	75.2%	o
Rates effort	Rate revenue / property values (CIV)		0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	o
Expenditure level	Total expenditure / no. of assessments		2,634	\$2,705	\$2,760	\$2,709	\$2,718	\$2,636	\$2,601	\$2,579	\$2,565	\$2,551	\$2,515	o
Revenue level	Residential rate revenue / No. of residential assessments		1,964	\$1,991	\$1,997	\$2,002	\$1,997	\$1,981	\$1,966	\$1,950	\$1,934	\$1,918	\$1,903	o
Key to Forecast Trend:														
+ Forecasts an improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator														
o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady														
- Forecasts a deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator														

Notes to Financial Plan Indicators

The targeted performance indicators above include both the VAGO financial sustainability measures as well as the prescribed performance indicators contained in Schedule 4 of the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020. Results against these indicators and targets will be reported in Council's Performance Statement included in the Annual Report.

1. **VAGO financial sustainability indicators** – These seven indicators show that Council is considered low risk for the next 10-years.
2. **Unrestricted cash** - This remains low, as Council has invested a greater amount of term deposits over 90 days (which is considered restricted assets). The indicator looks at unrestricted cash (cash in the bank and investments that can be redeemed in under 90 days). Overall cash levels (both restricted and unrestricted) are forecast to remain sufficient to meet Council's commitments as they become due.
3. **Loans and borrowings** – This shows a reduction of borrowings in the first three years and then an increase in 2028-29 when borrowings of \$15 million are projected for the Coburg Library and Piazza project. Following this, debt continues to be paid off, freeing up borrowing capacity in years 10 onwards for the next major project.
4. **Rates concentration** - It is anticipated that this indicator will remain consistent with the small forecast increase year on year due to anticipated supplementary rates.

3.4 Assumptions

This section describes the internal and external contexts which informed the 10-year financial projections and assumptions. Whilst we take every care in assessing each of these assumptions, the information is sensitive to changes that are often outside of the control of Council.

Our confidence in the accuracy of our assumptions is greatest in the near-future and decreases as we approach the outer years.

	Notes	Projections									
		2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
Rate Cap Increase	1	3.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Population Growth	2	1.80%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%
Investment Interest Rate	3	3.40%	3.20%	3.20%	3.20%	3.20%	3.20%	3.20%	3.20%	3.20%	3.20%
Statutory Fees & Fines	4	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
User Fees	4	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Grants - Operating (recurrent)	5	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Grants - Capital (non-recurrent)	5	0.36%	(42.02%)	(17.86%)	(29.54%)	(93.10%)	2972.61%	2.19%	2.19%	2.19%	2.18%
Contributions	6	(25.28%)	3.00%	16.15%	34.28%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Other Income	7	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
CPI	8	2.75%	2.75%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Materials and Services	9	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Depreciation	10	3.69%	3.36%	0.61%	2.42%	0.58%	0.58%	0.58%	0.58%	0.58%	0.58%
Borrowing Interest Rate	11	2.88%	2.88%	2.88%	2.88%	3.41%	2.03%	1.85%	1.85%	1.85%	1.25%
Bad and Doubtful Debts		1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Other Expenses		1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%

Notes to the assumptions**1. Rates cap increase**

The rate cap for 2025-26 was set at 3.0 per cent as approved by the Minister for Local Government, in comparison to 2.75 per cent for 2024-25. It should be noted that the Minister for Local Government announces the actual rate cap in December of the year preceding the annual budget.

The Plan is based on Council adopting the annual rate cap, which for the purposes of this document is assumed to be 2.0 per cent for future years outside of the annual 2025-29 budget.

2. Population growth

The municipality's population is currently estimated to be 191,747 and our forecast suggests population will grow to 222,733 by 2036.

3. Investment Interest Rate

Surplus funds are invested in line with Council's Investment Policy. Interest income is based on predicted cashflows, cash balance and investment returns. Council has committed through the Fossil Fuel Divestment Strategy to actively invest with fossil free financial institutions within the Investment Policy parameters.

Currently, Council has committed to ensuring that a minimum of 70 per cent of all term deposits held are a green investment. The official RBA Cash rate is now 3.85 per cent (as at 21 May 2025) with expectation of further rate decreases linked to the most recent RBA cash rate forecasts.

4. Statutory & User fees and charges

Future increases in user fees are assumed to increase by 3.0 per cent per annum. The increase to statutory fees and charges are controlled by the increase to the unit rate as determined in the Monetary Units Act 2004.

Council has estimated that statutory fees and fines will increase by 3.0 per cent, this is subject to change when the unit rates are set in May each year.

5. Grants (Operating & Capital)

Council recognises the importance of actively pursuing and maintaining grant funding from all available sources.

Commonwealth Operating Grants for Aged Services, Home Support and Children's Services are estimated at \$8.1 million for 2025/26. State based funding for Library Services, Maternal Child and Health and Financial Assistance Grants are estimated at \$10.5 million for 2025/26. Forward estimates project an annual increase of 2.0 per cent for the life of The Plan.

The level of capital grants is determined based on the nature and level of projects included in the Capital Works Program and vary widely. For the life of the plan, it has been assumed that non-recurrent 'specific purpose' grant funding will be maintained at 1.4 per cent of overall income and reflects a minor escalation in the levels of funding anticipated from the State and Federal Government.

Both sources of grant funding are reliant on external parties and there is an inherent level of risk in placing a reliance on these funds.

6. Contribution income

The council receives income from development for two main purposes:

- to improve open space and recreation (public open space contributions); and
- to improve the infrastructure and amenity of the municipality (developer contributions).

Public open space contributions - Amendment C235mbek to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme proposes a new municipal-wide Open Space Contribution Rate. The new municipal-wide contribution rate is predicted to substantially increase the revenue collected under this scheme, enabling Council to bring forward the completion date of a range of recreation and open space capital projects. It is anticipated that Amendment C235mbek will be approved in 2026/27. This approval is subject to approval by the Victorian Minister for Planning.

A Development Contributions Plan (DCP) imposes a development infrastructure levy to fund a range of social and physical infrastructure to meet the future needs of the community. The collection of DCP levies for planning permits under Council's current DCP ceased for permits issued after 30 June 2023. A new DCP has been prepared which will enable Council to collect DCP levies from new development. It is anticipated that collection of levies under the new DCP will commence in 2026/27 when the DCP is introduced into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme through Amendment C236mbek. This approval is subject to approval by the Victorian Minister for Planning.

7. Other Income

Council has estimated that other income will increase annually by 3.0 per cent. This includes revenue such as rental and lease income.

8. CPI

Consumer price index is consistent with the Victoria State Government's CPI outlook which is set in its 2025-26 budget.

9. Materials & services

Materials and services basic indexation has been set at 1.0 per cent for 2025-26 and for the outer years (except for major contracts and utilities). This is below the CPI increase and reflects Council's commitment to continuous improvement and finding efficiencies to continue delivering Council services without seeking an exemption from the rate cap.

10. Depreciation

Depreciation is a non-cash accounting entry that represents the monetary value of an asset decreasing overtime due to wear, tear and obsolescence.

Depreciation of council's infrastructure assets is determined from information contained within the various asset management plans and strategies. Depreciation is subject to periodic asset revaluations and indexation informed by market conditions. This can lead to significant year-on-year fluctuations, making precise predictions extremely difficult.

11. Borrowing costs

Council has both fixed and variation loans and the movement year-on-year is reflective of the estimated average borrowing rate. The interest expense to service Councils loan portfolio is detailed in section 5.1 of The Plan.

4. Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information regarding the following Financial Plan Statements for the 10 years from 2025-26;

Comprehensive Income Statement

This is an accrual-based statement that includes non-cash items such as depreciation charges but does not include capital items such as capital works expenditure.

Balance Sheet

This statement is a representation of the projected assets and liabilities of the Council.

Statement of Changes in Equity

This statement represents projected accumulated surplus, revaluation reserve and other reserve movements at 30 June each financial year.

Statement of Cash Flows

This statement provides a summary of projected cash inflow and outflows by type of activity – being either operating, investing or financing.

Statement of Capital Works

This statement sets out all the expected capital expenditure in relation to non-current assets for the year. It provides information related to the capital works expenditure including the funding source, the value of renewal of assets, upgrades and expansion of assets, and new assets.

Statement of Human Resources

This statement sets out projected Council staff expenditure and staff numbers.

4.1 Comprehensive Income Statement

	Forecast Actual 2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000	2031-32 \$'000	2032-33 \$'000	2033-34 \$'000	2034-35 \$'000
Income / Revenue											
Rates and charges	194,491	202,778	209,622	216,597	222,691	227,547	232,453	237,460	242,573	247,792	253,092
Statutory fees and fines	18,258	19,323	19,717	20,256	20,832	21,439	22,064	22,707	23,369	24,051	24,752
User fees	9,656	8,899	8,269	7,650	7,813	8,041	8,275	8,516	8,764	9,020	9,283
Grants - Operating	21,944	21,205	20,587	20,456	20,605	20,915	21,232	21,555	21,885	22,221	22,564
Grants - Capital	12,917	12,964	7,516	6,174	4,350	300	9,218	9,419	9,625	9,836	10,050
Contributions - monetary	11,017	8,232	8,479	9,848	13,224	13,489	13,759	14,034	14,314	14,601	14,893
Contributions - non-monetary	401	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net gain on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	62	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	114	117	121
Other income	17,121	7,797	7,936	8,272	8,523	9,083	9,372	9,597	9,827	10,064	10,306
Total income / revenue	285,866	281,292	282,220	289,351	298,140	300,918	316,479	323,398	330,471	337,701	345,060
Expenses											
Employee costs	114,628	116,144	118,863	120,257	124,005	128,044	132,483	136,802	141,262	145,868	150,622
Materials and services	77,293	73,203	81,730	81,519	85,906	79,760	79,497	80,643	82,670	84,777	84,249
Depreciation	40,146	43,621	45,230	46,749	47,036	48,175	48,454	48,735	49,018	49,302	49,587
Depreciation - right of use assets	236	236	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Allowance for impairment losses	3,501	3,153	3,247	3,344	3,444	3,478	3,513	3,548	3,584	3,619	3,656
Borrowing costs	887	816	285	234	181	877	771	684	596	504	421
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,213	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other expenses	735	790	803	823	843	852	860	869	877	886	895
Total expenses	238,638	237,964	250,158	252,926	261,415	261,187	265,578	271,280	278,006	284,956	289,429
Surplus for the year	47,229	43,328	32,062	36,425	36,725	39,732	50,901	52,118	52,465	52,745	55,632
Other comprehensive income											
Net asset revaluation gain /(loss)	-	49,206	-	69,641	-	52,202	-	73,296	-	55,381	-
Total comprehensive result	47,229	92,534	32,062	106,066	36,725	91,934	50,901	125,415	52,465	108,126	55,632

4.2 Balance Sheet

	Forecast Actual	Projections									
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Assets											
Current assets											
Cash and cash equivalents	14,441	89	8,719	10,965	17,733	26,724	19,206	20,026	30,959	38,730	49,564
Trade and other receivables	44,760	45,793	46,249	46,713	47,182	47,707	48,287	48,925	49,623	50,382	51,203
Other financial assets	78,100	73,107	83,107	93,107	93,107	93,107	123,107	143,107	153,107	173,107	193,107
Inventories	659	659	659	659	659	659	659	659	659	659	659
Prepayments	2,429	2,429	2,429	2,429	2,429	2,429	2,429	2,429	2,429	2,429	2,429
Other assets	2,208	2,208	2,208	2,208	2,208	2,208	2,208	2,208	2,208	2,208	2,208
Total current assets	142,597	124,284	143,372	156,080	163,318	172,833	195,896	217,355	238,985	267,515	299,170
Non-current assets											
Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	2,883,720	2,983,191	2,996,678	3,090,530	3,135,546	3,217,249	3,245,026	3,349,836	3,381,513	3,462,020	3,487,845
Right-of-use assets	364	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128
Investment property	36,024	36,024	36,024	36,024	36,024	36,024	36,024	36,024	36,024	36,024	36,024
Total non-current assets	2,920,110	3,019,345	3,032,832	3,126,684	3,171,700	3,253,403	3,281,180	3,385,990	3,417,667	3,498,174	3,523,999
Total assets	3,062,707	3,143,629	3,176,204	3,282,765	3,335,018	3,426,236	3,477,076	3,603,345	3,656,651	3,765,688	3,823,169
Liabilities											
Current liabilities											
Trade and other payables	18,717	18,753	18,794	18,835	18,878	18,918	18,957	18,998	19,039	19,081	19,123
Trust funds and deposits	6,274	6,384	6,496	6,608	6,721	6,836	6,952	7,069	7,187	7,306	7,427
Contract and other liabilities	6,898	6,898	6,898	6,898	6,898	6,898	6,898	6,898	6,898	6,898	6,898
Provisions	24,637	27,110	29,642	32,204	34,845	37,572	40,394	43,308	46,317	49,424	52,632
Interest-bearing liabilities	14,212	2,172	2,220	2,270	3,598	3,038	2,217	2,327	2,358	1,522	1,598
Lease liabilities	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total current liabilities	70,757	61,318	64,050	66,814	70,940	73,262	75,418	78,599	81,798	84,232	87,678
Non-current liabilities											
Provisions	2,603	2,603	2,603	2,603	2,603	2,603	2,603	2,603	2,603	2,603	2,603
Interest-bearing liabilities	13,609	11,437	9,218	6,948	18,350	15,312	13,095	10,768	8,410	6,888	5,290
Total non-current liabilities	16,212	14,040	11,821	9,551	20,953	17,915	15,698	13,371	11,013	9,491	7,893
Total liabilities	86,969	75,358	75,870	76,365	91,893	91,177	91,116	91,970	92,812	93,723	95,572
Net assets	2,975,738	3,068,271	3,100,333	3,206,400	3,243,125	3,335,059	3,385,960	3,511,374	3,563,839	3,671,965	3,727,597
Equity											
Accumulated surplus	851,036	916,351	930,155	956,565	990,225	1,022,538	1,052,885	1,086,697	1,119,506	1,150,265	1,177,172
Reserves	2,124,701	2,151,921	2,170,178	2,249,835	2,252,900	2,312,521	2,333,075	2,424,678	2,444,334	2,521,700	2,550,425
Total equity	2,975,738	3,068,272	3,100,334	3,206,400	3,243,125	3,335,059	3,385,960	3,511,374	3,563,839	3,671,965	3,727,597

4.3 Statement of Changes in Equity

	Forecast	Projections									
	Actual										
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Accumulated Surplus											
Balance at beginning of the financial year	785,732	789,691	817,036	825,404	844,679	858,942	866,100	892,931	923,243	951,255	978,674
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	47,229	43,328	32,062	36,425	36,725	39,732	50,901	52,118	52,465	52,745	55,632
Transfers to other reserves	(43,270)	(15,983)	(23,694)	(17,149)	(22,462)	(32,574)	(24,070)	(21,806)	(24,454)	(25,325)	(32,067)
Closing Balance	789,691	817,036	825,404	844,679	858,942	866,100	892,931	923,243	951,255	978,674	1,002,239
Revaluation Reserve											
Balance at beginning of the financial year	2,066,207	2,066,207	2,115,413	2,115,413	2,185,054	2,185,054	2,237,256	2,237,256	2,310,553	2,310,553	2,365,934
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)	-	49,206	-	69,641	-	52,202	-	73,296	-	55,381	-
Closing Balance	2,066,207	2,115,413	2,115,413	2,185,054	2,185,054	2,237,256	2,237,256	2,310,553	2,310,553	2,365,934	2,365,934
Other Reserves											
Balance at beginning of the financial year	76,569	199,129	135,823	159,517	176,666	199,129	231,703	255,772	277,578	302,032	327,357
Transfers to other reserves	43,270	32,574	23,694	17,149	22,462	32,574	24,070	21,806	24,454	25,325	32,067
Closing Balance	119,840	231,703	159,517	176,666	199,129	231,703	255,772	277,578	302,032	327,357	359,424
Balance at end of the financial year	2,975,738	3,164,152	3,100,334	3,206,400	3,243,125	3,335,059	3,385,960	3,511,374	3,563,839	3,671,965	3,727,597

4.4 Statement of Cash Flows

	Forecast Actual	Projections									
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflow s (Outflow s)	Inflow s (Outflow s)	Inflow s (Outflow s)	Inflow s (Outflow s)	Inflow s (Outflow s)	Inflow s (Outflow s)	Inflow s (Outflow s)	Inflow s (Outflow s)	Inflow s (Outflow s)	Inflow s (Outflow s)	Inflow s (Outflow s)
Cash flows from operating activities											
Rates and charges	191,574	199,737	206,478	213,348	219,351	224,134	228,966	233,898	238,934	244,075	249,295
Statutory fees and fines	17,345	18,357	19,322	19,851	20,416	21,010	21,623	22,253	22,902	23,570	24,257
User fees	9,463	8,721	8,104	7,497	7,657	7,880	8,109	8,345	8,589	8,839	9,097
Grants - operating	21,944	21,205	20,587	20,456	20,605	20,915	21,232	21,555	21,885	22,221	22,564
Grants - capital	12,917	12,964	7,516	6,174	4,350	300	9,218	9,419	9,625	9,836	10,050
Contributions - monetary	11,017	8,232	8,479	9,848	13,224	13,489	13,759	14,034	14,314	14,601	14,893
Trust funds and deposits taken	41,113	41,524	41,939	42,359	42,782	43,210	43,642	44,079	44,520	44,965	45,414
Other receipts	17,121	7,797	7,936	8,272	8,523	9,083	9,372	9,597	9,827	10,064	10,306
Employee costs	(112,187)	(113,670)	(116,331)	(117,696)	(121,363)	(125,317)	(129,661)	(133,888)	(138,253)	(142,761)	(147,413)
Materials and services	(77,254)	(73,167)	(81,689)	(81,478)	(85,863)	(79,721)	(79,457)	(80,602)	(82,629)	(84,734)	(84,206)
Trust funds and deposits repaid	(41,004)	(41,414)	(41,828)	(42,246)	(42,669)	(43,096)	(43,527)	(43,962)	(44,401)	(44,845)	(45,294)
Other payments	(735)	(790)	(803)	(823)	(843)	(852)	(860)	(869)	(877)	(886)	(895)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	91,314	89,497	79,709	85,561	86,169	91,037	102,416	103,860	104,436	104,943	108,068
Cash flows from investing activities											
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(102,229)	(93,886)	(58,717)	(70,961)	(92,052)	(77,676)	(76,232)	(80,248)	(80,694)	(74,427)	(75,412)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	62	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	114	117	121
(Payments for) / proceeds from investments	5,900	4,993	(10,000)	(10,000)	-	-	(30,000)	(20,000)	(10,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(96,267)	(88,801)	(68,622)	(80,863)	(91,950)	(77,572)	(106,125)	(100,138)	(90,581)	(94,310)	(95,292)
Cash flows from financing activities											
Finance costs	(887)	(816)	(285)	(234)	(181)	(877)	(771)	(684)	(596)	(504)	(421)
Proceeds from borrowings	-	-	-	-	15,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings	(1,997)	(14,212)	(2,172)	(2,220)	(2,270)	(3,598)	(3,038)	(2,217)	(2,327)	(2,358)	(1,522)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(109)	(20)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	(2,993)	(15,048)	(2,457)	(2,453)	12,550	(4,475)	(3,809)	(2,901)	(2,923)	(2,861)	(1,943)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	(7,946)	(14,352)	8,631	2,245	6,769	8,990	(7,518)	821	10,932	7,771	10,834
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	22,387	14,441	89	8,719	10,965	17,733	26,724	19,206	20,026	30,959	38,730
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	14,441	89	8,719	10,965	17,733	26,724	19,206	20,026	30,959	38,730	49,564

4.5 Statement of Capital Works

	Forecast		Projections									
	Actual											
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Property												
Land	3,245	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total land	3,245	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Buildings	30,096	8,910	6,270	16,570	40,375	29,925	17,322	20,901	16,951	14,563	15,022	
Building improvements	6,720	7,535	4,181	3,146	1,652	2,461	11,572	11,639	11,706	11,774	11,841	
Total buildings	36,816	16,445	10,451	19,716	42,027	32,386	28,894	32,540	28,657	26,337	26,864	
Total property	40,061	16,445	10,451	19,716	42,027	32,386	28,894	32,540	28,657	26,337	26,864	
Plant and equipment												
Plant, machinery and equipment	5,175	5,877	8,686	6,984	4,399	7,672	7,902	8,139	8,383	8,635	8,894	
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	189	171	173	175	177	179	250	251	253	254	256	
Computers and telecommunications	950	1,125	875	893	928	1,255	1,352	1,360	1,368	1,376	1,384	
Artworks	54	47	49	52	54	56	58	59	61	63	65	
Library books	1,082	1,082	1,082	1,082	1,082	1,110	1,139	1,168	1,198	1,229	1,261	
Total plant and equipment	7,451	8,302	10,865	9,186	6,640	10,272	10,701	10,979	11,264	11,558	11,860	
Infrastructure												
Roads	20,576	27,223	13,400	16,057	15,017	15,026	15,912	16,004	16,097	16,190	16,284	
Bridges	372	3,334	2,100	-	-	-	579	582	586	589	592	
Footpaths and cycleways	3,628	6,662	3,999	4,631	4,512	4,165	5,266	5,296	5,327	5,358	5,389	
Drainage	3,681	2,946	2,376	370	865	969	4,667	4,694	4,721	4,749	4,776	
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	-	14,025	6,429	12,082	9,349	6,427	-	-	-	-	-	
Waste management	545	2,183	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	
Parks, open space and streetscapes	24,656	12,767	8,817	8,890	13,612	8,402	10,183	10,123	14,012	9,617	9,617	
Other infrastructure	1,261	-	250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total infrastructure	54,718	69,140	37,401	42,059	43,385	35,018	36,637	36,730	40,773	36,533	36,688	
Total capital works expenditure	102,229	93,886	58,717	70,961	92,052	77,676	76,232	80,248	80,694	74,427	75,412	
Represented by:												
New asset expenditure	26,364	12,345	10,186	16,662	16,812	6,492	13,046	17,112	17,118	10,507	10,755	
Asset renewal expenditure	55,712	60,647	38,518	45,945	61,644	59,894	48,891	48,758	49,116	49,375	50,028	
Asset upgrade expenditure	20,153	20,894	10,013	8,354	13,596	11,291	14,295	14,378	14,461	14,545	14,629	
Total capital works expenditure	102,229	93,886	58,717	70,961	92,052	77,676	76,232	80,248	80,694	74,427	75,412	
Funding sources represented by:												
Grants	12,763	12,964	7,516	6,174	4,350	300	9,218	9,419	9,625	9,836	10,050	
Contributions	15,297	6,167	3,680	2,425	10,160	165	3,394	3,374	4,671	3,206	3,206	
Council cash	50,613	55,665	42,192	56,384	53,417	48,696	60,630	65,153	62,398	61,386	57,965	
Reserves (including carry forwards)	23,556	19,091	5,329	5,978	9,125	28,515	2,990	2,301	4,000	-	4,191	
Borrowings	-	-	-	-	15,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total capital works expenditure	102,229	93,886	58,717	70,961	92,052	77,676	76,232	80,248	80,694	74,427	75,412	

4.6 Statement of Human Resources (\$)

	Forecast	Projections									
	Actual										
	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000	2031-32 \$'000	2032-33 \$'000	2033-34 \$'000	2034-35 \$'000
Total staff expenditure											
Women	58,339	60,663	62,083	62,811	64,769	66,879	69,197	71,453	73,782	76,188	78,671
Men	46,781	49,944	51,113	51,713	53,324	55,062	56,970	58,828	60,745	62,726	64,770
Persons of self-described gender	368	424	434	439	453	467	484	499	516	533	550
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	9,141	5,113	5,232	5,294	5,459	5,637	5,832	6,022	6,219	6,422	6,631
Capitalised labour costs	1,926	1,814	837	804	807	833	862	890	919	949	980
Total staff expenditure	116,555	117,958	119,700	121,061	124,812	128,878	133,346	137,693	142,181	146,818	151,602
Permanent full-time											
Women	36,135	38,228	39,123	39,582	40,816	42,145	43,606	45,028	46,496	48,012	49,576
Men	43,856	47,067	48,169	48,734	50,253	51,890	53,689	55,439	57,246	59,113	61,039
Persons of self-described gender	213	218	223	226	233	241	249	257	265	274	283
Total permanent full-time expenditure	80,204	85,514	87,515	88,542	91,301	94,275	97,544	100,723	104,007	107,399	110,898
Permanent part-time											
Women	22,204	22,435	22,960	23,229	23,953	24,734	25,591	26,425	27,287	28,177	29,095
Men	2,925	2,877	2,944	2,979	3,072	3,172	3,282	3,389	3,499	3,613	3,731
Persons of self-described gender	155	206	211	213	220	227	235	242	250	258	267
Total permanent part-time expenditure	25,284	25,518	26,115	26,422	27,245	28,132	29,108	30,057	31,036	32,048	33,093
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	9,141	5,113	5,232	5,294	5,459	5,637	5,832	6,022	6,219	6,422	6,631
Capitalised labour costs	1,926	1,814	837	804	807	833	862	890	919	949	980

4.7 Statement of Human Resources (FTE)

	Forecast	Projections									
	Actual										
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
Total full-time equivalent (FTE)											
Women	487.2	485.1	485.1	485.1	485.1	485.1	485.1	485.1	485.1	485.1	485.1
Men	390.5	401.9	401.9	401.9	401.9	401.9	401.9	401.9	401.9	401.9	401.9
Persons of self-described gender	3.5	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Casuals and temporary staff	72.0	46.6	35.2	18.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5
Capitalised labour	13.0	15.0	7.0	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5
Total full-time equivalent (FTE)	966.2	952.6	933.2	916.0	915.0	915.0	915.0	915.0	915.0	915.0	915.0
Permanent full-time											
Women	277.0	279.0	279.0	279.0	279.0	279.0	279.0	279.0	279.0	279.0	279.0
Men	361.0	374.0	374.0	374.0	374.0	374.0	374.0	374.0	374.0	374.0	374.0
Persons of self-described gender	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Total permanent full-time FTE	640.0	655.0	655.0	655.0	655.0	655.0	655.0	655.0	655.0	655.0	655.0
Permanent part-time											
Women	210.3	206.1	206.1	206.1	206.1	206.1	206.1	206.1	206.1	206.1	206.1
Men	29.5	27.9	27.9	27.9	27.9	27.9	27.9	27.9	27.9	27.9	27.9
Persons of self-described gender	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Total permanent part-time FTE	241.3	236.0	236.0	236.0	236.0	236.0	236.0	236.0	236.0	236.0	236.0
Casuals and temporary FTE	72.0	46.6	35.2	18.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5
Capitalised FTE	13.0	15.0	7.0	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5

5. Strategies and Plans

This section describes the strategies and plans that support the 10-year financial projections included to the Financial Plan.

5.1 Borrowing Strategy

Whilst not a source of income, borrowings are an important cash management tool and can assist to bring forward the timing of expenditure and are often a major source of funding for significant infrastructure projects that will provide benefits for future generations. This is known as 'intergenerational equity' - where future debt repayments are matched with future benefits derived from the infrastructure developed.

Loans can only be approved by council resolution and all new borrowings are required to be included and approved in the annual budget year to which the borrowings relate.

The 10-year financial plan follows the following principles related to borrowings:

- Borrowing based Sustainability ratios must not be exceeded.
- Loan duration is not to exceed the lesser of 10 years or the life of the asset.
- Priority is given to projects with above loan repayment returns.
- Where an interest only loan is secured, an amount equivalent to the annual principal repayment will be reserved annually to ensure full repayment at maturity.
- Council will actively seek to reduce interest payable.
- Council will not borrow to fund operating expenses.

Current Debt Position

The total amount of borrowings as at 30 June 2026 is \$13.6 million.

Council has accessed debt funding to complete a range of major infrastructure projects including the construction of the \$27.5 million Glenroy Community Hub (completed in March 2022) and the \$36.8 million Fawkner Leisure Centre redevelopment (completed in November 2024).

Future Borrowing Requirements

The following table highlights Council's projected loan balance, including new loans and loan repayments for the 10 years of the Financial Plan. Council has assumed new borrowings in 2028-29 of \$15 million are projected for the Coburg Library and Piazza project. Following this debt continues to be paid off, freeing up borrowing capacity in years 10 onwards for the next major project.

	Forecast Actual	Projections									
	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000	2031-32 \$'000	2032-33 \$'000	2033-34 \$'000	2034-35 \$'000
Opening balance	29,818	27,821	13,609	11,437	9,218	21,948	18,350	15,312	13,095	10,768	8,410
Plus new loans	-	-	-	-	15,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Less principal repayments	(1,997)	(14,212)	(2,172)	(2,220)	(2,270)	(3,598)	(3,038)	(2,217)	(2,327)	(2,358)	(1,522)
Closing balance	27,821	13,609	11,437	9,218	21,948	18,350	15,312	13,095	10,768	8,410	6,888
Interest payment	887	816	285	234	181	877	771	684	596	504	421

Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of debt management performance indicators.

	Target	Forecast Actual	Projections									
		2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total borrowings / rates revenue	Below 60%	14.3%	6.7%	5.5%	4.3%	9.9%	8.1%	6.6%	5.5%	4.4%	3.4%	2.7%
Debt servicing / rates revenue	Below 5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Debt commitment / rates revenue	Below 10%	1.5%	7.4%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%	2.0%	1.6%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	0.8%
Indebtness / own source revenue	Below 60%	6.8%	5.9%	4.8%	3.8%	8.1%	6.7%	5.8%	4.8%	3.9%	3.3%	2.7%

5.2 Reserves Strategy

Reserves are funds that have been set aside and act as a future funding source for specific purposes. These reserve funds do not have bank accounts of their own but are a theoretical split up of the cash that Council has on hand for a future identified need or obligation.

Restricted Reserves - The usage of these funds is governed by legislation (or other legal requirements) and are not available for other purposes.

Unrestricted Reserves - Unrestricted reserves are a mechanism by which Council re-directs surplus council funds to strategic projects and initiatives that require savings over time. The usage of unrestricted reserves requires resolution of council and the availability of unrestricted cash to meet the intent of the reserve funding objectives is necessary to take advantage of identified opportunities at short notice.

	Forecast Actual	Projections									
	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000	2031-32 \$'000	2032-33 \$'000	2033-34 \$'000	2034-35 \$'000
Defined Budget Scheme (DBS) - Unrestricted											
The funds are used to assist with the funding of any call that may be made on Council because of a shortfall in the defined benefit superannuation entity.											
Opening balance	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	14,000	14,500	15,000	15,500	16,000
Transfer to reserves	-	-	-	-	-	500	500	500	500	500	500
Transfer from reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	14,000	14,500	15,000	15,500	16,000	16,500
Significant Projects Reserve - Unrestricted											
Accumulates funds to construct new assets or expand existing ones to meet population growth, such as the proposed Coburg Library and Piazza project as well as recently completed projects (Fawkner Leisure Centre and Balam Balam Place).											
Opening balance	9,833	679	4,354	17,910	20,594	20,681	14,366	24,152	31,400	41,016	51,217
Transfer to reserves	14,196	4,425	15,206	7,284	9,212	18,560	9,786	7,248	9,616	10,201	16,651
Transfer from reserves	(23,350)	(750)	(1,650)	(4,600)	(9,125)	(24,875)	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	679	4,354	17,910	20,594	20,681	14,366	24,152	31,400	41,016	51,217	67,869

	Forecast Actual	Projections									
	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000	2031-32 \$'000	2032-33 \$'000	2033-34 \$'000	2034-35 \$'000
Social & Affordable Housing Strategy Reserve - Unrestricted											
Provides funds to assist with the funding of housing initiatives.											
Opening balance	496	584	628	671	712	762	812	862	912	962	1,012
Transfer to reserves	88	45	42	41	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Transfer from reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	584	628	671	712	762	812	862	912	962	1,012	1,062
Local Government Funding Vehicle (LGFV) Reserve - Unrestricted											
As per the Investment Policy (2022) if Council were to enter an "interest-only" repayment schedule, an amount equivalent to principal repayments must be deposited to a cash reserve over the life of the loan to fund the principal repayment when it falls due.											
Opening balance	6,579	8,787	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserves	2,208	3,313	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer from reserves	-	(12,100)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	8,787	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carry Forward Reserve - Unrestricted											
To fund incomplete operating or capital works projects carried forward from the current financial year to the next financial year.											
Opening balance	21,276	15,958	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserves	15,958	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer from reserves	(21,276)	(15,958)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	15,958	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	Forecast Actual	Projections									
	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000	2031-32 \$'000	2032-33 \$'000	2033-34 \$'000	2034-35 \$'000
Public Resort & Recreation Land Fund Reserve - Restricted											
Accumulates developer contributions paid to Council and is used for the development of new open space and recreation assets, as well as upgrade or expansion of existing assets.											
Opening balance	20,308	16,063	18,024	22,684	29,974	32,902	46,085	56,304	66,812	76,302	87,536
Transfer to reserves	10,135	8,200	8,446	9,825	13,200	13,464	13,733	14,008	14,288	14,574	14,865
Transfer from reserves	(14,380)	(6,239)	(3,787)	(2,534)	(10,272)	(281)	(3,515)	(3,500)	(4,798)	(3,340)	(3,342)
Closing balance	16,063	18,024	22,684	29,974	32,902	46,085	56,304	66,812	76,302	87,536	99,060
Development Contributions Plan Reserve - Restricted											
To fund approved community infrastructure projects in line with the requirements of the DCP. Contributions must be expended on infrastructure projects that service the developments from which the contributions are received.											
Opening balance	2,026	1,630	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer from reserves	(397)	(1,630)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	1,630	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Waste Charge Reserve - Restricted											
Accumulates variances between the revenue collected from the waste charge and the expenditure in delivering waste services in each financial year. The funds are to be utilised to assist with the cost of strategic projects, compliance and long-term planning for Council's landfills, transfer stations and waste management responsibilities.											
Opening balance	2,551	1,293	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserves	685	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer from reserves	(1,943)	(1,293)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	1,293	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

6. Appendixes

Appendices A - Changes in the 10-Year Financial Plan

The Plan expands the assumptions that have been applied to the year one of the annual budget 2025-29 (Adopted Budget). However, it should be noted that the below changes have been made in The Plan:

- The assumption has been made that the Brunswick Early Years Hub project will be rates funded, and the transfers into the significant project reserve will be used to ensure a balanced budget
- The final version of the 10-year plan will have updated both the balance sheet and cashflow opening balances to reflect the actual balances at 1 July 2025.

7.11 YEAR 4 COUNCIL ACTION PLAN 2024-25 - FOURTH QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT

Director Business Transformation, Sue Vujcevic

Governance and Strategy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the Year 4 Council Action Plan 2024-25 – Fourth Quarter Performance Report (provided as Attachment 1) and the achievements to date in delivering against the Council Plan 2021-25.
2. Endorses the following action to be withdrawn from the Council Action Plan 2024-25 as outlined in the issues section of this report; these actions will be considered as actions for the 2025/26 Council Action Plan.
 - a) Action 209: *Commence construction of Brunswick Early Years Centre*
 - b) Action 215: *Commence construction on the West Street streetscape renewal project*
 - a) Action 216: *Progress construction of the Wheatsheaf Road Glenroy streetscape improvement project.*

REPORT

Executive Summary

The Fourth Quarter Performance Report (provided as **Attachment 1**) provides an overview of Council's performance through the delivery of the Council Plan 2021-25, specifically the Year 4 Council Action Plan 2024-25.

The status of the 64 actions is as follows:

- 95% (61 action) closed (achieved)
- 5% (3 actions) withdrawn (on hold or remove).

The Year 4 Council Action Plan in the fourth quarter shows that 95% of actions were completed in delivering the final year action plan for the overarching 2021-25 Council Plan.

With the completion of this Council Action Plan, this report provides the final update on the implementation of the Council Plan 2021-25. Over the past four years, Council has successfully delivered 357 individual actions that have all significantly contributed to achieving the strategic objectives of the plan through the delivery of the strategies, initiatives and priorities as outlined in the Council Plan 2021-25.

Some of the key initiatives have included the development of new Open Space and Transport strategies, the opening of major capital projects such as Glenroy Hub, Fawkner Leisure Centre, and Balam Balam Place in Brunswick.

Overall, through the Council Plan 2021-25 and across the five strategic themes, Council has:

- delivered on improvements to our shopping strips;
- supported a vibrant arts and culture scene, and a popular festival program;
- implemented numerous economic development activities to support local businesses;
- strengthened community engagement and improved customer service; and
- consistently advocated for enhanced community outcomes, ensuring Merri-bek remains a great place to live, work and play.

Endorsement is sought to withdraw the following actions, due to external partnerships delays that are impacting the delivery of these actions, and these actions will be considered for future Council Action Plans.

- Action 209: *Commence construction of Brunswick Early Years Centre*
- Action 215: *Commence construction on the West Street streetscape renewal project.*
- Action 216: *Progress construction of the Wheatsheaf Road Glenroy streetscape improvement project.*

This report also highlights the overall progress of delivering initiatives as outlined in the Council Plan 2021-25.

Previous Council Decisions

Year 4 Council Action Plan 2023-24 – Third Quarter Performance Report – 14 May 2025

That Council:

1. *Notes the Year 4 Council Action Plan 2024-25 – Third Quarter Performance Report (provided as Attachment 1) and the achievements to date in delivering against the Council Plan 2021-25.*
2. *Endorses the following actions to be placed on hold from Council Action Plan 2024-25 as outlined in section three of this report.*
 - a) *Place on hold Action 215: Commence construction on the West Street streetscape renewal project*
 - b) *Place on hold Action 216: Progress construction of the Wheatsheaf Road Glenroy streetscape improvement project.*

Year 4 Council Action Plan 2023-24 – Second Quarter Performance Report – 12 February 2025

That Council:

1. *Notes the Year 4 Council Action Plan 2024-25 – Second Quarter Performance Report (provided as Attachment 1) and the achievements to date in delivering against the Council Plan 2021-25*
2. *Notes the remaining action from the Council Action Plan 2023-24 has been delivered.*

Year 4 Council Action Plan 2023-24 – First Quarter Performance Report – 11 December 2024

That Council:

1. *Notes the Year 4 Council Action Plan 2024-25 – First Quarter Performance Report (provided as Attachment 1) and the achievements to date in delivering against the Council Plan 2021-25*
2. *Notes one action from the Council Action Plan 2023-24 has been delivered and there is one remaining action 'not achieved'.*

1. Policy Context

In accordance with sections 88 and 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council adopted its Community Vision 2021-31 and Council Plan 2021-25 in October 2021.

The Year 4 Council Action Plan 2024-25 supports the implementation of the Council Plan 2021-25 for the fourth and final financial year of the 4-year period and included specific actions to be undertaken that were resourced through the 2024-25 annual budget (included in the 2024-28 budget).

This report supports Council's continuing commitment to sustainable, equitable and transparent management of funds on behalf of ratepayers, key stakeholders and the broader community.

2. Background

The purpose of the third quarter performance report is to provide a status update on delivery against Council Action Plan 2024-25 as at 30 June 2025. These are outlined in the table below in section three of this report.

3. Issues

Council Action Plan Performance 2024-25

Of the 64 actions, 95% have been achieved in the final year of the action plan for the overarching 2021-25 Council Plan.

Some key highlights across the five strategic themes include:

Theme 1: Council made significant progress across its environmental initiatives. The Zero Carbon Merri-bek Action Plan 2020-2025 concluded, with the council achieving or exceeding 10 targets. Community engagement was strong, with events such as Women's Environmental Leadership Australia Stories of Change and World Environment Day drawing over 150 participants.

Infrastructure developments included finalising contracts for Brunswick's Community Battery, with delivery expected by October 2025, and completing the Dunstan Reserve stormwater harvesting system, pending power reconnection. Urban forest strategy efforts added 85 new tree plots in high-heat and tricky-to-plant areas, and community-focused initiatives such as plastic-free festivals and the ongoing Solar and Thermal Subsidies Program further exemplify Merri-bek's commitment to sustainability.

The Ride & Stride program held bike checks at seven schools, repairing over 200 bikes, donating 17 bikes to children, and providing helmets and locks. Regular Open Streets events and free bike education sessions continued, with the Wheel Sisters program supporting 22 women in Glenroy and Fawkner to learn to ride. Additionally, 45 women and gender-diverse residents gained bike maintenance skills, with high confidence and participation levels, highlighting Merri-bek's ongoing commitment to active, inclusive transport solutions.

Theme 2: Council has made significant strides in advocating for improved transport infrastructure, engaging with the Victorian government, including a meeting in May with the Minister's advisor and departmental representatives, to support the \$7.05 million Northern Rail Plan and advocate for the duplication, extension, and electrification of the Upfield line to Wallan. The Mayor, as Chair of the Northern Council Alliance, publicly reinforced this advocacy in June media reports.

The Victorian Budget allocated new Sunday bus services for route 536, improving access for residents. The council also contributed to Infrastructure Victoria's 30-year strategy, emphasising key priorities such as rail upgrades, bus reform, tram extensions, cycling networks, and pedestrian safety. All planned roads and footpath projects for the year were completed, including the Upfield Shared Path section and South Street Zebra Crossing. Engagement activities included final design work for streetscape upgrades and cycling infrastructure, with the draft Transport Action Plan scheduled for community consultation in September and finalisation by December 2025.

Theme 3: Council has continued to advance its social, environmental, and community priorities. Key capital projects include the Dunstan Reserve Child Care Centre, with a 22-place kindergarten expansion, and the completion of the Northwest Brunswick Kindergarten design, with construction expected by the end of 2025. Planning is underway for the redevelopment of HE Kane Kindergarten and Volga Street Maternal and Child Health Centre, scheduled to start in 2026, as well as the Dawson Street Children's Co-operative, which aims to add six licensed kindergartens by 2029.

Community initiatives supported over 80 participants in the Refugee and Migrant Business Development Series and engaged 20 residents in the Democracy Lab, fostering civic participation. The Anti-Racism Support Booklet, developed in partnership with neighboring councils, will be distributed soon to support over 400 residents.

Disability inclusion efforts included launching a Women and Gender Diverse Network, responding to more than 50 requests, and hosting community events. The Council also strengthened its response to discrimination against LGBTIQ+ residents, with over 200 community members participating. The Climate Risk Foundational Action Plan was successfully completed, meeting all targets, with the new Climate Emergency Action Plan 2025-2030 scheduled for adoption in September. The Homelessness Action Plan continues to operate effectively through programs like Functional Zero.

Theme 4: Over the past three months, Council has made important progress in housing, economic development, community engagement, and heritage initiatives. In March, the sale of land at 2-12 Wilkinson Street was finalised, supporting the construction of 39 social housing units in partnership with Haven Home Safe. Council continued advocacy efforts through submissions to the State Government's Activity Centres Program and engagement with the Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environments.

Economic initiatives included three business skills workshops, totalling 13 for the year, and support for local businesses to list on the online directory. The final Merri-bek Trails Guide and the inaugural Tourism Roundtable fostered collaboration among tourism operators. The 'Love Sydney Road Street Show' attracted over 55 business owners, providing practical shopfront enhancement advice.

Heritage actions from the Heritage and Local History Implementation Plan have been completed, including the launch of a queer history audio tour and documentation of First Nations history at the Ballert Moorroop site. Engagement with the Coburg Historical Society and Wurunderji Council informed design concepts and commemorations of Aboriginal history. Community events like Dinotastic and Eid celebrations enhanced local vibrancy.

Theme 5: Council strengthened its advocacy efforts by engaging regularly with local MPs, advocacy partners, and candidates, securing over \$9 million in Federal funding for key projects. Council also made submissions to important policy and infrastructure strategies, including proposals to Infrastructure Victoria and the State Government's Activity Centres program. Engagement with multicultural communities and initiatives like Conversations Merri-bek and Community Connectors continued to improve inclusivity. Additionally, ongoing work aimed to enhance customer experience, with online complaint training set for rollout from July 2025.

Detailed updates for the fourth quarter's performance are shown in **Attachment 1**.

Withdrawn (On hold or remove)

Three actions are proposed to be either placed on hold or withdrawn from the 2024–25 Council Action Plan. These actions are being recommended for withdrawal because they could not be delivered due to factors beyond the Council's control. They will be reconsidered for inclusion in the Council Action Plan 2025/26.

Detailed updates are presented in the table below.

Action #	Action Description and Update	Directorate
209	Commence construction of Brunswick Early Years Centre It is proposed to withdraw this action from the current Council Action Plan, as it could not be achieved due to factors outside of the Council's control. However, it will be reconsidered for inclusion in the 2025/26 Council Action Plan. Action Update: The project has been delayed due to the review processes undertaken by the State Government. It has subsequently been confirmed that the completion date for the project has been revised from January 2027 to January 2028, one year later than initially anticipated; therefore, this action was unable to be completed on time. This rescheduling can be accommodated as the existing services will remain operational until the new Centre is open and may be considered as a future Council Action Plan item.	Community
215	Commence construction on the West Street streetscape renewal project It is proposed to withdraw this action from the current Council Action Plan, as it was delayed by factors outside of Council's control. It remains an important priority and will be considered for inclusion in the 2025-26 Council Action Plan. Action Update: The project reached detailed design phase but has a delayed design schedule as a result of changing requirements from Melbourne Water. Pending resolution of Melbourne Water policy changes, a tender is now anticipated in the second half 2025, with construction expected to commence in 2025-26.	Place and Environment
216	Progress construction of the Wheatsheaf Road Glenroy streetscape improvement project It is proposed to withdraw this action from the current Council Action Plan, as it was delayed by factors outside of Council's control it. It remains an important priority and will be considered for inclusion in the 2025-26 Council Action Plan. Action Update: Works are still on hold pending final approvals from the Department of Planning and Transport. Work is ongoing seeking to resolve the proposed alignment of the drainage infrastructure and underground services; rescoping may be required.	Place and Environment

Community impact

Community impact is addressed throughout the Council Plan 2021-25 but primarily under strategic objective 5: To build community trust through encouraging participation, evidence-based decision making, stewardship of resources and being accessible and responsive.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications are addressed throughout the Council Plan 2021-25 but primarily under strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3:

1. To strive for maximum protection of people, plants and animals through leading an urgent response to the climate emergency and a regeneration of our natural environment.
2. To contribute to the health, safety, and security of everyone living in our diverse community and to increase safe, accessible, physically active and enjoyable ways to get around Merri-bek, especially via walking, cycling and public transport.
3. To support Merri-bek to become a more inclusive, connected, healthy and caring community through providing equitable access to community facilities and services and facilitating local partnerships and programs.

Economic sustainability implications

Economic sustainability implications are addressed throughout the Council Plan 2021-25 but primarily under strategic objective 4: To create welcoming, unique spaces and places across Merri-bek that attract and connect everyone, improving access to community facilities and affordable housing and encouraging vibrant artistic, social and economic activity.

Legal and risk considerations

The Merri-bek Community Vision 2021-31 and Merri-bek Council Plan 2021-25 and processes associated with the development of these documents have been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Community consultation and engagement was not required for this report as it reflects the performance against the Council Plan 2021 – 25.

Advice was sought from officers across Council to provide the performance updates.

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person's rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views. There are no individual rights or interests affected.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

All actions documented in the Council Action Plan 2024-25 were resourced through the 2023-24 annual budget (included in the 2024-28 Budget).

7. Implementation

The Year 4 Council Action Plan 2024-25 fourth quarter performance results will be made available on Council's website.

Attachment/s

1 [↓](#) Council Action Plan Report Q4 2024-25 D25/360240



Merri-bek City Council

Council Action Plan 2024-2025

4th Quarter Performance Report



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek. We pay respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging, as well as to all First Nations communities, who significantly contribute to the life of the area.

Executive Summary

This report supports Council's continuing commitment to sustainable, equitable and transparent management of funds on behalf of Merri-bek ratepayers, key stakeholders, and the broader community.

In accordance with sections 88 and 90 of the Local Government Act 2020, Council adopted a new Community Vision 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 on 20th October 2021. These were developed as major outputs of a four-stage engagement program which included a deliberative panel process.

The Council Action Plan 2024-25 was adopted which supports implementation of the Council Plan 2021-2025 for the fourth and final financial year of the 4-year period. It includes the specific actions to be taken during the fourth financial year in the implementation of the Council Plan 2021-2025.

This Fourth Quarter Performance Report gives an update on delivery of the Council Action Plan 2024-25.

In summary, the status of the 64 actions in the plan is as follows:

Number	Percentage	Status	Definition	Traffic Light
61	95%	Achieved	Completed, achieved	✓
3	5%	Withdrawn	On hold or removed	●

The rest of this report below provides a detailed progress update for each action below including:

- A description of the action
- The status in the form of a traffic light (see table above); and
- Relevant officer commentary.

Theme 1: An environmentally proactive Merri-bek

1: To strive for maximum protection of people's health, plants and animals through leading an urgent response to the climate emergency and a regeneration of our natural environment

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
1	Continue to implement the Zero Carbon Merri-bek Climate Emergency Action Plan and develop new Zero Carbon Merri-bek Action Plan to commence 2025	Place and Environment	✓	This is the final quarter and year of implementation for the Zero Carbon Merri-bek Action Plan (2020 - 2025). Together with our community, Council has achieved (or exceeded) 10 of the ambitious goals set for 2025. Council endorsed the draft Climate Emergency Action Plan 2025 - 2030 for community consultation, which began late June 2025. Highlights this quarter include: * Sustainability engagement events, including the Women's Environmental Leadership Australia (WELA) Stories of Change storytelling event and a World Environment Day Event for Multicultural Communities with over 150 attendees. * Victorian Government announcements of new building electrification regulations (including that all new homes must be all electric) and new Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards for rental and public housing, from March 2027, * Completed a review of Local Government Home Energy Upgrades programs by Victorian local councils to inform future collaboration. * Began study into the potential for Distributed Energy Resources relevant to the Merri-bek community. * Completed electrification works at six small Council sites. * The procurement process for the electrification of Oak Park Sports and Aquatic Centre began. * A summary of outcomes across the 5 years of the ZCM action plan was published.
2	Continue the delivery of the Integrated Behaviour Change Program including the Ride and Stride program with schools	Place and Environment	✓	Highlights this quarter included: - Ride & Stride program bike checks at 7 Ride & Stride Schools, repairing over 200 kids' bikes, donating 17 bikes to kids, and giving away bells, helmets, and locks to those who need them. Regular volunteer-led Open Streets events continued to be held across five Merri-bek schools, and free bike education training for teachers was conducted at Merri-

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
				bek Primary. - 22 more women learnt to ride in Glenroy & Fawkner through the Wheel Sisters program. - 45 more women and gender-diverse people in Merri-bek learnt bike maintenance skills. They all felt they had learned new skills and improved their confidence. 92% are now more likely to ride for transportation or ride more often, and 83% said the session, which was especially designed for women and gender-diverse people, encouraged them to sign up. - Merri-bek's E-bike Library pilot continued at Sussex and Fawkner Neighbourhood Houses.
3	Urban forest strategy - implementation of annual tree planting program including identifying ways to support the community to preserve and plant new trees on private and public land	City Infrastructure	✓	This action was achieved in the previous quarter.
14	Continue the implementation of the Plastic Wise Policy for community and council initiatives, including festivals, events and facilities	Place and Environment	✓	In this final quarter, Council delivered its second plastic-free Glenroy Festival and its second plastic-free Ballert Moorroop event, diverting over 1,800 items from landfill across both events. Plastic-wise catering was also provided at the World Environment Day event for multicultural communities in Fawkner. This marks the close of a successful year for leaders in this space, enabling the community to understand how sustainability can be integrated into smaller Council festivals and events.
120	Continue to implement the reformed kerbside waste service	City Infrastructure	✓	All actions scheduled in financial year have been completed, with the Fortnightly Garbage Trial ready to commence in the first week of 2025/26.
123	Continue to deliver improved safety and thermal comfort of low-	Place and Environment	✓	Over the last quarter, the solar and thermal subsidies program continued with enhanced strategies, including promotional outreach to low-income and diverse communities in the north, as well as letters from Mayors to low-income households. Despite a

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Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
	income residents at home through solar and energy efficiency subsidies initiative			promotional pause across most of the second quarter of the year due to the council election period, total participation numbers across the financial year were: - 51 homes upgraded for thermal comfort (insulation and/or draft-proofing). - 7 homes had efficient electric heating and cooling (split systems) installed. - 42 homes had solar PV installed (including seven apartments).
161	Construction of Dunstan Reserve (Brunswick West) stormwater harvesting system, subject to external funding	Place and Environment	✓	The construction of the Dunstan Reserve (Brunswick West) stormwater harvesting system is complete. Commissioning and testing of filtration and irrigation systems are underway. The final steps include reconnecting the power supply, which is dependent on Citipower.
164	Community and Neighbourhood Batteries - deploy the Brunswick Community Battery and continue investigation of locations and commercial models for potential future neighbourhood batteries	Place and Environment	✓	This quarter Council finalised and signed contracts for the supply and installation of Brunswick's Community Battery. It also established contracts for the required grid connection and upgrade with network provider Citipower. The signing of the supply contract enabled the ordering of the battery, a crucial part of the project timeline. Following approval of an extension to the federal funding agreement, the project is now on track for delivery by the end of October 2025.
198	Undertake feasibility and detailed design of stormwater harvesting/wetlands sites at; De Chene Reserve, Coburg, Oak Park Reserve, Oak Park and CB Smith, Reserve, Fawkner in order to deliver on the Integrated Water	Place and Environment	✓	A feasibility analysis has been completed for the Oak Park, De Chene, and CB Smith stormwater harvesting and wetlands sites. This analysis ensures that these sites align with the outcomes outlined in the Integrated Water Management Strategy 2040.

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
	Management Strategy 2040 outcomes			
199	Development of a Circular Economy Strategy: Towards a Zero Waste Merri-bek	Place and Environment	✓	Draft Circular Economy Strategy completed. The Draft Strategy was presented at the June Council Meeting and endorsed for consultation with the community. Stage two community consultation is scheduled to commence on Monday, 23 June 2025.
200	Develop new Integrated Water Management Action Plan, including priority actions from Yarra and Maribyrnong IWM Forums, to commence in 2025	Place and Environment	✓	A new draft Integrated Water Management (IWM) Action Plan has been developed, and community consultation has been undertaken. The final draft has been developed and will be presented to Council in August 2025 for endorsement. This includes priority actions from the IWM Forums.
201	Develop new Open Space Strategy Action Plan to commence in 2025	City Infrastructure	✓	The Open Space Action Plan 2025-29 is currently under development, based on actions already adopted by the Council in 2024. It is expected to be finalised in the second half of 2025.
202	Develop new Merri-bek Nature Plan Action Plan to commence in 2025	City Infrastructure	✓	The Open Space Action Plan 2025-29 is under development, and will include actions already adopted by the Council in 2024. It is expected to be finalised in the second half of 2025.
203	Delivery of the tricky places tree planting project for 2024-2025	City Infrastructure	✓	There were 85 new tree plots constructed in priority areas of low canopy cover and high urban heat islands at the following locations: -Collier Crescent (25 plots) in Brunswick West - Hunter Street (25 plots) in Brunswick West - Centennial Avenue (20 plots) in Brunswick West - Michael Street (8 plots) in Brunswick - Black Street Car Park (7 plots). Trees will be planted in these plots in the 2025 planting season, starting in May 2025 and concluding by October 2025. Twenty-seven tree plots were planned for completion in Guthrie Street, Brunswick West, by 30 June 2025. However, this project has been deferred to the new financial year. This concludes the 'Tricky Places' tree planting project for 2024-2025.

Theme 2: Moving and living safely in Merri-bek

2: To contribute to the health, safety, and security of everyone living in our diverse community and to increase safe, accessible, physically active and enjoyable ways to get around Merri-bek, especially via walking, cycling and public transport

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
27	Continue to advocate to improve public and sustainable transport capacity and equitable access across Merri-bek	CEO	✓	Council met with the Advisor to the Victorian Transport Infrastructure Minister and departmental representatives in May to discuss the \$7.05 million (federal funding) Northern Rail Plan work being carried out by the State government and continued to advocate for the delivery of the Upfield rail line duplication, extension and electrification to Wallan. Merri-bek Mayor, as Chair of the Northern Council Alliance, was quoted in June media reports advocating for the delivery of duplication, extension, and electrification to Wallan. The Victorian State Budget included improvements to bus services in northern Merri-bek, with Sunday services announced for the 536 buses. Council also submitted Infrastructure Victoria's draft 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy, providing Merri-bek's position on transport issues, including the duplication, extension, and electrification of the Upfield rail line, reconfiguration of the city loop, bus reform, accessible tram stops upgrades, tram line extensions, cycle networks, and improved road safety for pedestrians.
165	Deliver roads and car park capital works renewal and road resurfacing capital works program	City Infrastructure	✓	All projects planned under the roads and footpath capital works program were completed for the financial year.
167	Deliver active travel capital works program	Place and Environment	✓	Projects completed for the quarter include the Batman Avenue section of the Upfield Shared Path and the South Street Zebra Crossing (awaiting power connection), as well as a Council decision not to proceed with additional separated bike lanes on De Carle Street. We have awarded the contract for the shared zones on Albert Street and Victoria Street and undertaken engagement in this quarter on the final design for the

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Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
				Harding Street Bridge Replacement, the design for the O'Hea Street bike lane extension, and streetscape improvements for Harding and Munro Streets, Breese Street, Hope Street, and Albert Street.
204	Develop the Transport Strategy Action Plan to commence in 2025	Place and Environment	✓	The action plan has been developed, with a draft completed. It is scheduled for Council engagement in September, with finalisation expected by December 2025.

Theme 3: A healthy and caring Merri-bek

3: To support Merri-bek to become a more inclusive, connected, healthy and caring community through providing equitable access to community facilities and services, facilitating local partnerships and programs, mitigating the effects of climate change and supporting the community to adapt and build climate resilience

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
34	Deliver Early Years Infrastructure Projects as listed in the 5-year Capital Works Program	Community	✓	Key highlights include: Dunstan Reserve Child Care Centre: a 22-place kindergarten expansion project and improvements to amenities. The project has been delayed due to Melbourne Water's identification of potential flood risk on the site and the need to revise the project plans to ensure appropriate mitigation. Northwest Brunswick Kindergarten: project to improve accessibility, including an accessible entry and bathroom. The design has been completed, and a builder has yet to be appointed. It is anticipated that the work will be completed before the end of 2025. HE Kane Kindergarten and Volga St Maternal and Child Health Centre redevelopment: preliminary planning is occurring for the redevelopment of this site in Hadfield. Subject to the development of a feasible concept design and confirmation of the anticipated funding contribution from the State Government, this project is scheduled to commence in 2026 and to be completed in 2029. Dawson Street Children's Co-operative: The expansion project will deliver six additional licensed kindergartens, with an expected completion date in 2029. Planning will commence imminently.
48	Continue implementation, monitor and evaluate the Social Cohesion Plan	Community	✓	This quarter, the Refugee and Migrant Business Development Series—a four-part business growth program—was successfully delivered from the Glenroy Community Hub. The series offered expert-led sessions focused on developing a business mindset, networking, and impactful business practices aimed at supporting local entrepreneurs,

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
				small business owners, and aspiring founders in the Merri-bek area. More than 80 people participated in these workshops. During this quarter, the Social Cohesion Plan funded project 'Democracy Lab' was run by The Public Value Studio in partnership with the Council. The Lab was developed with a particular aim of strengthening civic participation and community-led action in Merri-bek. This year, 20 participants representative of Merri-bek's diversity and residing in different suburbs participated in The Lab. The Anti-Racism Support Booklet, created by Darebin, Hume, Merri-bek, and Whittlesea Councils, will be ready for distribution by the end of this quarter. The booklet will help residents in Melbourne's northern suburbs to recognise, report, and address racism. It offers guidance on making complaints and accessing support, is available in multiple languages, and aims to raise awareness, assist victims, and build a more inclusive community by simplifying reporting processes.
49	Finalise the navigation pilot - Aged Well planning to support older people to access services	Community	✓	Due to the program's success, it has been extended for the 2025-26 year. Council has supported over 400 residents this year through one-to-one support and community education sessions.
50	Continue to implement to improve new outdoor help and services for older people	Community	✓	This year, we have 262 residents and another 69 residents who will have work completed in July. This program has been extended for the 2025-26 financial year.
52	Continue the implementation of the First People's Employment Plan	Business Transformation	✓	A new First Peoples Employment Plan is currently in development. This quarter, key initiatives completed under the existing plan include delivering cultural awareness training and organising events across the organisation as part of our annual wellbeing calendar.
131	Continue the implementation of the Gender Equity Action Plan	Business Transformation	✓	A depot-based Women and Gender Diverse Network has been launched, to support an inclusive environment. An annual diversity and inclusion calendar was developed and distributed to leaders, facilitating awareness and engagement. A project aimed at

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Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
				enhancing the collection of staff demographic data is in final testing stage, supporting more accurate representation for our diverse workforce to inform action planning.
168	Continue implementation of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan to meet the requirements of the Disability Act 2006	Community	✓	The final quarter of the 2024 2025 financial year saw the implementation of several actions from the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. Key highlights for this quarter include: the adoption of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program (and planning for future events in the coming months); hosted a dance party at Coburg Town Hall in collaboration with Holstep Health for 160 residents of Supported Residential Services; delivered a music and art making program for 25 people with disabilities at Glenroy Hub; delivered an Environmental Sustainability information session for residents with disabilities in Fawkner; convened multiple disability network meetings including two Disability Reference Group meetings; supported Sydney Road Accessible Tram Stop rally; advocated for multiple issues impacting people with disabilities (e.g. barriers for neurodivergent people in assessment, health and education settings; inadequate wages in sheltered workshops; improving disability awareness of building surveyors and designers); reviewed the Hearing Loop systems in libraries; supported the YMCA to launch the Attendant Support Initiative (ASI) program; provided disability access advice on several Council infrastructure projects; responded to over 50 disability related customer requests.
175	Advocate to secure long-term support to establish the Ballertr Mooroop Community Hub	Community	✓	Development of the Ballertr Mooroop site continues to progress, with work underway to support the Business Case and long-term planning. This includes preparation of a site masterplan, design review, and development of culturally appropriate signage and presentation materials. Council completed the Ballertr Mooroop History Study, a landmark report exploring the cultural, educational and social significance of the site on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country. The study includes a short history of Ballertr Mooroop, informed by extensive research and interviews with key community members. Planning is also underway for temporary site activation, including exploration of a modular building option and funding opportunities.

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
180	Complete the Pilot Library Social Worker to support community wellbeing	Community	✓	This action was achieved in the previous quarter.
181	Implementation of the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan with key stakeholders	Community	✓	This quarter Merri-bek continued to address discrimination faced by LGBTIQ+ people through a range of programs and events. IDAHOBIT saw Council hold several unique events across the organisation. This included 50 attendees at the queer youth take over at Brunswick library. LGBTIQ+ community leaders came together at the Counihan Gallery to explore the exhibition Misbaḥa / The Prayer Beads / مسبحة with artist Ayman Kaahe. The week of programs concluded with LGBTIQ+ allyship training, where 20 Merri-bek community members attended a workshop to develop skills to support our growing LGBTIQ+ communities. Merri-bek was proud to support Transgender Victoria to host the Trans and Gender Diverse job fair at Brunswick Town Hall. Over 150 people were in attendance and Council officers made new connections with local LGBTIQ+ community member to discuss Council employment opportunities.
205	Complete the Fawkner Leisure Centre upgrade	City Infrastructure	✓	Action completed in quarter two.
206	Continue to implement the Climate Risk Foundational Action Plan and develop a new Climate Risk Action Plan to commence in 2025	Place and Environment	✓	The implementation of the Climate Risk Foundational Action Plan was completed in June 2025. Through its progress scorecard rating process, Council confirmed that targets were met across the five goals of the Climate Risk Strategy. More details will be included in the 2024-2025 annual report. By concluding the plan, Council improved its understanding of what climate change means for Merri-bek, including its impacts on infrastructure, open spaces, natural environments, and community services. A better understanding was also achieved regarding how climate risks may affect the health and well-being of the community. Council will continue to focus on key action areas, such as enhancing the integration of climate risk into capital works planning and asset management processes, as well as ongoing assessment of the financial impacts of climate change. The climate risk and resilience actions to be implemented from 2025 to 2030 are

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Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
				integrated into the Climate Emergency Action Plan 2025-2030, which is expected to be considered for adoption by Councillors in September.
207	Implement Year 1 of the Homelessness Action Plan	Community	✓	Implementation of the Homelessness Action Plan continued this quarter. The Functional Zero service coordination program is ongoing with regular key stakeholder and 'Hot Spots' meetings. The Merri Assertive Community Outreach program is also ongoing. Quarterly reports and weekly meetings are provided to ensure this program is on track.
208	Implement Year 4 Sport and Active Recreation Strategy	Community	✓	The implementation of the fourth year of the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy actions has now been completed. An evaluation of the strategy was undertaken in the previous quarter, which will inform the development of a new strategy due for review in the next financial year, 2025-26.
209	Commence construction of Brunswick Early Years Centre	Community	●	It is proposed to withdraw this action from the current Council Action Plan, as it could not be achieved due to factors outside of the Council's control. However, it will be reconsidered for inclusion in the 2025/26 Council Action Plan. The project has been delayed due to the review processes undertaken by the State Government. It has subsequently been confirmed that the completion date for the project has been revised from January 2027 to January 2028, one year later than initially anticipated; therefore, this action was unable to be completed on time. This rescheduling can be accommodated as the existing services will remain operational until the new Centre is open and may be considered as a future Council Action Plan item.

Theme 4: Vibrant spaces and places in Merri-bek

4: To create welcoming, unique spaces and places across Merri-bek that attract and connect everyone, improving access to community facilities and affordable housing and encouraging vibrant artistic, social and economic activity

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
76	Continue to support Merri-bek Affordable Housing Ltd partnership	Place and Environment	✓	Key highlights have included work progressing on potential future projects on council land. In March, a Settlement was reached on the sale of land at 2-12 Wilkinson St to Merri-bek Affordable Housing, and the site was prepared for the construction of 39 units of social housing in partnership with Haven Home Safe. A joint communications plan is in place between project partners for the Wilkinson project.
80	Continue to advocate for zero carbon in the planning scheme through the Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environments (CASBE)	Place and Environment	✓	Advocacy is ongoing, including through Council's submission to Phase 1 community engagement on the State Government's Activity Centres Program (Merri-bek Cluster). Council officers are working with the Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environments (CASBE) to understand the implications of recently announced reforms to residential development standards.
94	Continue to integrate and implement business development programs into the Shopping Strip Renewal Program (SSRP)	Place and Environment	✓	West Street Trader Association received practical support to recruit and onboard a new social media manager. Following the successful completion of the Shop Front Improvement Program earlier this year, which benefited 10 businesses on West Street, preparatory work has begun on a similar project in the Melville Road (Victoria - Albion) Neighbourhood Activity Centre. This included door-to-door visits to local businesses, as well as project scoping and procurement activities. Additionally, the evaluation of the Shopping Strip Renewal Program for 2024-25 continued, with planned completion in the coming months. Overall, the program was successfully delivered for another year, maintaining its ongoing schedule since 2014.
96	Continue to implement adaptive training and support programs for	Place and Environment	✓	During April to June, three business skills training workshops were held, including the 'Love Sydney Road Street Show' (1 April 2025), 'Marketing for Impact' (14 May 2025), and Digital Marketing Made Easy (21 May 2025). A joint information session with other Northern Melbourne councils, 'How to work with your Local Council', was also held (17

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
	micro and small businesses			April 2025). This brings the number of business skills and training workshops held this financial year to 13 workshops and four business information sessions.
97	Continue to support the Love Merri-bek Buy Local campaign	Place and Environment	✓	Council continued to support the Love Merri-bek Buy Local campaign, with several businesses supported to list themselves on the Love Merri-bek business online directory. Work to finalise a new Trail Map, showcasing 'Northern Discoveries' in Merri-bek, was also completed.
98	Collaborate with local traders, residents, agencies and creatives to develop and implement an activation program for Brunswick, Glenroy and Coburg	Place and Environment	✓	A major event - Dinotastic was held in Glenroy attracting double expected crowds mostly families from the north of the municipality. Projections are continuing in Michelle Guglielmo Park. A series of Eid celebrations were held in Victoria Mall Coburg in partnership with the Central Coburg Business Association. Program development for events in Coburg and Glenroy are well advanced for winter fun to come early in the 2025/26 financial year.
108	Implement two key visitor attraction activities - To raise awareness of Merri-bek as a great place to visit, work, and to run a business, implement additional 'trail maps' showcasing visitor destinations and hold an annual roundtable with prominent tourism operators to discuss opportunities for collaboration	Place and Environment	✓	Over the past few months, work has been undertaken to finalise a fifth, new Love Merri-bek Trails Guide - Northern Discoveries, showcasing destinations across northern Merri-bek. An inaugural Annual Tourism Roundtable was also held on 26 June 2025, attracting 14 participants from traders associations, tourism destinations, live music, and accommodation providers across Merri-bek to discuss collaboration opportunities moving forward. The participants were highly engaged and resolved to meet regularly to continue their efforts to collaborate.
134	Continue preparation of a new Development Contributions Plan	Place and Environment	✓	On 14 May 2025, Council endorsed the new Development Contributions Plan and resolved to commence Amendment C236mbek to implement it. The Amendment has been submitted to the Minister for Planning for authorisation and is awaiting a decision.

[15 | Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2024 – 2025 Q4 Report](#)

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
148	Progress a planning scheme amendment to include stormwater drainage modelling within the Planning Scheme	Place and Environment	✓	An Independent Panel Hearing to consider Amendment C196 to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme (local stormwater mapping) and submissions was held over two days in mid-June 2025. Council expects to receive the Panel Report in mid-to-late July, with public release on its website in August, in line with statutory requirements.
152	Implement the Affordable Housing Action Plan	Place and Environment	✓	Over the past three months, Council provided referral advice on several planning permit applications to support the delivery of affordable housing in both private and not-for-profit developments, contributing to submissions to Infrastructure Victoria and the Victorian Government Activity Centres Program. Prepared Council Report for submission to Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into public housing towers redevelopment and contributed advice and guidance to RMIT Barkly Street Futures Research project. Provided strategic guidance on the Coburg Revitalisation Project and convened an Affordable Housing Reference Group meeting.
153	Finalise development plans for the construction of a new storage annex, refurbishment of the Coburg Historical Society Bluestone Cottage and creation of a heritage garden in consultation with Historical Society	Community	✓	Significant consultation was undertaken with the Coburg Historical Society to inform the concept designs and detailed designs for the Coburg Bluestone Cottage site. Consultation with the Wurunderji Council and other stakeholders was undertaken to inform the establishment of a First Nations garden and recognition of Aboriginal history (pre- and post-colonial) as part of the precinct.
182	Through the Brunswick Design District partnership, continue to elevate Brunswick's profile as a design district	Place and Environment	✓	Officers focused on running a Melbourne Design Week event - a tour of three key sites in the Brunswick Design District, including Michelle Guglielmo Park, Balam Balam Place, and RMIT University Brunswick Campus. Work also commenced for three 'open studio' morning networking coffee events that will take place bi-monthly between July and December 2025, with the first event booked, scheduled and invitations issued.
183	Implement two key activities to support business and job growth	Place and Environment	✓	The first activity was completed in March 2025 - A health tour in conjunction with RMIT University and Merri-bek's emerging biomedtech ecosystem. Various other meetings and a biomedhealth-tech networking event throughout the back half of the financial

[16 | Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2024 – 2025 Q4 Report](#)

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
	within Merri-bek's key (e.g. top 5) and/or emerging industry sectors			year complemented the event. The second activity - twin events - were completed in May and June 2025; a Food Waste Summit (15 May 2025) and a food industry networking event 'Brewing Success' at a local Brunswick East brewer (12 Jun 2025) - both in conjunction with Melbourne's North Food Group.
193	Local History Maintenance & Conservation: deliver Heritage and Local History implementation action plan items	Community	✓	Heritage and Local History implementation action plan items scheduled for this financial year have been completed. The queer history of Merri-bek audio tour was launched with partners 3CR at the Midsumma Festival in February 2025. The First Nations history project addressing the contemporary history of the Ballert Moorroop site was completed in June 2025.
210	Finalise construction of the Saxon Street Brunswick facility and open space	City Infrastructure	✓	This action was achieved in the previous quarter.
211	As part of a new partnership model with Cladding Safety Victoria implement an expanded Combustible Cladding Rectification Project including an additional 69 buildings returned from the Victorian Building Authority to Council for resolution	Place and Environment	✓	As a results of Council's combustible cladding rectification program throughout this year there are now only 23 building remaining with outstanding compliance notices. The program is therefore anticipated to conclude within with the next 12 - 18 months and is consider as ongoing business as usual.
212	Progress a Planning Scheme amendment for an Activity Centre Zone for the Brunswick Activity Centre and	Place and Environment	✓	Amendment C230mbek, which proposes to introduce the Activity Centre Zone in Brunswick to guide land use, attract investment, and support local employment, is still awaiting authorisation from the Minister for Planning. Council resolved in May 2023 to undertake a comprehensive Built Form Review of the Brunswick Activity Centre. While well advanced, the review is currently on hold to avoid

[17 | Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2024 – 2025 Q4 Report](#)

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
	commence a review of built form controls in the Brunswick Activity Centre			duplication with the State Government's Activity Centres Program and reduce community confusion. This was noted in the 11 June 2025 Council Meeting Agenda.
213	Finalise and implement a new Economic Development Action Plan to guide Council's economic development-related work over future years	Place and Environment	✓	Significant progress has been made in implementing the Economic Development Action Plan 2024-2027 including; Economic Research: Completing major activity centre precinct profiles to support informed decision-making. Brunswick Design District Promotion: Highlighting local businesses through initiatives such as the Melbourne Design Week Walk in May 2025. Business Approvals Merri-bek Service: Continuing coordination and promotion, including the distribution of a promotional postcard. Business Skill Workshops: Developing and delivering a program with three workshops in the past three months and a total of 13 throughout the financial year. Networking Events: We have held regular networking sessions, including seven events, three business information sessions, and three joint NorthLink events, in the past quarter. Shopfront Improvement Initiative: Educating and upskilling business owners, demonstrated by the Love Sydney Road StreetShow on 1 April 2025. Local Safety Initiatives: Promoting trader and Council participation in safety efforts, including two meetings with Victoria Police and traders in Glenroy and Coburg Central. Tourism Operator Roundtable: Holding an annual roundtable to explore opportunities with key tourism operators. Lover Merri-bek Trail Map: Completing the Northern Discoveries trail map to enhance local tourism. Circular Economy Strategy: Contributing to the establishment of the Council's first Circular Economy Strategy, which remains ongoing.
214	Implement a shopfront improvement initiative for Sydney Road to educate	Place and Environment	✓	The Love Sydney Road StreetShow took place on 1 April 2025 at Brunswick Town Hall. Over 55 business owners and operators attended and heard from a panel of three retail experts. Post-event surveys confirmed that participating businesses found it highly

18 | Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2024 – 2025 Q4 Report

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
	and upskill business owners on how to improve the visual presentation of shopfronts and facades			informative and helpful. Post-event initiatives included shop front cleansing, bespoke visual merchandising advice for participating businesses & limited one-time-only graffiti removal from shop fronts. The initiative empowered local business owners with knowledge and skills to elevate their shopfront aesthetics, contributing to a more vibrant and appealing streetscape.
215	Commence construction on the West Street streetscape renewal project	Place and Environment	●	It is proposed to withdraw this action from the current Council Action Plan, as it was delayed by factors outside of Council's control. It remains an important priority and will be considered for inclusion in the 2025-26 Council Action Plan. Action Update: The project reached detailed design phase but has a delayed design schedule as a result of changing requirements from Melbourne Water. Pending resolution of Melbourne Water policy changes, a tender is now anticipated in the second half 2025, with construction expected to commence in 2025-26.
216	Progress construction of the Wheatsheaf Road Glenroy streetscape improvement project	Place and Environment	●	It is proposed to withdraw this action from the current Council Action Plan, as it was delayed by factors outside of Council's control it. It remains an important priority and will be considered for inclusion in the 2025-26 Council Action Plan. Action Update: Works are still on hold pending final approvals from the Department of Planning and Transport. Work is ongoing seeking to resolve the proposed alignment of the drainage infrastructure and underground services; rescoping may be required.
217	Progress construction of the Stewart Street Brunswick streetscape improvement project	Place and Environment	✓	Construction is largely complete, and the street is open to the public for use.
218	Commence detailed design for Louisa Street Coburg Streetscape improvement project	Place and Environment	✓	Action completed in quarter one.
219	Complete construction for 260 Sydney Road	Place and Environment	✓	This action was achieved in the previous quarter.

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
	Brunswick (Park Close To Home)			
220	Commence construction of York Street Pascoe Vale South (Park Close to Home)	City Infrastructure	✓	The contract award for this project was presented to Council for decision in July 2025, with construction expected to commence in August 2025, two months later than the original target date. Despite the minor delay in construction commencement, the project is still on track for its planned completion in the 2025/26 financial year.
221	Carry out research, technical studies, strategic planning, partnership building, engagement planning and affordable housing, to guide the future of central Coburg	Place and Environment	✓	The central Coburg program is progressing with a range of technical studies, strategic planning and engagement planning underway to examine various scenarios. Councillors are being engaged through briefings and Council reports. A Council resolution in March 2025 has provided direction to continue this work. A precinct scenario is expected to be presented to Council by mid-late 2025.
222	Develop a funding and delivery strategy for a new library in central Coburg that includes a functional brief for future library services, potential co-located uses, adjacent open space and public realm, and captures these within an initial Concept Plan	Community	✓	This action was achieved in the previous quarter.

Theme 5: An empowered and collaborative Merri-bek

5: Build community trust through encouraging participation, evidence-based decision making, stewardship of resources and being accessible and responsive

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
115	Continue to deliver advocacy campaigns that support council priorities	CEO	✓	Council continued regular meetings with local State and Federal MPs and continued collaborative work with advocacy partners including NCA, M9, CASBE, NAGA, Mayoral Taskforce for People Seeking Asylum and more. In the lead up to the May 2025 Federal Election, Council met with various candidates to share infrastructure priorities. Commitments in excess of \$11 million were made by the major parties and with the Albanese Government's election, over \$9 million in funding was secured for Fawkner Netball Club, Gillon Oval and vegetation and associated works along the Merri-creek in Coburg North. Council met with Victorian Shadow Minister for Local Government and discussed issues including planning reform, ESVF, Upfield Rail and community safety. Council also made submissions to Phase 1 of the State Government's Activity Centres program for the Merri-bek Cluster (Brunswick and Coburg), to the Victorian Climate Change Strategy 2026-30 and to Infrastructure Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy 2025-2055.
156	Continue to support the CALD Merri-bek connectors community engagement program to improve access to information and services	Community	✓	Council continued to work with the Community Connectors on all engagement projects to engage with our multicultural communities. Ongoing work has also continued with our Conversations Merri-bek provider to optimise translations on the platform and make it more visible and user-friendly with a translation button for individual projects at the top of each project page.
223	Commence planning scheme amendment for a new open space contribution	Place and Environment	✓	Council resolved on 12 March 2025 to commence Planning Scheme Amendment C235mbek to implement a new open space contribution. The Amendment has been submitted to the Minister for Planning for authorisation and is awaiting a decision.

Action Code	Action Name	Directorate	Status	Comments
224	Enhance customer experience and capacity	Community	✓	Online complaints training to be completed by 30 June 2025 with roll out to commence from July 2025. Current Community at the Heart resources concludes on 30 June with plans to finalise ongoing resourcing from July 2025 under consultation with Executive - this will include a new customer experience "lead" role to lead an overarching customer experience program across Council.

7.12 GOVERNANCE REPORT - AUGUST 2025 - CYCLICAL REPORT

Director Business Transformation, Sue Vujcevic

Governance and Strategy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the summary of minutes from the Friends of Aileu Community Committee held 17 June 2025, at Attachment 1 to this report.
2. Notes the Records of Meetings, at Attachment 2 to this report.
3. Notes the summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee held 3 June 2025, at Attachment 3 to this report.
4. Endorses the following motions (provided as Attachment 4) for submission to the next Municipal Association of Victoria State Council meeting:
 - a) Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund
 - b) Keep in-home aged care services in Council hands
 - c) Protect the future of our public pools.
5. Approves attendance of the Mayor, Cr Davidson to attend the Northern Councils Alliance Mayor and CEO advocacy visit to Parliament in Canberra, 26-28 August 2025, at a cost of approximately \$1,500 (including GST), and notes the Chief Executive Officer, Cathy Henderson will also be attending.
6. Notes the attendance of the Mayor, Cr Davidson at the Mayoral Taskforce Supporting Asylum Seekers Delegation in Canberra from 2 to 3 September 2025, with all associated costs covered by the Mayoral Taskforce.
7. Approves membership for Cr Iwasaki to the Ecological Society of Australia at a cost of \$120.
8. Approves interstate travel and registration for Cr Iwasaki to attend the Ecological Society of Australia Conference in Adelaide from 23 to 28 November 2025, at an estimated total cost of \$3,000 (inclusive of GST, travel, accommodation, and registration). Noting that expenses will be covered by the Mayor and Councillor Support budget, and that membership fee reduces the conference registration from \$1,045 (non-member rate) to \$845.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The Governance report is prepared as a monthly standing report to Council which provides a single reporting platform for a range of statutory compliance, transparency, and governance related matters.

This Governance report includes:

- A summary of the minutes of the Friends of Aileu Community Committee held 17 June 2025.
- Records of Meetings, with a recommendation that Council notes the records.
- A summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 3 June 2025.

- Councillor initiated proposed motions for Council's consideration and endorsement to the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council meeting, on the following topics:
 - Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund
 - Keep in-home aged care services in Council hands
 - Protect the future of our public pools.
- Proposed attendance of the Mayor, Cr Davidson at the Northern Councils Alliance advocacy delegation to Parliament in Canberra in August 2025.
- Proposed attendance of the Mayor, Cr Davidson at the Mayoral Taskforce supporting Asylum Seekers Delegation in Canberra in September 2025.
- Proposed attendance of Cr Iwasaki at the Ecological Society of Australia Conference in Adelaide in November 2025 (including membership).

Previous Council Decisions

Governance Report – July 2024 – Cyclical Report (Northern Councils Alliance advocacy visit to Canberra) - 10 July 2024

That Council:

...

9. *Approves attendance of Mayor Adam Pulford at the Northern Councils Alliance Mayor and CEO advocacy visit to Canberra in August 2024, at a cost of up to \$1,200, and notes CEO Cathy Henderson will also be attending.*

...

1. Policy Context

Reports from Advisory Committees to Council are provided in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and the Governance Rules set out the requirements for keeping and reporting records of meetings held under the auspices of Council.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is the legislated peak body for local government in Victoria. Council appoints a representative to the MAV to participate at, amongst other things, the two State Council Meetings held annually, and vote in accordance with Council's policy positions.

The Councillor Support, Expenses and Resources Policy states that interstate travel by a Councillor should be by Council resolution via a Council report.

2. Background

The Governance Report is prepared as a monthly report to Council to provide a single reporting platform for a range of statutory compliance, transparency, and governance related matters.

In accordance with best practice principles and good governance practice, and to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Act, this report incorporates matters including reporting of Advisory Committees, records of meetings held under the auspice of Council, items relating to the delegation of Council powers and duties, and policy and strategy reporting.

3. Issues

Advisory Committee minutes

A summary of the minutes of the Advisory Committees is provided at **Attachment 1** for Council's information:

- Friends of Aileu Community Committee held 17 June 2025.

Records of Meetings held under the auspice of Council

Records of matters discussed at meetings organised or hosted by Merri-bek that involve Councillors and Council officers are kept in accordance with the Governance Rules.

Meeting Records must include meeting attendees, including organisations represented by external presenters; the title of matters discussed; and any conflicts of interests disclosed and whether the declarant of a conflict of interest recused themselves from the meeting.

Some examples include Councillor Briefings, meetings with residents/developers/clients/organisations/Government departments/statutory authorities and consultations.

Records of Meetings received since the previous Council Meeting are presented at **Attachment 2** as follows:

- Councillor Briefing – 2 June 2025
- Councillor Briefing – 30 June 2025
- Councillor Briefing – 7 July 2025
- Councillor Briefing – 14 July 2025
- Planning Briefing – 21 July 2025
- Central Coburg Oversight Committee – 23 July 2025
- Councillor Briefing – 28 July 2025
- Hearing of Submissions – Draft Community Vision and Draft Council Plan 2025-2029 – 29 July 2025
- Central Coburg Oversight Committee – 30 July 2025
- Councillor Briefing – 4 August 2025.

Audit and Risk Committee minutes

A summary of the minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 3 June 2025 is provided at **Attachment 3**.

Municipal Association of Victoria State Council Meeting

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council meets twice a year to consider matters of state-wide significance.

At its meeting in December 2024, Council appointed Cr Pulford, with the Mayor, Cr Davidson as substitute, as Merri-bek's representative to the MAV.

Motions

Motions must have state-wide significance or relevance across the Victorian local government sector and be related to current issues within the City of Merri-bek. Motions already adopted by the State Council remain active until they are completed, and the MAV has advised motions seeking the same outcomes as have been previously adopted will not be considered as complying with the criteria.

The State Council Meeting is scheduled for Friday 10 October 2025. Councils must submit motions no later than midnight on Monday 11 August 2025 or delayed Council resolutions by Wednesday 20 August 2025.

The proposed motions have been prepared based on suggestions from Councillors and are provided in **Attachment 4**, for Council's consideration and endorsement in relation to:

- Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund
- Keep in-home aged care services in Council hands
- Protect the future of our public pools.

Northern Councils Alliance Mayor and CEO advocacy trip – Canberra, August 2025

Merri-bek City Council is a participating member of the Northern Councils Alliance, an alliance of 7 municipalities in Melbourne's north working together to advocate for projects that will improve services for residents and business in the region. The Alliance has scheduled an advocacy visit to Canberra on 26-28 August 2025, and this report seeks the approval of the Mayor, Cr Davidson to attend.

A key advocacy priority being pursued by the Northern Council Alliance in Canberra is the Upfield Duplication and Extension.

Several key topics will be addressed in the area of transport, the delivery of the Upfield rail extension to Wallan, supporting improved bus connectivity and promoting active transport options, precinct development that drives job growth, inclusive employment opportunities, the outer North Hospital and ending family violence.

Mayoral Taskforce supporting Asylum Seekers Delegation – Canberra, September 2025

The Mayoral Taskforce supporting Asylum Seekers Delegation in Canberra is a taskforce, comprising over 40 Australian local governments, aiming to ensure that people seeking asylum receive fair treatment and opportunities to rebuild their lives. The taskforce will specifically highlight the plight of individuals with short-term visas who lack work rights, access to healthcare, and adequate housing.

Travel and accommodation expenses for the Mayor, Cr Davidson is being met by the Mayoral Taskforce.

Conference of the Ecological Society of Australia – Adelaide, November 2025

The Ecological Society of Australia's conference theme is 'Biodiversity on the brink – Bold actions for a resilient future.' The ecological world around us is facing critical change. Biodiversity is truly on the brink. But positive change can still make a difference, and bold actions can help protect a resilient future.

The conference will explore the fresh ideas and bold decisions needed to deliver sustainable solutions that are now more important than ever.

Ecological Society Australia 2025 will highlight the important science of ecology in Australia – across all its varied forms – and offer valuable opportunities to collaborate and strengthen the connections between theory, research, policy and measurable real-world outcomes.

Attendance at this conference aligns with the objectives of the Councillor Support Expenses and Resources Policy, as Cr Iwasakis's participation directly relates to their climate responsibility portfolio.

The maximum cost of attending the conference is \$1,045 however, this can be reduced, if a \$120 membership fee to the Ecological Society of Australia's is endorsed by Council.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Advisory committees provide a valuable communication and consultation link between the organisation, Councillors, Council and the community.

5. Officer Declaration for a Conflict of Interests

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflicts of interest in the matters contained therewith.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

Expenses associated with travel, accommodation, and registration for the August Canberra visit will be met from the annual budget allocation. Registration costs for the September Canberra visit will likewise be funded through the same budget provision.

Expenses associated with Cr Iwasaki's travel, accommodation and registration for the November Adelaide visit will be met from the annual budget allocation.

7. Implementation

Subject to Council's decision, next steps include:

- Proposed motions will be submitted for the MAV State Council meeting in October 2025.
- The Mayor, Cr Davidson will represent Council (alongside the Chief Executive Officer), Cathy Henderson, at the Northern Councils Alliance Mayor and CEO advocacy visit to Parliament in Canberra in August 2025.
- The Mayor, Cr Davidson will represent Council alongside the Chief Executive Officer, Cathy Henderson, at the Mayoral Taskforce supporting Asylum Seekers Delegation in Canberra in September 2025.
- Cr Iwasaki will represent Council at the Conference of the Ecological Society of Australia in Adelaide in November 2025.

Attachment/s

<u>1</u>	Report from Advisory Committee to Council - August 2025	D25/395452
<u>2</u>	Records of Meetings - August 2025	D25/395484
<u>3</u>	Summary of Audit and Risk Committee minutes 3 June 2025	D25/360275
<u>4</u>	Proposed Motions - MAV State Council - October 2025	D25/397716

FRIENDS OF AILEU COMMUNITY COMMITTEE - 17 JUNE 2025

A report of the Friends of Aileu Community Committee meeting held on 17 June 2025 are provided for Council's information.

Councillors appointed to the Friends of Aileu Community Committee:

Merri-bek: Cr Adam Pulford (apology) and Cr Chris Miles (apology)

Hume: Cr Jarrod Bell (apology) and Cr Naim Kurt

Key Items Discussed

- The Minutes of the previous meeting on 15 April 2025 were adopted
- The upcoming delegation to Timor-Leste, visiting Aileu 7-9 July and participating in the Friendship Conference 10 & 11 July
- The proposal for a study tour to Timor-Leste in October 2025, where young people could participate in the 1st International PermaYouth Convergence
- The membership and activities of the Working Group for the Kose Nahen oral health education project
- The Friends of Aileu's June eNewsletter [Friends of Aileu Newsletter June 2025](#)
- Work in progress on Communications and Engagement planning, including the draft social media strategy
- Recent and upcoming events and activities.

Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was disclosed at the meeting.

Committee Recommendation

The meeting unanimously passed the following motion.

The Committee recommends that Merri-bek and Hume City Councils:

1. Fund Councillor participation in official reciprocal visits to and from Aileu, on the basis of one such visit each-way per 4-year term of Council.
2. Extend invitations to the Aileu Municipal President or delegate, and an Aileu non-government partner organisation representative, to visit Merri-bek and Hume in the 2026-27 financial year.
3. Continue to fund officer level visits once per year.

This motion was passed following discussion on the upcoming visit to Timor-Leste, including for the Friendship Conference and meetings in Dili and Aileu.

In these discussions the meeting noted:

- a) That at its 9 April meeting, Merri-bek Council decided not to fund Councillor travel in 2025.
- b) With thanks, the donation made by Merri-bek in lieu of funding a Councillor's travel in 2025.
- c) That following Hume Council's 28 April meeting, which did not consider Councillor travel, the Mayor Cr Bell decided to travel at his own expense.

The meeting also noted:

- a) That Richard Brown (Community Committee member) and Dr John Rogers (Kose Nehan oral health education project working group member) were travelling at their own expense
- b) Over the 25 years of the relationship there have been:
 - i. 9 official visits to Aileu involving Councillors, the most recent in 2023
 - ii. 11 official visits from Aileu, the most recent in 2019
 - iii. 11 other visits to Aileu by the Project Officer
 - iv. Approximately 45 other visits (encompassing some 140 person visits) by Community Committee members, partner organisation representatives or volunteers, that were either funded from Friends of Aileu fundraising, self-funded or funded from sources other than the 2 Councils.

The Committee expressed the view that:

- a) The value to the friendship relationship of official visits between Merri-bek and Hume Councils and Aileu is demonstrated by the warm and overwhelmingly positive reception given to past visits by Council representatives to Timor-Leste and the learning opportunities in both directions.
- b) The outcomes have been important in strengthening the friendship relationship and partnership; they have included the maintenance of strong personal and organisational connections, better understanding of each partner's roles and commitment to the relationship as well as the benefits to our respective communities that flow from an active and meaningful relationship.

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Councillor Briefing

Date: 2 June 2025

Meeting time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

Rule 9.1 provides that a record of the matters discussed at all **Hearing of Submission Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings** and **Councillor Briefings** organised or hosted by Council will be kept.

The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees		
Councillors	Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor	Cr Chris Miles
	Cr Nat Abboud	Cr Jay Iwasaki
	Cr Liz Irvin	Cr Katherine Theodosios
	Cr Ella Svensson	Cr Oscar Yildiz JP
	Cr Adam Pulford	Cr Sue Bolton
Apologies	Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor	
Council Staff (name and position)	• Cathy Henderson, Chief Executive Officer • Anita Curnow, Acting Director City Infrastructure • Eamonn Fennessey, Director Community • Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment • Yvonne Callanan Manager Governance and Strategy • Christina Grayland, Acting Manager Community Wellbeing • Stefan Grun, Manager Customer, Communications and Engagement • Alayna Chapman, Unit Manager Strategic Planning • Jemma Wightman, Chief Financial Officer	
External participants	Nil	

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1	Council Plan 2025-2029 Workshop	-	-
2	State Activity Centre Reforms Brunswick & Coburg – proposed submission	-	-
3	2025-2029 Budget	-	-
4	Confidential Risk Update	-	-

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Eamonn Fennessey, Director Community

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Councillor Briefing

Date: 30 June 2025

Meeting time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

Rule 9.1 provides that a record of the matters discussed at all **Hearing of Submission Meetings**, **Advisory Committee Meetings** and **Councillor Briefings** organised or hosted by Council will be kept.

The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor Cr Chris Miles Cr Nat Abboud Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor Cr Liz Irvin Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Ella Svensson Cr Sue Bolton Cr Adam Pulford
Apologies	Cr Oscar Yildiz JP Cr Katherine Theodosis
Council Staff (name and position)	• Cathy Henderson, Chief Executive Officer • Anita Curnow, Acting Director City Infrastructure • Eamonn Fennessy, Director Community • Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment • Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation • Bec Fitzgerald, Coburg Revitalisation Lead • Lachlan McGowan, Revitalisation Project Manager • Peter Sagar, Program Director Central Coburg • Catherine Dear, Manager City Services • Christina Grayland, Acting Manager Community Wellbeing • Kim Critchley, Unit Manager Aquatic and Leisure Services • Jemma Wightman, Chief Financial Officer • Seamus Lowe, Unit Manager Property
External participants	Traffix Group, MGS Architects, SGS Economics & Planning

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1	Confidential - Central Coburg Program	-	-

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
2	Confidential - Major Service Contracts expiring mid-2026	-	-
3	Organisational Update	-	-
4	Murrell Street Sale Report Back	-	-

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Councillor Briefing

Date: 7 July 2025

Meeting time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

Rule 9.1 provides that a record of the matters discussed at all **Hearing of Submission Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings** and **Councillor Briefings** organised or hosted by Council will be kept.

The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor Cr Chris Miles Cr Nat Abboud Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor Cr Liz Irvin Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Ella Svensson Cr Adam Pulford
Apologies	Cr Katherine Theodosios Cr Oscar Yildiz JP Cr Sue Bolton
Council Staff (name and position)	• Cathy Henderson, Chief Executive Officer • Anita Curnow, Acting Director City Infrastructure • Eamonn Fennessy, Director Community • Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment • Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation
External participants	Nil

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1	Council agenda	-	-

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Councillor Briefing

Date: 14 July 2025

Meeting time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm



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The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor Cr Adam Pulford Cr Liz Irvin Cr Ella Svensson Cr Chris Miles Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Sue Bolton
Apologies	Cr Nat Abboud Cr Katerine Theodosis
Council Staff (name and position)	• Cathy Henderson, Chief Executive Officer • Anita Curnow, Acting Director City Infrastructure • Eamonn Fennessy, Director Community • Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment • Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation • Nathan Reading, Shared Mobility Officer • Vaughn Allan, Unit Manager Transport Planning • Caden McCarthy, Manager City Design and Economy • Nathan Reading, Shared Mobility Officer • Jemma Wightman, Chief Financial Officer • Indivar Dhakal, Manager Capital Works Planning and Delivery • Judy Spokes, Glenroy Community Hub Coordinator • Lisa Dempster, Manager Cultural Development
External participants	Nil

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1	Shared E-bikes update	-	
2	10-year Financial Plan overview & 10-year Asset Plan	-	
3	Three years of Glenroy Community Hub	-	
4	Organisational Update – 2025 Staff Survey	-	

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
5	Parking Fines Refund Scheme Update	-	

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Planning Briefing

Date: 21 July 2025

Meeting time: 6:00pm



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The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor Cr Sue Bolton Cr Adam Pulford Cr Nat Abboud Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor Cr Liz Irvin Cr Ella Svensson Cr Jay Iwasaki
Apologies	Cr Katherine Theodosis Cr Chris Miles
Council Staff (name and position)	Cathy Henderson – Chief Executive Officer Pene Winslade – Director Place and Environment Phil Priest – Group Manager City Development Mark Hughes – Unit Manager Urban Planning Esha Rahman – Planning Coordinator
External participants	Nil

Items discussed	Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1 MPS/2024/648 – 27 Breese Street, Brunswick	1. Cr Jay Iwasaki 2. Material 3. Nature of the conflict: Material related to proximity to home and association with objectors parties.	Yes
2 PPE/2025/215 (Ministerial referral) - 31-33 Hilda Street & 88 Isla Avenue Glenroy	-	-

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Phillip Priest, Group Manager City Development

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Central Coburg Oversight Committee

Date: 23 July 2025

Meeting time: 5.15 pm



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Attendees			
Councillors	Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor Cr Nat Abboud Cr Jay Iwasaki		
Apologies	None		
Council Staff (name and position)	Cathy Henderson Eamonn Fennessy Peter Sagar Pene Winslade		
External participants	Nil		
Items discussed	Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting	
1 Central Coburg matters	None		

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Pene Winslade, Director Place & Environment

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Councillor Briefing

Date: 28 July 2025

Meeting time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

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The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor Cr Chris Miles Cr Nat Abboud Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor Cr Sue Bolton Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Ella Svensson
Apologies	Cr Adam Pulford Cr Katerine Theodosis Cr Liz Irvin
Council Staff (name and position)	• Cathy Henderson, Chief Executive Officer • Anita Curnow, Acting Director City Infrastructure • Eamonn Fennessy, Director Community • Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment • Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation • Yvonne Callanan, Manager Governance & Strategy • Phil Jansen, Unit Manager Urban Forest • Richard Tolliday, Unit Manager Open Space Design and Development • Vaughn Allan, Unit Manager Transport Planning • Caden McCarthy, Manager City Design and Economy • Indivar Dhakal, Manager Capital Works Planning and Delivery • Alayna Chapman, Unit Manager Strategic Planning • Jemma Wightman, Chief Financial Officer • Brian Harris, Manager People and Safety • Michael Pogia, Unit Manager Procurement
External participants	Nil

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1	Advisory Committees Review	-	
2	Urban Forest Update	-	

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
3	Linear Park Reserve Masterplan Update - City of Yarra and Merri-bek City Council Collaboration	-	
4	Streets for People Plan inc. Turning Roads into Parks	-	
5	Road Management Plan Review	-	
6	Proposed Amendment C196MORE – Special Building Overlay Schedule 2 (SBO2) to land at risk of flooding from local stormwater drains – Decision Gateway 3: Consideration of Panel Report and Decision on the Amendment	-	
7	Procurement Policy follow up – Suppliers with employment programs for people with disabilities	-	

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Hearing of Submissions – Draft Community Vision and Draft Council Plan 2025-2029

Date: 29 July 2025

Meeting time: 6.00pm



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The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor Cr Adam Pulford Cr Nat Abboud Cr Ella Svensson Cr Sue Bolton
Apologies	Cr Liz Irvin Cr Katherine Theodosis Cr Chris Miles
Council Staff (name and position)	Chief Executive Officer – Cathy Henderson Director Business Transformation – Sue Vujcevic Director City Infrastructure – Anita Curnow Director Community – Eamonn Fennessy Director Place and Environment – Pene Winslade Manager Governance and Strategy – Yvonne Callanan Corporate Planner – Carly Alexander
External participants (include organisation represented)	Rodney Spark - Merri-bek Residents for Reconciliation Action Mark Goodie - Merri Outreach Support Service Brendon Agpasa - My Choice Support Network Maria Abdani - Fawkner's Future Zara Asmat – Fawkner's Future

Items discussed	Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature
1 Draft Community Vision and Draft Council Plan 2025-2029	Nil

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Yvonne Callanan, Manager Governance and Strategy.

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Central Coburg Oversight Committee

Date: 30 July 2025

Meeting time: 5.45pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

Rule 9.1 provides that a record of the matters discussed at all **Hearing of Submission Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings** and **Councillor Briefings** organised or hosted by Council will be kept.

The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees			
Councillors		Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor	
		Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor	
		Cr Jay Iwasaki	
		Cr Nat Abboud	
Apologies			
Council Staff (name and position)		Cathy Henderson, Chief Executive Officer Eamonn Fennessy, Director Community Pene Winslade, Director Place & Environment Peter Sagar, Program Director Central Coburg	
External participants		None	
Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1	Central Coburg matters	-	

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Pene Winslade, Director Place & Environment

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Councillor Briefing

Date: 4 August 2025

Meeting time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

Rule 9.1 provides that a record of the matters discussed at all **Hearing of Submission Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings** and **Councillor Briefings** organised or hosted by Council will be kept.

The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor Cr Chris Miles Cr Nat Abboud Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor Cr Liz Irvin Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Ella Svensson Cr Katherine Theodosios
Apologies	Cr Adam Pulford Cr Sue Bolton
Council Staff (name and position)	- Anita Curnow, Director City Infrastructure - Eamonn Fennessy, Acting Chief Executive Officer - Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment - Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation - Lisa, Acting Director Community - Lachlan McGowan, Revitalisation Project Manager - Peter Sagar, Program Director Central Coburg - Eren Cakmakaya, Unit Manager Communications - Kim Critchley, Unit Manager Aquatic and Leisure Services - Bernadette Hetherington, Manager Community Wellbeing - Simon Adams, Unit Manager Waste Services - Nick Groves, Project Manager
External participants	Nil

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1	Central Coburg update		
2	Aquatic and Leisure Services		
3	NW Building Phoenix Street		
4	Waste – confidential		
5	Fortnightly Rubbish Trial - Councillor Update		

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation

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Committee:	Audit and Risk Committee (Established in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>)
Meeting Date:	Tuesday 3 June 2025
Representatives:	Councillor members – Mayor Cr Helen Davidson, Deputy Mayor Cr Helen Politis and Cr Ella Stevensson (apology) Independent members - John Watson (Chair), Marilyn Kearney, Lisa Tripodi and Jeff Rigby

The Audit and Risk Committee is chaired by Independent Chair, John Watson. The following business was conducted:

1. No conflicts of interest were declared.
2. The CEO advised the Committee that no issues relating to any impending legal action or known legislation breached or instances of fraud were noted.
3. The internal and external auditor reported that there had been no obstructions to the work of internal audit.
4. It was confirmed that the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 4 March 2025 had been circulated and confirmed out of session.

FINANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. **RECEIVED and NOTED** the progress against the 3-year Financial Management Improvement Plan;
2. **RECEIVED and NOTED** the monitoring and update on Council's controls for unusual transactions above acceptable risk;
3. **RECEIVED and NOTED** the management disclosures in financial reports of the effect of significant compliance issues;
4. **RECEIVED and NOTED** Council's handling of accounting, internal accounting controls or auditing matters or other matters likely to affect the Council or its compliance with relevant legislation and regulations;
5. **RECEIVED and NOTED** the Finance Management Report for the period ending 31 March 2025
6. **RECEIVED and NOTED** the Third Quarter Financial Review.

Finding:

1. Council is monitoring and managing its financial position and key controls.

COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT AND WORK PLAN REPORT

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. **NOTED** the schedule of the Place and Environment policies overdue for review.
2. **NOTED** the register- Instruments of Delegations.
3. **NOTED** the report on Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality.
4. **NOTED** the report on the CEO credit card transactions.
5. **ADOPTED** the Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan for the financial year 2025-26.

Findings

1. Management has a plan in place to review and update policies.
2. The Register - Instruments of Delegations is current.
3. Report of gifts, benefits and hospitality have been recorded in accordance with policy.
4. The Chief Financial Officer has reviewed the credit card transaction for the CEO corporate credit card.
5. The current Audit and Risk Committee work plan is on track. Management and the Audit and Risk Committee have fulfilled all obligations scheduled since the March 2025 meeting.

MEMORANDUM OF AUDIT PLANNING AND AUDITS COMPLETED

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. **DISCUSSED, ACCEPTED and ENDORSED** the following Memorandum of Audit Planning for the forthcoming audit:
 - Cyber Security
 - Library Services
 - Occupational Health and Safety – Depot Based Employees

DISCUSSED: the Climate Change Memorandum of Audit Planning
2. **DISCUSSED, ACCEPTED and ENDORSED** the findings, recommendations, and management comments for the following audits and review:
 - Depot Operations
 - Privacy and Third-Party Management
 - Human Resources – Recruitment and Selection
3. **NOTED** the internal audit program for 2024 -25 is complete.

Findings

1. The Depot Operations audit identified findings and management comments have been provided against recommendations.
2. The Privacy and Third-Party Management audit identified areas for improvement and management comments have been provided against recommendations.
3. The Human Resources – Recruitment and Selection audit identified areas for improvement and management comments have been provided against recommendations.
4. Crowe have completed the eight audits scheduled in the 2024 -25 Internal Audit Plan.

EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. **RECEIVED and NOTED** the Interim Management Letter.
 2. **NOTED** the VAGO Status Report.
-

Findings

1. The Interim Management Letter has been received.
2. Management has reviewed the February 2025 VAGO Status Report.

Forthcoming Meetings:

2 September 2025 18 November 2025

Proposed MAV Motion

Motion title: Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund

Motion:

That the MAV:

1. Call for the State Government:
 - a) To immediately implement a moratorium on collecting the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF) in order to allow a public inquiry to examine the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF) and its implications.
 - b) Note that the previous Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) was implemented following the Black Friday Bushfire Royal Commission. The ESVF was implemented with minimal consultation and without input or oversight of a Parliamentary Committee.
 - c) If any kind of emergency services levy is implemented, to not use the levy to fund non-core activities and not use the levy to disguise cuts to funding for emergency services.
 - d) If any kind of emergency services levy is implemented, to use the State Revenue Office to collect it, not local councils.
2. Begins a public campaign to advocate for transparency on what the funding recipients included in Government Gazette s269 received in 2023/24 to enable the public to understand the level of funding recipients are receiving under the new levy (increasing or decreasing).

Rationale:

The Fire Services Property Levy was a recommendation from the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission (2009-2010) prior to its introduction.

Unlike the Fire Services Levy, the proposal for an Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund (ESVF) was announced in December 2024, without any public inquiry to justify it.

The ESVF is intended to cover an expanded number of services - Triple Zero Victoria, Emergency Management Victoria, the State Emergency Service as well as Fire Rescue Victoria and the CFA.

These emergency services are currently paid for out of taxes on the community that are paid into consolidated revenue.

The State Government claims that the ESVF is needed to fund Emergency Services.

There is legitimate concern that the ESVF won't be used exclusively for core needs of emergency services such as replacing fire trucks and maintaining minimum staffing levels for fire and other emergency services. There is also concern that emergency services funding levels will decrease under the ESVF.

There needs to be an immediate moratorium on collecting the ESVF in order to allow a public inquiry to examine the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF) and its implications.

Proposed MAV Motion

Motion title: Keep in-home aged care services in Council hands

Motion:

That the MAV:

1. Notes the meaningful and important work of Council aged care workers supporting older residents in our local communities to live good lives and remain independent in their own homes.
2. Notes that while this work is predominantly funded by the Federal Government's Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) block funding, Councils do subsidise this work through their own budgets.
3. Writes to the Federal Ministers and Assistant Ministers for Aged Care and Health advocating to make permanent the Commonwealth Home Support Program block funding that are currently scheduled to end mid-2027 to give certainty to the 28 Councils in Victoria still delivering these services in-house, to older residents who currently access the program and to Council workers employed through the program.

Rationale:

For decades, councils have provided in-home aged care support services to older residents. These services include in-home personal care, delivered meals, social connection and leisure activities and on-demand community transport.

Council in home aged care services are delivered by dedicated and skilled workers and are much-loved by older residents in the community. In some cases, our aged care workers have supported local older residents for decades, building deep trust and rapport with them. This is critically important as it is a big ask for people to let someone else into their own home to provide personal care, like assistance with showering. These services support older people to remain living independently in their own homes for longer.

Councils' aged care services are funded in large part through the Federal Government's Commonwealth Home Support Program block funding, however councils do subsidise this work too.

CHSP block funding is scheduled to end mid-2027. This looming deadline and funding uncertainty has seen many Victorian Councils withdraw from providing aged care services in-house.

Making CHSP block funding permanent would mean many councils could continue to provide these important services to our older residents. This would also provide certainty to older residents accessing these services and Council aged care workers across the state.

Proposed MAV Motion

Motion title: Protect the future of our public pools

Motion:

That the MAV:

1. Recognises the critical importance of public pools and aquatic/leisure centres to our communities as:
 - a) hubs of social connection;
 - b) places for people to exercise and be healthy;
 - c) places for people, particularly children, to learn the life skill of swimming; and
 - d) places for people to cool down during extreme heat events, which will only become more frequent with worsening climate change.
2. Notes that:
 - a) the high cost of maintaining, upgrading and building new public pools and aquatic/leisure centres present huge financial challenges for Councils, particularly in the context of continued cost-shifting by other levels of government and rate-capping;
 - b) many Councils' public pools and aquatic/leisure centres are ageing assets that will require high levels of investment to maintain and upgrade in order to continue operating; and
 - c) notes that demand for public pools and aquatic/leisure centres will only increase as Victoria's population and population density grow.
3. Calls on the Victorian and Federal Governments to work with Councils to protect the future of our public pools by providing ongoing funding streams to support Councils to maintain, upgrade and build new public pools and aquatic/leisure centres in order to meet community demand.

Rationale:

Public pools and aquatic/leisure centres are vital pieces of community infrastructure that deliver wide-reaching social, health, educational and environmental benefits. They are community hubs that play a critical role in supporting public health and social wellbeing across all demographics.

They are one of the few truly intergenerational, multicultural, and accessible spaces where people of all ages and backgrounds can gather, connect, and participate. They support community cohesion and mental wellbeing by offering a welcoming and affordable environment for recreation and interaction.

Public pools support healthy, active lifestyles and prevent chronic illness by enabling physical activity in a safe and supportive setting. For many people—particularly older adults, people with disabilities, and those recovering from injury—aquatic exercise is one of the most accessible forms of movement.

Swimming is a critical life skill, and public pools are essential for ensuring that all children, regardless of socio-economic status, have the opportunity to learn to swim. In a country surrounded by water and home to thousands of inland waterways, this is a matter of public safety as much as equity.

As the impacts of climate change intensify, public aquatic facilities will become increasingly important as designated cool zones during extreme heat events.

However, the financial cost of maintaining, upgrading, and renewing these facilities is beyond the reach of many local governments, particularly in a context of rate capping and continued cost-shifting. More than half of Victoria's 260 council-run public swimming pools are over 50 years old and considered beyond their end-of-life date.¹ On a national level, a report has indicated that up to 40% of local government-run public pools would likely need serious refurbishment or outright replacement at a cost of more than \$8 billion within a decade.² At the same time, demand for public pools is rising due to population growth and urban density.

Without support from state and federal governments, many Councils will be forced to make difficult decisions about the future of these much-loved assets. A sustainable, ongoing funding partnership is essential to protect the future of public pools and ensure they continue to meet the needs of growing communities.

¹ ABC News Online, 6 March 2025 '[Victoria's ageing pools need cash splash to stay afloat, councils warn](#)'

² Australian Leisure Management, 11 May 2025 '[Victoria's ageing aquatic facility infrastructure in need of resources](#)'

7.13 CONTRACT AWARD: MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA (MAV) MAV-MS8014-25 MAILING SERVICES

Director Business Transformation, Sue Vujcevic

Information Technology

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approves opting into a Collaborative Procurement Arrangement with Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) contract MAV-MS8014-25 for the Provision of Digital Mail Services **(Contract)**:
 - a) For an amount not exceeding \$5,000,000 excluding GST; and
 - b) For an initial contract term of three (3) years with a further two (2) by three (3) year extension options commencing 1 August 2025.
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract; and
3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to exercise the option to extend contracts in accordance with the provisions within the Contract; and
4. Advises Municipal Association of Victoria of its decision on this matter.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to recommending opting into contract no MAV-MS8014-25 for mailing services. The current Municipal Association of Victoria (DM8014) contract is due to expire on 31 July 2025.

The scope of the tender for mailing services included the following services:

- Category One – Direct Mail Services
- Category Two – Unaddressed Mail/Mail Delivery

Direct Mail Services involve the physical delivery of promotional or transactional materials, like letters, brochures, or catalogues, directly to a recipient's mailbox.

Unaddressed mail, also known as letterbox drops or unaddressed advertising, refer to the delivery of materials to residential and business addresses without specific recipient names or addresses.

Council is seeking Category One - Direct Mail Services only. The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) conducts the tender on behalf of councils. The tender was advertised on 7 April 2025, closing on 1 May 2025. The proposed contract term is three (3) years from 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2028 with an option to extend for two (2) additional periods of three (3) years.

The tender complies with Section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Previous Council Decisions

Digital Mail (Printing and Postage Services) MAV Contract DM8014 - 13 April 2022

That Council authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:

1. *Approve and appoint the use of the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) panel for the provision of Digital Mail Services contract #DM8014 which expires in July 2025.*

2. Do all things necessary to engage the services and execute any other required documentation.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under Section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$350,000 (incl GST) as well as comply with the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy.

2. Background

The purpose of this report is to recommending opting into contract no MAV-MS8014-25 for Mailing services under Category One – Direct Mail Services.

The MAV contract (MAV-MS8014-25) includes the following services:

- Enables Council staff to send digital documents to an external provider who handles printing, sorting, folding, inserting, and mailing.
- Helps reduce the time spent on manual mail preparation, allowing staff to focus on higher-value tasks.
- Supports remote working by allowing mailouts to be completed from any location.
- Offers better oversight of mail activity through detailed reports and dashboards.
- Minimises errors by automating steps that were previously done manually.

Other councils using a digital mail service include Casey City Council, City of Melbourne, Kingston City Council, Glen Eira City Council, Brimbank City Council and Stonnington City Council.

As this is common requirement for councils, MAV considered it as a suitable area where the market could be approached on behalf of a large number of councils. The expected outcome was a better price for councils and reduced effort in responding to multiple tenders for providers.

Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) invited tenders from qualified suppliers to be part of a panel of providers for Digital Mail Services commencing 1 August 2025 and ending 30 July 2028 with an option to extend for a further two (2) periods of three (3) years. The tender was advertised via Tenderlink on 7 April 2025. The tender closed 24 days after the advertised date at 5.00pm AEDT on 1 May 2025 with 8 submissions received.

Tender submissions were evaluated through a thorough process, involving a qualitative assessment against selection criteria, pricing analysis and ongoing risk assessment, the MAV Tender Evaluation Panel has shortlisted 5 suppliers for the Mailing Services panel. Detailed evaluation criteria and weighting are provided in the following table:

Criteria	Weighting
Ability to meet the specifications	22%
Capability and capacity	22%
Customer service & performance management	20%
Organisational expertise (case studies and referees)	16%
Social & sustainable procurement	20%
Total	100%

As outlined in **Confidential Attachment 1** MAV-MS8014-25 Digital Mail Services (Member Report), MAV has outlined the procurement process and evaluation.

3. Issues

Collaboration

Note that section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies, Procurement Australia, or MAV that may be available.

This is a Collaborative Procurement Arrangement with Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).

Community impact

Improved timeliness and accuracy of postal services through the automation of manual processes have been achieved through use of the direct mail.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

Digital mail providers use high-volume, high-efficiency printers located across Australia. Mail is sent electronically to the printer closest to the delivery address which reduces the distance the item needs to physically travel, reducing emissions due to transportation. By outsourcing the digital mail service, Council can reduce the number and size of its fleet of printers, reducing the amount of electricity consumed and eWaste generated.

Economic sustainability implications

The usage cost for direct mail includes postage, materials and handling. Based on financial modelling performed internally, direct mail services will deliver an economic savings to Council when the costs of maintaining the service and equipment in house are considered.

Legal and risk considerations

Through the MAV tender process, suppliers appointed by Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) confirms that it complies with all relevant legislation.

By automating processes that were previously done manually, the risk of incorrectly addressed mail is reduced, preventing data breaches which erode confidence in Council's services.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and no issues were identified.

4. Consultation and engagement

MAV consulted all member councils involved by public tender and evaluation. A Council staff representative from Moorabool Council was part of the panel.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

By using a digital mail service, Council has an opportunity to continue to reduce the number and size of its printer fleet. It also avoids the need to purchase folding machines, which are used intensively for short periods but sit idle most of the time.

All areas using the service have reported a reduction in time spent on administrative tasks which is being used to improve the way they deliver services.

The exact cost to Council is dependent upon the volume and method used for payment. Regardless of the method used, the cost is likely to be less than Merri-bek City Council could have achieved if the tender had been conducted in isolation. The use of the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) panel for the provision of Digital Mail Services contract will be funded from existing operational budgets.

Table 1: Estimated spend

Year	Estimate Budget Value (\$ excluding GST)
2025-2026	\$447,855
2026-2027	\$470,248
2027-2028	\$493,760
2028-2029	\$518,448
2029-2030	\$544,371
2030-2031	\$571,589
2031-2032	\$600,169
2032-2033	\$630,177
2033-2034	\$661,686
Total	\$4,938,303

7. Implementation

Following Council approval, Council officers will opt-in to the new panel arrangement using the MAV - Vendor Panel portal. Suppliers will receive confirmation of the opt-in via email.

Attachment/s

- 1 MAV-MS8014-25 Tender Recommendation Report.docx D25/356308

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7.14 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-P-2024-6 PROVISION OF DRAINAGE, CCTV SURVEYS, DRAIN CLEANING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS/SERVICES

Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow

City Services

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:

a) Make a formal offer to:

Veolia Environmental Services (Australia) Pty Ltd	ABN 20 051 316 584
Total Drain Cleaning Services Pty Ltd	ABN 17 130 467 346
ASG Industrial Pty Ltd	ABN 70 628 475 052
Patriot Tankers Pty Ltd	ABN 58 133 136 400

to award to the Contractors contract RFT-P-2024-6 for the Provision of Drainage, CCTV Surveys, Drain Cleaning and Associated Works/Services (**Contract**) on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 1(b) of this Resolution:

- i. for a supply contract – for the servicing and maintenance of the Stormwater Drain Cleaning, CCTV and other associated works within the municipality to complement and assist council current drainage maintenance program which is operated by the Street Cleansing Unit; and
- ii. for an estimate contract value of \$837,000 (excluding GST) for the 3-year fixed term, the total contract value including options to extend (1 x 2 years) is \$1,395,000 (excluding GST).

b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:

- i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
- ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer.

2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution:

- a) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract;
- b) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to exercise the option(s) to extend contracts in accordance with the provisions within the Contract;
- c) Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to accept new panel contractor(s) during the contract term subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted for the original panel contractors, to ensure we can maintain a range of suitable suppliers to meet Council's needs, providing the total contract amount to remain as paragraph 1 (a); and
- d) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The purpose of the report is to award a tender to a panel of providers for the provision of Drainage, CCTV Surveys, Drain Cleaning and Associated works/services. Council owns 495.8 km of pipes, 20,842 pits and 23 Gross Pollutant traps (GPT's) within its boundaries, of these approximately 410 km of pipes and 14,572 Pits are within road reserves.

The contracts provide street drainage, CCTV surveys, drain cleaning and associated works/services to the entire municipality as required. The current contract expired on the 30 June 2024, currently services have been provided on a quote basis.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Previous Council Decisions

None.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$350,000 (incl GST) as well as the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy.

2. Background

The purpose of the report is to award a tender to a panel of providers for the provision of Drainage, CCTV Surveys, Drain Cleaning and Associated works/services.

The contract provides street drainage, CCTV surveys, drain cleaning and associated works/services to the entire municipality as required. The current contract expired on the 30 June 2024, currently services have been provided on a quote basis.

The tender was advised via Council Procurement portal on 27 November 2024, inviting tenderers via the e-tender portal from suitably experienced contractors to undertake the works. Council officers also emailed all providers that have existing relationships with Merri-bek City Council to advise them of this tender opportunity via the Procurement Portal. Eight conforming tenders were received.

Tenderers Name	ABN Numbers
Veolia Environmental Services (Australia) Pty Ltd	ABN 20 051 316 584
Total Drain Cleaning Services Pty Ltd	ABN 17 130 467 346
ASG Industrial Pty Ltd	ABN 70 628 475 052
Patriot Tankers Pty Ltd	ABN: 58 133 136 400
AME Group	ABN 53 665 485 512
Leading Civil Solutions	ABN 94 652 891 864.
QEST Infrastructure	ABN 52 647 783 837
TDM Pipeline Solutions Pty Ltd	ABN 80 654 325 863

Tender Evaluation

The tenders were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, at the time of tendering and in accordance with the approved Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan for this project.

The tender evaluation criteria included cost, capacity, capability, and social / environmental / local considerations. Tenderers were asked to answer a number of questions which cover the consideration of the evaluation criteria.

Detailed evaluation criteria and weighting are provided in the following table:

Criteria	Weighting
Price	40%
Capability of the tenderer to provide the goods and services or works	25%
Capacity of the tenderer to provide the goods and/or services and/or work	25%
Social Sustainability	4%
Economic Sustainability	3%
Environmental Sustainability	3%
Total	100%

The membership of the tender evaluation panel was as follows.

Title and/or company	Project Mgr/ Generalist or Nominated Speciality	Full Voting / Advisory Member
Unit Manager Street Cleansing	Generalist	Full
Unit Manager City Works	Generalist	Full
Senior Project Drainage Engineer	Nominated Specialist	Full
Team Leader Response Services	Generalist	Full
Senior Procurement Partner	Procurement	Advisory

3. Issues

All tenders were evaluated in accordance with the approved Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan for this contract.

The Officer Recommendation is to allow the Chief Executive Officer to approve new suppliers, as required, to ensure we maintain a number of suppliers over the life of the contract to meet council's needs and address circumstances which may arise, such as contractors that cease their operations during the term of the contract. This would be subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted by the original evaluation panel, to ensure we maintain a suitable range of suppliers to meet Council's needs. The ability to bring on new suppliers also enables Council to potentially increase the number of contractors who align with our Procurement Policy environmental, social and economic objectives e.g. provide opportunities to business such as refugee businesses, social benefit suppliers etc. Any additional suppliers added to the panel would not change the overall maximum spend amount.

Collaboration

Note that section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies which may be available.

Under this contract there are no opportunities to collaborate with other Councils or public bodies because it is a local stand-alone road re-construction and drainage project for which there is a healthy local market of contractors.

Interviews

Interviews were deemed not necessary. No further clarifications were made.

Options

The cost to Council of appointing the recommended panel for the provision Drainage, CCTV Surveys, Drain Cleaning and Associated works/services, ensures that council meets its obligations for maintenance and cleaning of drains, alleviating issues that would be related to neglecting this infrastructure that could lead to litigation from affected residents.

The preferred panel of tenderers are being recommended due to their experience in providing the required services, previous services provided to council and successful reference checks conducted by our council officers.

Social / Environmental / Local Implications

Tenderers were required to demonstrate their social / environmental and economic initiatives. Some of the recommended tenderers initiatives are outlined below:

- 3% aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce participation, \$2m spend per year of goods and services supplied by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers, and at least five community partnerships across Australia
- Initiatives underway for women's equality and safety, including Women in Leadership programs, WEDO global community to connect women, gender diverse Parental Leave Framework, gender diversity targets at a global and Australia level (30% of women in leadership roles)
- Job Creation: ASG employs a diverse workforce, including local workers and disadvantaged groups, creating employment opportunities and driving economic growth
- Resource recovery and reuse/ Waste minimisation, ensures all waste materials, including plastics, metals, and construction debris, are sorted and sent for recycling where possible, reducing landfill contributions. Reuse water during jetting operations.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Consultation / Recommendation from Management

Street Cleansing as the leading service unit for this tender process consulted with Engineering Services and City Works in respect to this tender and representatives were included on the tender evaluation panel.

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council Officers, external consultants and all other parties involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The estimated spend in this area is approximately \$270,000 annually which comes out of the street cleansing budget.

7. Implementation and Timeline

It is proposed that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to do all things necessary to execute the contracts and any other required documentation, including the execution of the future optional contract extension(s).

The contracts will commence as soon as possible following Council endorsement.

Attachment/s

1 Drainage - Tender Recommendation Report

D25/390541

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g(ii)) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7.15 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2025-1 DUNSTAN RESERVE CHILDCARE CENTRE EXPANSION

Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow

Capital Works Planning and Delivery

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Make a formal offer to Notion Partners - ABN 30 328 629 266 (Contractor) to award to the Contractor contract RFT-2025-1 Dunstan Reserve Childcare Centre Expansion (Contract) on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 1(b) of this Resolution for the lump sum of \$2,467,079.00 (excluding GST).
 - b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:
 - i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
 - ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer.
2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution:
 - a) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract; and
 - b) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The Dunstan Reserve Childcare Centre Expansion project aims to expand the existing kindergarten and upgrade the existing amenity to accommodate increasing population needs including the State's expansion of 3-year-old kindergarten programs.

The proposed kindergarten will provide additional 22 student places and will be compliant with current standards. The design has been finalised and approved by key stakeholders.

A public tender was released on 1 February 2025 and closed on 28 February. Seven tender submissions were received.

Tender evaluation was undertaken by Tender Evaluation Team. Interviews were conducted with shortlisted tenderers, and Best and Final Offer (BAFO) requested. Notion Partners has been identified as the preferred service provider based on a set of predefined evaluation criteria, which considered a balance of cost, capacity, capability, and risk.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Previous Council Decisions

There is no prior decision relating to this contract.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$300,000 (incl GST) as well as the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy at the time of tendering. The cumulative spend threshold has since been revised to \$350,000 (incl GST).

2. Background

The purpose of the report is to award a tender for the construction of Dunstan Reserve Childcare Centre Expansion.

Dunstan Reserve Childcare (managed by Moreland Community Child Care Centres) is a not-for-profit Childcare Centre in Brunswick West. With the increasing population and higher demand, the centre requires an expansion to accommodate the needs.

The scope of work includes: a new 3-year-old kindergarten room, new landscaped play area, children's bathroom to accommodate the new kindergarten room, accessible ramp to connect the new kindergarten room to the existing building, alteration to the existing building to provide more staff toilets, and improvements to the staff room, office and kitchen.

The design has been finalised and approved by key stakeholders.

The tender was advertised in *The Age* newspaper on 1 February 2025. It closed at 3pm on 28 February and 7 tenders were received.

Tenderer Name	ABN Number
Constructive Group	40 102 865 074
FIMMA Constructions	22 101 232 320
Izza Group	96 635 258 972
Notion Partners	30 328 629 266
Salisbury Construction	52 667 621 909
Simbuilt	86 140 288 080
Site Clean Management Services	33 097 739 412

The tenders were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, at the time of tendering.

One (1) tender was non-conforming due to failing to provide all mandatory information on the Tender Response.

Tender Evaluation

Tenders were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy and in accordance with the approved Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan for this contract

The tender evaluation was based on the following the evaluation criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Price	40%
Capability	15%
Capacity	10%
Methodology	10%
Tender Program / Works Program	15%

Criteria	Weighting
Social Sustainability	3%
Economic Sustainability	3%
Environmental Sustainability	4%
Total	100%

The membership of the tender evaluation panel was as follows.

Title and/or company	Full Voting / Advisory Member
Project Manager	Full
Senior Project Manager	Full
Early Years and Youth Project Manager	Full
Quantity Surveyor – Zinc Cost Management	Advisory
Project Architect	Advisory
Head of Building Projects	Advisory
Senior Procurement Partner	Advisory

The evaluation process that identified Notion as the preferred tender based on the results of the evaluation matrix, included as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

3. Issues

Collaboration

Note that section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies which may be available.

Under this contract there are no opportunities to collaborate with other Councils or public bodies, because it is a local, stand-alone refurbishment project with specific timing requirements.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with the two shortlisted tenderers Ranked 1 and 2. Both demonstrated their competency in delivering the work through the interview. While the other shortlisted tenderer's methodology was considered by the Tender Evaluation Panel to be superior, when accounting for the price difference, Notion Partners was considered the best value for money and recommended as the preferred contractor overall.

Social / Environmental / Local Implications

Notion has committed to engage locally based Youthworx to assist with this project, as well as purchasing signage and PPE from Indigenous-owned Panku Safety Solutions Pty Ltd. Notion has also made a deliberate effort to create an inclusive work environment by employing an individual who was recovering from a stroke.

Environmentally, Notion carries out sustainability initiatives across all projects as part of plan for reducing carbon emissions. The initiatives are:

- Low-embodied energy material selection
- Low energy LED temp lighting
- Encourage site staff to use public transport
- Eliminate single use consumables on site
- Exceed 50 per cent recycled water content in concrete
- Source only responsibly accredited raw materials

- 80 per cent construction waste recycling

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Consultation / Recommendation from Management

Consultation with the local community was undertaken via Conversations Merri-bek page from June 2024. During this engagement, community feedback was collected which influenced the design.

Internal stakeholders including the childcare centre, Children's Services, Urban Design and Sustainable Built Environment are also actively engaged throughout the design process.

The application for a planning permit led to further engagement with the local community with the local residents regarding this project to expand and refurbish the centre. No concern/objections were raised from the community during this process.

Nearby property owners and residents will be informed prior to the works commencing on site via a letter drop from Council and the contractor.

It is recommended that the Contract be awarded to Notion Partners and that the project progress in line with the plans that have been agreed with the key stakeholders and community.

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council Officers, external consultants and all other parties involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The adopted budget has the below figures included in the capital works program for Dunstan Reserve Childcare Centre Expansion:

Budget and expenditure	Amount
2024/25 Revised Budget	\$223,400
Approved Carry forward for 2025/26	\$3,420,000
Total Budget	\$3,643,400
Less	
Project expenditure to date	\$231,000
Total Available Budget	\$3,412,400
Less	
<i>Recommended contract amount RFT-2025-1 Dunstan Reserve Childcare Centre Expansion</i>	\$2,467,079
Provision for temporary facilities for kinder	\$50,000
Other committed costs (design, authority)	\$100,000
Provision for latent conditions or unforeseen costs	\$123,353
Project Management and Superintendent Cost	\$130,000
Other costs outside of the current contract	\$541,968

The project is expected to be delivered within the available budget subject to discovery of any significant site related latent condition.

7. Implementation and Timeline

This report is seeking a Council decision to authorise the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the contract and any other required documentation.

Upon approval by Council of these this report recommendations, contract between the Contractor and Council is estimated to be executed in August 2025.

The construction work is expected to start in September with anticipated completion date of April 2026. There will be a subsequent 12 months defect liability period.

Attachment/s

1 RFT-2025-1 Tender Recommendation Report

D25/377716

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(i) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that relates to trade secrets.

7.16 CONTRACT AWARD RFT-P-2025-1 - PROVISION OF BLUESTONE, PAVING AND RETAINING WALL MAINTENANCE SERVICES

Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow

City Services

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Make a formal offer and award Contract RFT-P-2025-1 - Provision of Bluestone, Paving and Retaining Wall Maintenance Services to GP Bluestone Pty Ltd ABN 21 664 700 435 as the preferred contractor, accepting the tendered Schedule of Rates
 - i. For a period of one (1) year commencing 1 September 2025, with an option for a further three (3), one (1) year extensions at the discretion of Council
 - ii. For a maximum amount of \$1,400,000 (excluding GST) over the term of the contract, including extension options.
 - b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:
 - i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
 - ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer;
2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution, Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract;
 - b) Exercise the option(s) to extend contracts in accordance with the provisions within the Contract;
 - c) Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to accept new panel contractor(s) during the contract term subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted for the original panel contractors, to ensure we can maintain a range of suitable suppliers to meet Council's needs, providing the total contract amount to remain as paragraph 1 (a); and
 - d) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The report seeks Council endorsement to award Contract RFT-P-2025-1 - Provision of Bluestone, Paving and Retaining Wall Maintenance Services.

The contract is required for Council officers to coordinate maintenance works for bluestone laneways, bluestone kerb, retaining walls and paving. A single supplier will be appointed to provide the following services:

- Part A – Bluestone Pitcher Repair
- Part B – Retaining Wall Repair

- Part C – Pavement Repair

The overall goal is to ensure our bluestone assets are maintained and safe for the community.

The initial contract period of 1 year with three additional extension options each of 1 year at the discretion of Council.

The total contract term including options is 4 years.

There is no specific nominated budget under this contract; it will be dependent upon workload generated by projects. However, the overall combined contract expenditure is limited to \$1,400,000 (excluding GST) over the life of the contract (up to 4 years).

Expenditure under this contract will be determined by available annual budget allocations and works required during the contract term.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Previous Council Decisions

There has been no prior Council decision in relation to this specific contract.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$350,000 (incl GST) as well as the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy.

2. Background

An advertisement was placed in *The Age* newspaper on 31 May 2025 inviting tenders via the e-tender portal. The request for tender closed on 23 June 2025 and 4 tenders were received with all submissions received deemed as conforming.

Tenderers Name	ABN
GP Bluestone Pty Ltd	ABN 21 664 700 435
Stone Culture	ABN 80 113 193 990
Langdon Contractors P/L	ABN 93 119 755 065
Kaizen Civil Pty Ltd	ABN 18 619 423 068

The conforming tender submissions were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, at the time of tendering.

The following is a breakdown of the Evaluation Criteria applicable to this procurement project.

Criteria	Weighting
Price	40%
Experience and past performance	17%
Resources and Capacity	15%
Works Program	10%
Social Sustainability	5%
Economic Sustainability	5%
Environmental Sustainability	8%
Total	100%

The membership of the tender evaluation panel was as follows.

Title and/or company	Project Mgr/ Generalist or Nominated Speciality	Full Voting / Advisory Member
Operations Engineer	Project Mgr (Chair)	Full
Works Officer	Generalist	Full
Building Maintenance Coordinator	Generalist	Full
City Services Manager	Technical Advisor	Advisory
Senior Procurement Partner	Procurement	Advisory

In assessing the tenders, consideration was given to the predefined evaluation criteria included in the Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan.

Further details of tender evaluation are shown in the Tender Recommendation Report (**Confidential Attachment 1**).

3. Issues

All tenders were evaluated in accordance with the approved Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan for this contract.

All contractors have appropriate experience and qualifications with some specialised services having the required registered licences to conduct and sign off on registered work.

Collaboration

Note that section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies which may be available.

Under this contract, there are no opportunities to collaborate with other Councils because they have existing contracts that do not align with our contract current requirements.

Interviews

Interviews were not deemed necessary as tenderers provided sufficient evidence having experience within the Council, and qualifications to provide the services within the contract.

Social / Environmental / Local Implications

The preferred contractor has internal policies supporting social sustainability, environmental management, and the use of local suppliers and businesses. Local employment opportunities are encouraged and implemented within their organisation values. The contractor is located within Merri-bek.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Consultation / Recommendation from Management

City Works Unit as the leading service unit for this tender process and conducted the evaluation scoring in conjunction with the Procurement Unit as the advisory.

Four submissions were received via Council's e-tendering portal on the closing date at 2pm on 23 June 2025 and evaluated in accordance with the Procurement Policy.

The evaluation panel applied the pre-defined criteria to the tender submissions and determined that GP Bluestone Pty Ltd provided suitable experience, rates and other quality and sustainability attributes to achieve the highest scores in the evaluation and has therefore been recommended for the contract.

Price contributed 40 per cent to the overall evaluation and was calculated by applying the rates for each items of works to arrive at a total lump sum figure for comparison purposes.

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council Officers, external consultants and all other parties involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

Expenditure under this contract will be determined by available annual budget allocations and works required during the contract term. Works under the contract will draw from both capital and maintenance budgets.

The schedule of rates provided are expected to be maximum chargeable by the supplier subject to CPI increase (where applicable). In calculating the maximum spend over the greatest possible Contract life of 4 years, it has been estimated that spending will stay at this level, with allowance for CPI growth.

Spending on RFT-P-2025-1 in any given year will be limited by budget capacity.

7. Implementation and Timeline

It is proposed that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to do all things necessary to execute the contract RFT-P-2025-1 with each of the recommended panel contractors and any other required documentation, including the execution of the future optional contract extension(s).

The contracts will commence on 1 September 2025 following Council endorsement.

Attachment/s

1	RFT-P-2025-1 Tender Recommendation Report - Provision of Bluestone, Paving and Retaining Wall Maintenance Services	D25/376400

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7.17 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-P-2025-3 PANEL OF BUILDING MAINTENANCE SERVICES PROVIDERS

Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow

Open Space and Environment

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Accept the Schedule of Rates submitted by tenderers and make a formal offer and award Contract RFT-P-2025-3 Panel of Building Maintenance Service Providers (Contract) to the following contractors under each service category:

Painting

- Prestige Painting Group Pty Ltd ABN 17 711 734 627
- Argyle Maintenance Unit Trust ABN 86 057 016 273
- Programmed Property Services Pty Ltd ABN 66 106 015 632

Plumbing

- New Plumbing Solutions ABN 54 672 685 228
- Burstons Plumbing and Gas Fitting ABN 35 668 579 717
- Evans Plumbing ABN 64 648 307 939
- The Reed Group Australia ABN 37 617 148 295
- Shield Plumbing and Drainage Pty Ltd ABN 82 169 750 289

Carpet and Vinyl

- Nesty's Floor, ABN 71 477 041 134
- Blended Services Group Pty Ltd ABN 45 634 713 554

Carpentry and Building

- Fraietta Nominees Pty Ltd ABN 53 920 898 858
- Blended Services Group Pty Ltd ABN 45 634 713 554
- Keast Construction and Maintenance Pty Ltd ABN 87 230 958 723
- Harris HMC Maintenance ABN 56 006 262 979

Glazing

- M & R Glass Pty Ltd ABN 12 249 685 699
- Blended Services Group Pty Ltd ABN 45 634 713 554

Paling & Chainwire

- Blended Services Group Pty Ltd ABN 45 634 713 554
- Keast Construction and Maintenance Pty Ltd ABN 87 230 958 723

Safety Access

- Blended Services Group Pty Ltd ABN 45 634 713 554
- Harris HMC Maintenance ABN 56 006 262 979

Concreting and Bricklaying

- Fraietta Nominees Pty Ltd ABN 53 920 898 858
- Blended Services Group Pty Ltd ABN 45 634 713 554

Shade sails

- Oasis Tension Structures ABN 58 074 918 120
- Blended Services Group Pty Ltd ABN 45 634 713 554

- i. For a period of two (2) years commencing 1 September 2025, with an option for a further two (2), two (2) year extensions at the discretion of Council

- ii. For a maximum amount of \$8,800,000.00 (excluding GST) across all suppliers over the term of the contract, including extension options.
 - b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:
 - i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
 - ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer.
2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution, Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to:
- a) Do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract;
 - b) Exercise the option(s) to extend contracts in accordance with the provisions within the Contract;
 - c) Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to accept new panel contractor(s) during the contract term subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted for the original panel contractors, to ensure we can maintain a range of suitable suppliers to meet Council's needs, providing the total contract amount to remain as paragraph 1 (a); and
 - d) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The report seeks Council endorsement to award Contract RFT-P-2025-3 Panel of Building Maintenance Service Providers. This contract is to select and appoint a panel of licensed and qualified vendors to provide a variety maintenance services for Council owned assets across multiple sites within the Merri-bek City Council municipality.

This contract provides a range of contractors who are suitable for trade works in Council buildings, based on their cost, experience and expertise.

Tenderers were called for a panel of appropriate experienced and qualified vendors to provide a variety maintenance services for Council owned assets across multiple sites within the Merri-bek City Council municipality for an initial contract period of 2 years with two additional extension options each of 2 years at the discretion of Council.

The total contract term including options is 6 years.

The following suppliers are proposed to be awarded Contract RFT-P2025-3;

• Prestige Painting Group Pty Ltd	ABN 17 711 734 627
• Argyle Maintenance Unit Trust	ABN 86 057 016 273
• Blended Services Group Pty Ltd	ABN 45 634 713 554
• New Plumbing Solutions	ABN 54 672 685 228
• Burstons Plumbing and Gas Fitting	ABN 35 668 579 717
• Evans Plumbing	ABN 64 648 307 939
• The Reed Group Australia	ABN 37 617 148 295
• Shield Plumbing and Drainage Pty Ltd	ABN 82 169 750 289
• Nesty's Floor	ABN 71 477 041 134
• Fraietta Nominees Pty Ltd	ABN 53 920 898 858
• Keast Construction and Maintenance Pty Ltd	ABN 87 230 958 723
• M & R Glass Pty Ltd	ABN 12 249 685 699
• Programmed Property Services Pty Ltd	ABN 66 106 015 632

- Harris HMC Maintenance ABN 56 006 262 979
- Oasis Tension Structures ABN 58 074 918 120

There is no specific nominated budget under this contract; it will be dependent upon workload generated by projects, and reactive and planned maintenance works. However, the overall combined contract expenditure is limited to \$8,800,000 (excluding GST) over the life of the contract (up to 6 years).

Expenditure under this contract will be determined by available annual budget allocations and works required during the contract term.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Previous Council Decisions

There has been no prior Council decision in relation to this specific contract.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$350,000 (incl GST) as well as the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy.

2. Background

The report seeks Council endorsement to award Contract RFT-P-2025-3 Panel of Building Maintenance Service Providers. This contract is to select and appoint a panel of licensed and qualified vendors to provide a variety maintenance services for Council owned assets across multiple sites within the Merri-bek City Council municipality.

The objective is to ensure council-owned assets across the municipality are maintained and a range of services are provided for reactive and planned maintenance works.

This tender provides a panel of contractors who are suitable for future trade works in Council buildings, based on their cost, experience and expertise. The contracts do not compel Council to procure from the panel. While they have submitted their schedule of rates for this tender, officers can seek quotes for capital works to maintain competitiveness within the panel. Market testing of the panel may also be conducted via the seeking of quotes from outside the panel periodically throughout the life of the contracts to ensure best value is being obtained.

The panel includes contractors under the following nominated categories:

- Carpet and vinyl services.
- Painting and specialised coating services.
- Plumbing – above ground and below ground plumbing, gas fitting services and roof plumbing.
- Carpentry and minor building services.
- Glazing and shuttering services.
- Paling and chainmesh fencing services.
- Safety access and roof safety.
- Shade sails.
- Concreting and brickwork.

An advertisement was placed in *The Age* newspaper on 15 May 2025 inviting tenders via the e-tender portal. The request for tender closed on 4 April 2025 and 32 tenders were received with all submissions received deemed as conforming.

Tenderers Name	ABN
Groundbreaker Pty Ltd	ABN 50 678 643 144
1 Services	ABN 40 651 547 33
AAA Glass	ABN 26 005 437 838
Argyle Maintenance Unit Trust	ABN 86 057 016 273
AWS Services	ABN 73 163 375 031
Evans Plumbing	ABN 64 648 307 939
Bindara Group Pty Ltd	ABN 18 673 157 232
Blended Services Group Pty Ltd	ABN 45 634 713 554
Bourke Infrastructure Group	ABN 54 612 568 626
Burstons Plumbing and Gas Fitting	ABN 35 668 579 717
DJS Melbourne Property Services	ABN 35 164 596 874
Entire Building Services Pty Ltd	ABN 96 114 739 990
Fraietta Nominees Pty Ltd	ABN 53 920 898 858
Harris HMC Maintenance	ABN 56 006 262 979
JKC Plumbing and Construction	ABN 57 666 295 594
M & R Glass Pty Ltd	ABN 12 249 685 699
Australian Facilities Plumbing	ABN 99 125 507 253
MPE Group Interiors	ABN 97 628 646 579
New Plumbing Solutions	ABN 54 672 685 228
Prestige Painting Group Pty Ltd	ABN 17 711 734 627
Programmed Property Services	ABN 66 106 015 632
The Reed Group Australia	ABN 37 617 148 295
Reliant Plumbing & Building Services	ABN 25 123 071 634
Safety Plus Australia	ABN 13 067 394 281
Oasis Tension Structures	ABN 58 074 918 120
Shield Plumbing and Drainage Pty Ltd	ABN 82 169 750 289
St Clair Floor coverings	ABN 90 028 457 322
Supreme Fencing	ABN 41 568 532 751
Symmetry Commercial	ABN 27 006 956 609
Nesty's Floor	ABN 71 477 041 134
Keast Construction and Maintenance Pty Ltd	ABN 87 230 958 723
IKON Property Services Pty Ltd	ABN 30 162 440 977

The conforming tender submissions were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, at the time of tendering.

The following is a breakdown of the Evaluation Criteria applicable to this procurement project.

Criteria	Weighting
Price	40%
Capability	35%
Capacity	10%
Tender Program/Works Program (Quality Assurance)	5%

Criteria	Weighting
Social Sustainability	3%
Environmental	3%
Economic	4%
Total	100%

The membership of the tender evaluation panel was as follows.

Title and/or company	Project Mgr/ Generalist or Nominated Speciality	Full Voting / Advisory Member
Building Maintenance Coordinator	Project Mgr (Chair)	Full
Unit Manager Building Maintenance	Generalist	Full
Sports and Recreation Project Manager	Generalist	Full
Senior Procurement Partner	Procurement	Advisory

In assessing the tenders, consideration was given to the predefined evaluation criteria included in the Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan.

Further details of tender evaluation are shown in the Tender Recommendation Report (**Confidential Attachment 1**).

3. Issues

All tenders were evaluated in accordance with the approved Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan for this contract.

All contractors have appropriate experience and qualifications with some specialised services having the required registered licences to conduct and sign off on registered work. The panel Contractors may be asked to provide competitive quotes for reactive and planned maintenance works. If any become insolvent or otherwise become unable to provide panel services other panel contractors can carry the workload.

The Officer Recommendation is to allow the Chief Executive Officer to approve new suppliers, as required, to ensure we maintain a number of suppliers over the life of the contract to meet council's needs and address circumstances which may arise, such as contractors that cease their operations during the term of the contract. This would be subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted by the original evaluation panel, to ensure we maintain a suitable range of suppliers to meet Council's needs. The ability to bring on new suppliers also enables Council to potentially increase the number of contractors who align with our Procurement Policy environmental, social and economic objectives e.g. provide opportunities to business such as refugee businesses, social benefit suppliers etc. Any additional suppliers added to the panel would not change the overall maximum spend amount.

Collaboration

Note that section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies which may be available.

Under this contract, there are no opportunities to collaborate with other Councils because they have existing contracts that do not align with our contract current requirements.

Interviews

Interviews were not deemed necessary as tenderers provided sufficient evidence having experience, and qualifications to provide the services within the contract. Referee checks were conducted for the successful contractors that have not previously conducted contracted works for Council. Out of the fifteen (15) successful contractors, ten (10) are incumbent contractors.

Social / Environmental / Local Implications

The preferred contractors have internal policies supporting social sustainability, environmental management, and the use of local suppliers and businesses. Local employment opportunities are encouraged and implemented within their organisation values. The contractors are located within the municipality, or within proximity in adjacent municipalities.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Consultation / Recommendation from Management

Building Maintenance Unit as the leading service unit for this tender process consulted with Sports and Recreation Unit and conducted the evaluation scoring in conjunction with the Procurement Unit as the advisory.

Thirty-two submissions were received via Council's e-tendering portal on the closing date at 2pm on 4 April 2025 and evaluated in accordance with the Procurement Policy.

It was determined by the evaluation panel that fifteen (15) contractors are needed on the panel for building maintenance services to allow sufficient resource to adequately cater over the maximum 6 years of the contract.

The evaluation panel applied the pre-defined criteria to the tender submissions and determined that the following panel of contractors provided suitable experience, rates and other quality and sustainability attributes to achieve the highest scores in the evaluation and therefore be recommended for the contract.

Price contributed 40 per cent to the overall evaluation and was calculated by applying the rates submitted by each contractor multiplied by the number of expected work requests and their average hour duration combined with the annual planned maintenance costs.

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council Officers, external consultants and all other parties involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

Expenditure under this contract will be determined by available annual budget allocations and works required during the contract term.

The schedule of rates provided are expected to be maximum chargeable by suppliers subject to CPI increase (where applicable). In calculating the maximum spend over the greatest possible Contract life of 6 years, it has been estimated that spending will stay at this level, with allowance for CPI growth.

It is important to note that the contractors from this panel will sometimes be used to provide building maintenance services related to capital projects using project budgets and/or emergency works using emergency budgets, and this influences the level of spending which may be above the core budget available for electrical services maintenance.

Spending on RFT-P-2025-3 in any given year will be limited by budget capacity.

It worth noting, for panel arrangements Council does not guarantee either a minimum quantity of work in relation to any of the Contract components or any particular mix of work within the Contract components.

7. Implementation and Timeline

It is proposed that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to do all things necessary to execute the contract RFT-P-2025-3 with each of the recommended panel contractors and any other required documentation, including the execution of the future optional contract extension(s).

The contracts will commence on 1 September 2025 following Council endorsement.

Attachment/s

1	Tender Recommendation Report - Contract RFT-P-2025-3 Building Maintenance Panel	D25/341162

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7.18 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-P-2025-4 SUPPLY OF MEAT AND/OR FISH

Director Community, Eamonn Fennessy

Aged and Community Support

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Accept the Schedule of Rates submitted by Tenderers and make a formal offer to each of the individual panel contractors listed in Table 1 below according to the service categories, for the **Contract RFT-P-2025-4 Supply of Meat and/or Fish (Contract)** on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 1(b) of this Resolution:
 - i. For a period of two (2) years commencing 1 September 2025, with an option for a further two (2), two (2) year extension at the discretion of Council.
 - ii. For a maximum contract expenditure of \$3,022,000 (excluding GST) across all suppliers for the term of the contract including extension options.

Preferred Tenderers Fully Legal Name	ABN
Meat Suppliers	
Australian Meat Company Pty Ltd	41 114 584 100
PFD Food Services Pty Ltd	29 006 972 381
Poultry N More (Aust) Pty Ltd	42 142 888 015
The Trustee for the Tip Top Butchers Trust T/as Tip Top Meats	38 204 135 272
Fish Suppliers	
PFD Food Services Pty Ltd	29 006 972 381
The Trustee for the C&G Goulas Family Trust T/as Conway Fish Trading (Aust) Pty Ltd	58 636 278 084

- b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and each Contractor provided that:
 - i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
 - ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer.
2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by each Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Do all things necessary to execute the Contract;
 - b) Exercise the option to extend contracts in accordance with the provisions within the Contract;
 - c) Accept new panel contractor(s) during the contract term subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted for the original panel contractors, to ensure we can maintain a range of suitable suppliers to meet Council's needs, providing the total contract amount to remain as paragraph 1 (a).
 - d) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to recommend the award of a panel contract for the supply of meat and fish products to Council.

The aim of the tender process is to establish a panel of meat and fish suppliers to support the operations of Merri-bek's Meals Production Kitchen. This kitchen functions as a Class 1 Food Production Business and is responsible for preparing and delivering meals to eligible recipients under the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), the Home and Community Care Program (HACC), and individuals with Home Care Packages who have supply agreements in place. In addition to servicing Merri-bek residents, the meals service fulfills contractual obligations with Banyule, Yarra, and Darebin Councils.

To facilitate procurement of these services and in the light of the expiry of the previous contract through which Council used to procure these services, Merri-bek City Council is establishing a new panel of contractors with competitively sourced schedules of rates to provide the following Panel of Meat and/or Fish Services.

Council sought tenders from suitably qualified contractors for each of these categories and assessed the tenders in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy and with the Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan. Contracts are recommended to be awarded as outlined in the Officer Recommendation above. The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*

Previous Council Decisions

Nil.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to comply with its Procurement Policy (Policy) before entering into a contract for the purchase of goods or services or the carrying out of works. The Policy requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$350,000 (incl GST) as well as the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy.

2. Background

Council is seeking to appoint a panel of suppliers for the supply of meat and fish. The proposed meat and fish contract will be managed by the Meals Production Kitchen, operated by the Aged & Community Support branch from the Bob Hawke Community Centre located on Hudson Street, Coburg. The recommendation is to appoint a panel for an initial term of two years, with the option for two further extensions of two years each. Establishing a panel will ensure business continuity and deliver best value for Council.

The Meals Production Kitchen prepares approximately 3,000 healthy meals per week. Each meal includes a soup or sandwich, a main course, dessert, and fruit juice. All meals are reviewed by an Accredited Practising Dietitian to ensure compliance with the National Meal Guidelines for Meals on Wheels. Meals are delivered by paid staff who also provide a welfare check and social interaction with recipients. In addition to Merri-bek and Darebin, meals are distributed to Banyule and Yarra City Councils for onward delivery to their clients. Recipients include individuals supported by CHSP, HACC for Younger People, and those receiving Home Care Packages through contracted providers.

An advertisement was placed in *The Age* newspaper on Wednesday, 16 April 2025 inviting tenders via the e-tender portal. The request for tender closed on 9 May 2025 and 6 tenders were received with 5 of those submissions received deemed as conforming submissions.

Tenderers Name	ABN
Australian Meat Company Pty Ltd	41 114 584 100
PFD Food Services Pty Ltd	29 006 972 381
Poultry N More (Aust) Pty Ltd	42 142 888 015
The Trustee for the Tip Top Butchers Trust T/as Tip Top Meats	38 204 135 272
The Trustee for the C&G Goulas Family Trust T/as Conway Fish Trading (Aust) Pty Ltd	58 636 278 084
Austral Meat Services Pty Ltd T/as Chefs Choice Meats	40 668 352 038

The conforming tender submissions were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, at the time of tendering.

Interviews were not conducted as the panel was satisfied with the information in the tender submission and the post tender clarifications.

The following is a breakdown of the Evaluation Criteria applicable to this procurement project.

Item	Weighting %
Pricing Response	
Price	40%
Qualitative Criteria Response	
Capability	15%
Capacity	5%
Quality	15%
Certification – Halal	5%
Social Sustainability	7.5%
Economic Sustainability	5%
Environmental Sustainability	7.5%
Total Qualitative Criteria Response	60%
Total Scores	100%

The membership of the tender evaluation panel was as follows:

Position	Full Voting/Advisory/ Member Contribution
Unit Manager Social Support	Full
Unit Manager Integrity Risk and Resilience	Full
Operations and Quality Management Coordinator	Full
Chef	Non-Voting/Advisory
Procurement Partner	Procurement Process Advisory

Further details of tender evaluation are shown in the attachment Tender Recommendation Report (**Confidential Attachment 1**).

3. Issues

The cost of some products is not fixed, and prices can change significantly during the term of the contract, based on availability and seasonality.

The preferred panel are being recommended as they met the requirements for price, experience, resources, capacity, social/environmental/local considerations, food safety/quality assurance and OHS compliances/relevant insurances. Having a panel of suppliers in each category provides flexibility and allows us to obtain competitive pricing when purchasing goods.

The Officer Recommendation is to allow the CEO to approve new suppliers, as required, to ensure we maintain a number of suppliers over the life of the contract to meet council's needs and address circumstances which may arise, such as contractors that cease their operations during the term of the contract. This would be subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted by the original evaluation panel, to ensure we maintain a suitable range of suppliers to meet Council's needs. The ability to bring on new suppliers also enables Council to potentially increase the number of contractors who align with our Procurement Policy environmental, social and economic objectives e.g. provide opportunities to business such as refugee businesses, social benefit suppliers etc. Any additional suppliers added to the panel would not change the overall maximum spend amount of \$3,022,000 (excluding GST).

Collaboration

Section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies which may be available. Under this contract, there are no opportunities to collaborate with other Councils because other local government agencies have existing contracts that do not align with Council's current contract requirements.

Merri-Bek Meals service produces meals for distribution to Banyule, Yarra and Darebin Councils through various contracts.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

All tender submissions by vendors were scored and assessments weighted against Economic, Environmental and Social Sustainability requirements. Council officers engaging with suppliers and service providers will ensure these are adhered to as part of ongoing contractor performance monitoring.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Engagement with external parties was not required.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Two Council officers involved in the preparation of this report were perceived to have an indirect interest. No other conflict of interest was declared in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The award of this contract does not have any direct financial implications as works will be funded through ongoing operational budgets. The anticipate spend for the life of contract are detailed in the table below.

Year	Description	Estimate Budget Value (\$ excluding GST)
2025-2026	Meat	\$400,000
	Fish	\$38,000
2026-2027	Meat	\$420,000
	Fish	\$40,000
2027-2028	Meat	\$445,000
	Fish	\$42,000
2028-2029	Meat	\$470,000
	Fish	\$45,000
2029-2030	Meat	\$500,000
	Fish	\$47,000
2030-2031	Meat	\$525,000
	Fish	\$50,000

It worth noting, for panel arrangements Council does not guarantee either a minimum quantity of work in relation to any of the Contract components or any particular mix of work within the Contract components.

7. Implementation

It is proposed that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to do all things necessary to execute the contracts and any other required documentation, including execution of the future optional contract extension.

The contracts is anticipated to commence on 1 September 2025.

Attachment/s

1 RFT-P-2025-4 - Tender Recommendation Report

D25/307732

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7.19 CONTRACT AWARD:RFT-P-2025-5 SUPPLY OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Director Community, Eamonn Fennessy

Aged and Community Support

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Accept the Schedule of Rates submitted by Tenderers and make a formal offer to the individual panel contractors listed below:
 - The Trustee for City Fresh Wholesalers Unit Trust T/as City Fresh Wholesalers Pty Ltd (55 133 089 762)
 - The Trustee for Dimasi Family Trust T/as Northern Mobile Fresh Produce (66 541 820 451)
 - PFD Food Services Pty Ltd (29 006 972 381)
 - The Trustee for the M Santalucia Trust T/as Tasty One (52 453 980 316)for the **Contract RFT-P-2025-5 Supply of Fruit and Vegetables (Contract)** on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 1(b) of this Resolution:
 - i. For a period of two (2) years commencing 1 September 2025, with an option for a further two (2), two (2) year extension at the discretion of Council
 - ii. For a maximum amount of \$1,390,000 (excluding GST) across all suppliers over the term of the contract including extension options.
 - b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and each Contractor provided that:
 - i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
 - ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer.
2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by each Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution, Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Do all things necessary to execute the Contract;
 - b) Exercise the option(s) to extend contracts in accordance with the provisions within the Contract;
 - c) Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to accept new panel contractor(s) during the contract term subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted for the original panel contractors, to ensure we can maintain a range of suitable suppliers to meet Council's needs, providing the total contract amount to remain as paragraph 1 (a).
 - d) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to recommend the award of a panel contract for the supply of fruit and vegetables to Council.

The aim of the tender process is to establish a panel of fruit and vegetable suppliers to support the operations of Merri-bek's Meals Production Kitchen. This kitchen functions as a Class 1 Food Production Business and is responsible for preparing and delivering meals to eligible recipients under the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), the Home and Community Care Program (HACC), and individuals with Home Care Packages who have supply agreements in place. In addition to servicing Merri-bek residents, the meals service fulfills contractual obligations with Banyule, Yarra, and Darebin Councils.

To facilitate procurement of these services and in the light of the expiry of the previous contract through which Council used to procure these services, Council is establishing a new panel of contractors with competitively sourced schedules of rates to provide the following Panel of Fruit and Vegetables Services.

The potential term for the successful tenderers is six years, consisting of the initial contract term of 2 years with two 2-year extension options.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*

Previous Council Decisions

Nil.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to comply with its Procurement Policy (Policy) before entering into a contract for the purchase of goods or services or the carrying out of works. The Policy requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$350,000 (incl GST) as well as the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy.

2. Background

Council is seeking to appoint a panel of suppliers for the supply of fruit and vegetables. The proposed Fruit and Vegetables contract will be managed by the Meals Production Kitchen, operated by the Aged and Community Support branch from the Bob Hawke Community Centre located on Hudson Street, Coburg. The recommendation is to appoint a panel for an initial term of two years, with the option for two further extensions of two years each. Establishing a panel will ensure business continuity and deliver best value for Council.

The Meals Production Kitchen prepares approximately 3,000 healthy meals per week. Each meal includes a soup or sandwich, a main course, dessert, and fruit juice. All meals are reviewed by an Accredited Practising Dietitian to ensure compliance with the National Meal Guidelines for Meals on Wheels. Meals are delivered by paid staff who also provide a welfare check and social interaction with recipients. In addition to Merri-bek and Darebin, meals are distributed to Banyule and Yarra City Councils for onward delivery to their clients. Recipients include individuals supported by CHSP, HACC for Younger People, and those receiving Home Care Packages through contracted providers.

An advertisement was placed in *The Age* newspaper on Wednesday, 16 April 2025 inviting tenders via the e-tender portal. The request for tender closed on 9 May 2025 and 5 tenders were received with 4 of those submissions received deemed as conforming submissions.

Tenderer name	ABN
The Trustee for City Fresh Wholesalers Unit Trust T/as City Fresh Wholesalers Pty Ltd	55 133 089 762
The Trustee for Dimasi Family Trust T/as Northern Mobile Fresh Produce	66 541 820 451
PFD Food Services Pty Ltd	29 006 972 381
The Trustee for the M Santalucia Trust T/as Tasty One	52 453 980 316
Santili Road Family Trust t/as Just Squeezed Fruit Juices	44 395 365 758

The conforming tender submissions were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, at the time of tendering.

Interviews were not conducted as the panel was satisfied with the information in the tender submission and the post tender clarifications.

The following is a breakdown of the Evaluation Criteria applicable to this procurement project.

Item	Weighting %
Pricing Response	
Price	45%
Qualitative Criteria Response	
Capability	15%
Capacity	5%
Quality	15%
Social Sustainability	7.5%
Economic Sustainability	5%
Environmental Sustainability	7.5%
Total Qualitative Criteria Response	55%
Total Scores	100%

The membership of the tender evaluation panel was as follows:

Title and/or company	Project Manager/ Generalist or Nominated Speciality	Full Voting / Advisory Member
Unit Manager Social Support	Generalist (Chair)	Full
Operations & Quality Management Coordinator	Generalist	Full
Unit Manager Integrity, Risk & Resilience	Generalist	Full
Chef	Technical advisor	Advisory
Procurement Partner	Procurement	Advisor

Further details of tender evaluation are shown in the attachment Tender Recommendation Report (**Confidential Attachment 1**).

3. Issues

The cost of some products is not fixed, and prices can change significantly during the term of the contract, based on availability and seasonality.

The preferred panel are being recommended as they met the requirements for price, experience, resources, capacity, social/environmental/local considerations, food safety/quality assurance and OHS compliances/relevant insurances. Having a panel of suppliers in each category provides flexibility and allows us to obtain competitive pricing when purchasing goods.

The Officer Recommendation is to allow the CEO to approve new suppliers, as required, to ensure we maintain a number of suppliers over the life of the contract to meet council's needs and address circumstances which may arise, such as contractors that cease their operations during the term of the contract. This would be subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted by the original evaluation panel, to ensure we maintain a suitable range of suppliers to meet Council's needs. The ability to bring on new suppliers also enables Council to potentially increase the number of contractors who align with our Procurement Policy environmental, social and economic objectives e.g. provide opportunities to business such as refugee businesses, social benefit suppliers etc. Any additional suppliers added to the panel would not change the overall maximum spend amount of \$1,390,000 including GST.

Collaboration

Section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies which may be available.

Under this contract, there are no opportunities to collaborate with other Councils because other local government agencies have existing contracts that do not align with Council's current contract requirements.

Merri-Bek Meals Service produces meals for distribution to Banyule, Yarra and Darebin Councils through various contracts.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

All tender submissions by vendors were scored and assessments weighted against Economic, Environmental and Social Sustainability requirements. Council officers engaging with suppliers and service providers will ensure these are adhered to as part of ongoing contractor performance monitoring.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Consultation with other Units in their respective Branches, and more broadly with staff delivering operational services for Council was not required because of the specialist nature of the services being procured.

Engagement with external parties including community groups was not required.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Two Council officers involved in the preparation of this report were perceived to have an indirect interest. No other conflict of interest was declared in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The award of this contract does not have any direct financial implications as works will be funded through ongoing operational budgets. The anticipate spend for the life of contract are detailed in the table below

Year	Description	Estimate Budget Value (\$ excluding GST)
2025-2026	Fruit and Vegetables	\$190,000
2026-2027	Fruit and Vegetables	\$200,000
2027-2028	Fruit and Vegetables	\$220,000
2028-2029	Fruit and Vegetables	\$240,000
2029-2030	Fruit and Vegetables	\$260,000
2030-2031	Fruit and Vegetables	\$280,000

It worth noting, for panel arrangements Council does not guarantee either a minimum quantity of work in relation to any of the Contract components or any particular mix of work within the Contract components.

7. Implementation

It is proposed that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to do all things necessary to execute the contracts and any other required documentation, including execution of the future optional contract extension.

The contracts will commence on 1 September 2025.

Attachment/s

1 RFT-P-2025-5 - Tender Recommendation Report

D25/307736

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7.20 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2025-9 ALLARD PARK SPORTS FIELD UPGRADE

Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow

Open Space and Environment

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Make a formal offer to The Trustee for The Green Turf Trust to award to the Contractor contract RFT-2025-9 for the Allard Park Sports Field Upgrade Works (Contract) on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 1(b) of this Resolution:
 - i. For the total Contract value of \$1,911,695 (excluding GST), comprising of fixed lump sum of \$1,868,326.75 (excluding GST) plus provisional sum(s) of \$43,368.25 (excluding GST),
 - b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:
 - i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
 - ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer;
2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution:
 - a) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract; and
 - b) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.

REPORT

Executive Summary

After a competitive tender process this report seeks to award contract RFT-2025-9 for the Allard Park Sports Field Upgrade Works to the preferred contractor, The Green Turf Trust. The focus of this project is to improve ground playing conditions increasing the availability of the ground used by North Brunswick Football Club, the Brunswick Cricket Club and the Brunswick Ultimate Disc Society.

The existing playing surface is currently compromised by poor drainage and inadequate grass coverage, particularly during the winter months, which adversely affects both sporting activities and broader community use.

Improvements to the sport field include reorientation of the football goals and goal squares, upgrading the drainage and irrigation and replacing the existing synthetic cricket wicket with a new natural turf cricket wicket. In addition, a warm-season grass surface will be installed, offering improved durability during summer, reduced water consumption, and greater year-round usability for passive recreation, including dog walking.

The tenders were evaluated, and The Green Turf Trust was identified as the preferred tenderer, achieving the highest score through the evaluation process by the evaluation panel. The project scope was assessed including the provisional sum items.

The Green Turf Trust has previously delivered similar type of sports field upgrade projects successfully to a very good standard and demonstrated in their tender submission that they have undertaken similar upgrade works that have included drainage, irrigation and re-shaping of the ground for other local government authorities.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Previous Council Decisions

There have been no previous Council decisions in relation to this specific contract or project.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$350,000 (incl GST) as well as the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy.

2. Background

Allard Park is home to the North Brunswick Football Club, Brunswick Cricket Club, and the Brunswick Ultimate Disc Society and is a well used community asset. A project to upgrade the Allard Park playing surface has been included in the Capital Works Program. The purpose of the report is to award a tender for this project, which includes upgrades to irrigation and sports field drainage.

Sporting club representatives have regularly raised concerns with the condition of the playing surface at Allard Park. The park and sports field are located on a former landfill site and as a result the playing surface has sunken in some locations over time, which is a common outcome in similar scenarios.

In addition, the site has an inadequate drainage system that results in the ground becoming waterlogged in winter, which negatively impacts the grass coverage and ability for the turf to withstand the rigours of community use.

The ground also features cool season grass that requires a significant amount of water during summer months and the current irrigation system is antiquated and not fit for purpose. Due to its age, the system frequently breaks down and is continuously being repaired by Council's maintenance staff.

This project provides an opportunity to address the existing issues and to realign the orientation of the football goals. The current goal configuration is misaligned, resulting in an uneven playing area with a disproportionately large forward pocket on the eastern side of the ground compared to the western side. Realignment will improve the overall functionality of the field and reduce risk to player safety.

The tender was released on 21 June 2025 inviting tenders via the e-tender portal from suitably experienced contractors to undertake the construction of Allard Park Sports Field Upgrade Works. Council officers also emailed all providers that have existing relationships with Merri-bek City Council to advise them of this tender opportunity via the Procurement Portal.

The tender closed on 11 July 2025 and 4 Tenders were received from the following contractors, all tenderers were deemed conforming.

Tenderer Name	ABN Number
Global Turf Projects Pty Ltd	53 608 443 67
Greenturf Pty Ltd	62 695 528 65
Native Space Pty Ltd	33 672 336 82
RMS Groundworks	73 606 867 127

Tender Evaluation

The tenders were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy at the time of tendering and in accordance with the approved Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan for this project.

Interviews were not conducted as the panel was satisfied with the information in the tender submission and the post tender clarifications.

The following is a breakdown of the evaluation criteria applicable to this procurement process.

Criteria	Weighting
Cost	40%
Capability of the tenderer to provide the services	15%
Capacity of the tenderer to provide the services	15%
Methodology and task appreciation	10%
Tender Program/Works Program	10%
Social, environmental and economical	10%
Total	100%

The membership of the tender evaluation panel was as follows:

Title and/or company	Project Mgr/ Generalist or Nominated Speciality	Full Voting / Advisory Member
Technical Officer Open Space	Project Mgr (Chair)	Full
Team Leader West and Sportsfields	Generalist	Full
Unit Manager Urban Forest	Generalist	Full
Water Management Officer	Generalist	Advisory
External Designer	Technical	Advisory
Unit Manager Open Space Design and Development	Technical Advice	Advisory
Acting Manager Community Wellbeing	Technical Advice	Advisory
Senior Procurement Partner	Procurement	Advisory

The evaluation process identified The Green Turf Trust as the preferred tenderer based on the results of the evaluation matrix, included as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

3. Issues

Collaboration

Note that section 109(2) of the Local Government Act 2020 requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies which may be available.

Under this contract there are no opportunities to collaborate with other Councils or public bodies because it is a local stand-alone road re-construction and drainage project for which there is a healthy local market of contractors.

Project Scope

The following outlines the agreed project scope:

- Shift AFL goalposts by 8 metres to improve ground playability

- Install a new drainage system to address waterlogging issues
- Install a modern irrigation system to support new warm seasons turf
- Level and regrade the playing surface
- Plant a warm-season grass variety to improve durability and reduce water use
- Relocate coaches' boxes to more strategic positions
- Install park benches around the ground, that are designed to integrate irrigation valve access for easier maintenance
- Include infrastructure for a mobile electronic scoreboard
- Remove the existing synthetic cricket pitch and replace it with a natural turf wicket
- Replace the outdated galvanised pipe rail fence with a new fence using cypress pine and galvanised steel rail.

Cost savings

Cost savings were achieved during the tender process by requesting Best and Final Offers from the shortlisted tenderers.

Community impact

The upgrade of the sports field will improve the standard and safety of the ground which will provide greater opportunities for community use and encourage more people to participate as players and volunteers associated with its use.

The upgraded ground will assist in providing Merri-bek football and cricket clubs with a high quality surface which will allow for the ground to have higher useage hours.

Concerns were raised by residents of the Nunan Street development with regards to the potential for footbolls to disrupt and damage private property during games and training. Officers met with the residents and marked out the proposed changes on site to demonstrate the changes. While the proposed realignment and shifting of the goals approximately 8m will move them closer to the residences, there is still substantial setback from the private property. Although it is not expected to become an issue, should there be a problem post completion of the project, there remains suitable space for the installation of ball protection netting.

Social implications

The successful tenderer has included the below initiatives in their tender response:

- The depot is located within the Northern Councils' Alliance region and the company has direct engagement with local Merri-bek subcontractors and employ Merri-bek staff.
- The company employs apprentices through Melbourne Polytechnic and engages First Nations-owned businesses, including traffic management and material transporters.

Local Impacts

To minimise user disruption during the works, appropriate site detours will be provided and clearly marked if required. Key stakeholders will be informed prior to works commencing on site. Council's project manager will maintain communication with key stakeholders throughout the delivery of the project to help manage disruptions and provide updates as the project progresses.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

Council is committed to managing the impact of climate change and sustainable treatment of water useage and its discharge to protect waterway health and this has been accounted for in the project design through the upgrade of the irrigation system and drainage.

An environmentally sustainable approach to construction will be undertaken including the provision of comprehensive tree protection zones, dust and erosion controls and an environmental management plan followed by the contractor.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been considered in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Consultation has taken place with key stakeholders, including the sporting clubs based at Allard Park and the Nunan Street residents' group. Extensive face-to-face consultation has been undertaken with a broad cross-section of the local community.

Adjoining residents were given the opportunity to provide written feedback and express their views on the project and Officers have met onsite and discussed the proposal on a number of occasions.

The sporting clubs are aware that there will be disruption to the 2025/26 summer season and potential delayed access for the 2026 winter season. Officers will work with the impacted clubs to find alternate grounds for use during the construction and the turf establishment periods.

The designer has made every effort to reflect the views of all stakeholders in the proposed design and issues raised have been assessed internally to reach a preferred outcome. The preferred design was subsequently recommended to an internal Project Control Board, which endorsed the recommendation and approved proceeding with the project.

During construction stakeholders including adjoining residents and park users will be notified as part of the construction process via normal methods including letters and onsite signage.

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council Officers, external consultants and all other parties involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The project has an allocated budget of \$2,300,000 (excluding GST) in the endorsed Council Budget for 2025/26. With a contract award cost of \$1,911,695 (excluding GST) including provisional items, it is expected that there will be savings, provided there are no unforeseen issues which arise during the project.

The table below shows the breakdown of the 2025/26 budget for the entire works.

Project Name	Allocated Budget (\$) (Excluding GST)
Allard Park Sportsfield upgrade	2,300,000
Total Budget	2,300,000
Less	
<i>Recommended contract award RFT-2025-9 Allard Park Sportsfield upgrade</i>	<i>1,911,695</i>

Project Name	Allocated Budget (\$) (Excluding GST)
Allard Park Sportsfield upgrade	2,300,000
Other project costs (including potential contamination)	250,000
Savings to be referred to quarterly forecast process	138,578

Should variations arise they will be approved in alignment with delegation.

7. Implementation and Timeline

It is proposed that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to do all things necessary to execute the contract and any other required documentation.

Subject to the awarding of the contract, works on site are expected to commence as soon as possible.

Attachment/s

- 1 Confidential Attachment - RFT-2025-9 - Tender Recommendation Report D25/371799

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7.21 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2025-10 RETAINING WALL RECONSTRUCTION AT MITCHELL PARADE, PASCOE VALE SOUTH

Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow
Capital Works Planning and Delivery

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Make a formal offer to Multipro Civil Pty Ltd, ACN 112 295 879 / ABN 15 872 800 386 (Contractor) to award to the Contractor contract RFT-2025-10 for the Reconstruction of retaining wall at Mitchell Parade, Pascoe Vale South (**Contract**) on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 1(b) of this Resolution:
 - i. For the Total contract value is \$2,079,912.00 (excluding GST) comprising of Fixed Lump sum of \$1,979,912 (excluding GST) and provisional sum of \$100,000 (excluding GST).
 - b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:
 - i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
 - ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer.
2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution:
 - a) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract; RFT-2025-10; and
 - b) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.
3. Allocate the budget shortfall of \$1,068,852 through the Roads to Recovery 2024-2029 allocation.

REPORT

Executive Summary

In September 2022, a section of retaining structure abutting private properties along Mitchell Parade, Pascoe Vale South collapsed. The structure is described as 300mm thick bluestone wall with no reinforcement, with unknown footing details. The structure comprises of a terraced wall, consisting of two rows of bluestone walls, with heights varying in accordance with the grade of Mitchell Parade. In the southern location of the wall, the two terraced walls merge into a single structure of approximately 7.0m high. It is at this section of the wall that the sudden failure occurred. Following the collapsed wall, temporary fencing and propping were installed to stabilise the structure and make it safe.

After much engineering investigation and analysis, it has been established that the existing failing structure requires replacement with a new retaining wall.

The scope of work includes the construction of a new concrete retaining wall, consisting of piles, shotcrete and a capping beam, backfilling restoration directly behind the retaining wall, drainage works, installation of a balustrade steel fence, demolition of the existing lower retaining wall and reinstatement of the footpath and driveway at 390 Reynard Street.

During the tender evaluation process, Multipro Civil Pty Ltd (Multipro) was identified as the preferred tenderer based on their previous experience and quality of their submission. Multipro confirmed their availability to undertake the works with a starting date early to mid-September 2025.

Multipro has previously undertaken projects of similar complexity with other councils and Merri-bek with good outcomes. Their construction program is a 27-week duration, starting in 2025/26, and aligns with Council's requirements to complete this project this financial year 2025/26.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Previous Council Decisions

There have been no prior Council decisions in relation to this specific contract or project.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$300,000 (incl GST) as well as the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy at the time of tendering. The spending threshold has since been revised to \$350,000 (incl GST).

2. Background

The purpose of the report is to award a tender to a suitably qualified contractor to reconstruct the collapsed retaining wall structure along Mitchell Parade, Pascoe Vale South, in accordance with the design drawings and specifications.

The tender was advertised via Council Procurement portal and in *The Age* newspaper on 12 April 2025, inviting tenders via the e-tender portal from suitably experienced contractors to undertake the works.

Tender closed on Friday 30 May 2025, with tenders received from following six contractors. One of the tender submissions was deemed to be non-conforming.

	Tenderer	ABN Numbers
1	AXIS Infrastructure	51 618 982 657
2	Construction and Building Design Pty Ltd	39 125 786 914
3	Entracon Civil Pty Ltd	35 118 370 077
4	Evergreen Civil Pty Ltd	67 667 088 791
5	Multipro Civil Pty Ltd	15 872 800 386
6	Silver Fox Management Pty Ltd	18 607 545 228

Tenders were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, at the time of tendering and in accordance with the approved Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan for this project. The tender evaluation criteria included cost, capacity, capability, social, environmental, and economic sustainability considerations.

Detailed evaluation criteria and weighting are provided in the following table:

Item	Weighting %
Pricing Response	
Price	45%
Qualitative Criteria Response	
Capability of the tenderer to provide the works Experience in successfully undertaking projects or works similar in nature and scale, confirmed through reference check.	10%
Capacity of the tenderer to provide the works Provide traffic, equipment handling, safety and general works management program of the site	10%
Methodology and task appreciation. The Respondent describes or provides their proposed construction methodology for the project considering all constraints, risks and opportunities. They also demonstrate they have clearly understood the task	14%
Tender Program/Works Program The Respondent describes their approach and capability to manage the program of works.	9%
Social Sustainability	4%
Economic Sustainability	4%
Environmental Sustainability	4%
Total Qualitative Criteria Response	55%
Total Scores	100%

The membership of the tender evaluation panel was as follows.

Title and/or company	Project Manager/ Generalist or Nominated Speciality	Full Voting / Advisory Member
Project Manager	Project Manager (Chair)	Full
Unit Manager Engineering Services	Generalist	Full
Senior Transport Officer	Generalist	Full
Construction Engineer	Generalist	Full
Design Engineer	Finance	Advisory
Procurement Partner	Procurement	Advisory

The Tender Recommendation Report is attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

3. Issues

Collaboration

Note that section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies which may be available.

Under this contract there are no opportunities to collaborate with other Councils or public bodies because it is a local stand-alone retaining wall construction with adequate contractors available.

Interviews

Interviews were held on the 17 July 2025 with the two (2) highest scoring tenderers, where they answered questions on their construction methodology and their tender submission.

Options

The preferred tenderer is recommended due to their capacity, overall capability to deliver the works and their previous experience on projects similar in size and complexity.

Social / Environmental / Local Implications

Multipro has a social procurement policy under development. Multipro is based within the Hume City Council and part of Northern Council Alliance.

Environmental

Multipro has documented processes to recycle and reuse construction materials and use recycled products during the construction. All excavated spoil, concrete and asphalt is taken to recycling facilities during the project.

Legal Considerations

Council’s legal services were consulted, and external lawyers were engaged to prepare a contract for this project and execute a licences deed with the owner of 390 Reynard Street, to undertake work within their private property.

4. Consultation / Recommendation from Management

Information and notification of this project with the residents of Mitchell Parade and adjoining streets occurred through a letter drop and direct phone calls with affected property owners. Further information and plans were shared with the public via Merri-bek City Council website.

Prior to the commencement of construction, further notifications will be issued to the community through a letter circulation from the Contractor and Council to ensure clear communication of project requirements.

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council Officers, external consultants and all other parties involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

A budget of \$1.86 million was allocated to this project over the four years (2022-23 to 2025/26), with this year 2025/26 being the fourth year. A total of \$744,000 has been expended on design and propping the existing wall to make it safe, over the three years. The remaining allocated budget is \$1,116,060 in 2025/26. The total construction cost is estimated at \$2,079,912 (Excluding GST).

The table below shows the breakdown of the project budget for the works.

Item	Amount (excluding GST)
2022-23 actuals	\$117,413
2023-24 actuals	\$277,486
2024-25 actuals	\$349,135

Item	Amount (excluding GST)
2024-25 carry forward into 2025-26 (proposed - to be presented at September Council meeting)	\$116,060
2025-26 adopted budget	\$1,000,000
Total allocated budget	\$1,860,094
<u>Funding source</u>	
Council	\$860,094
Grants (Roads to Recovery)	\$1,000,000
Total funding source	\$1,860,094
<u>Less</u>	
Actual spend year to date to Start 2025/26	\$744,034
Expected expenditure for propping and make safe 2025-26	\$105,000
<i>Recommended tender award RFT-2025-10 Mitchell Parade Retaining Wall Tender Lump sum amount</i>	<i>\$1,979,912</i>
<i>Recommended tender award RFT-2025-10 Mitchell Parade Retaining Wall Provisional sum</i>	<i>\$100,000</i>
Budget shortfall	-\$1,068,852

The budget shortfall of \$1,068,852 is a result of the propping expenses, making the site safe from further collapse and securing the site. The Contractor tender submissions were higher than expected due to the risk and complexity of the work.

The budget shortfall will be funded through the Roads to Recovery 2024-2029 allocation. The total allocation for this project under the Roads to Recovery will be \$2,068,852.

7. Implementation and Timeline

It is proposed that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to do all things necessary to execute the contract/s and any other required documentation.

The contracts will commence as soon as possible following Council endorsement by 13 August 2025.

Construction works are planned to commence in early September 2025 and be completed by May 2026.

Attachment/s

- 1 Confidential: RFT-2025-10 - Tender Recommendation Report Mitchell D25/370450 Parade Retaining Wall

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7.22 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2025-24 ROAD RECONSTRUCTION KATAWA GROVE, BRUNSWICK (COORAMINTA STREET TO DEAD END) AND DRAINAGE ALONG COORAMINTA STREET (BLYTH STREET TO KATAWA GROVE)

Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow

Capital Works Planning and Delivery

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Make a formal offer to MJ Construction Group Pty Ltd and ACN 092 432 730 (Contractor) to award to the Contractor contract RFT-2025-24 Road Reconstruction Katawa Grove, Brunswick (Cooraminta Street to Dead End) and Drainage Along Cooraminta Street (Blyth Street to Katawa Grove) (Contract) on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 1(b) of this Resolution:
 - i. For the total Contract value of \$826,958.00 (excluding GST), comprising of fixed lump sum of \$658,448.00 (excluding GST) and provisional amount of \$168,510.00 (excluding GST).
 - b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:
 - i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
 - ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer,
2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution:
 - a) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract; and
 - b) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.
3. Refers the budget shortfall of \$168,197 to the quarterly budget review process.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The road reconstruction of Katawa Grove in Brunswick, from Cooraminta Street to the dead end, has been included in the 2025–2026 Capital Works Program under the Roads and Carparks Program. As part of this project, and to improve the drainage system along Katawa Grove, a new drainage network will also be installed along Cooraminta Street, extending up to Blyth Street. The project is part-funded through the Development Contributions Plan (DCP).

The scope of works includes the installation of underground drainage pipes and associated pits, reconstruction of the existing bluestone kerb and channel, bluestone and concrete vehicle crossings, asphalt footpaths, and garden bed installation.

Following the tender evaluation process, MJ Construction Group Pty Ltd (MJ) has been identified as the preferred tenderer based on the strength of their submission. Subject to contract award on 13 August 2025, the contractor has confirmed readiness to commence offsite preparatory works from 29 August 2025.

MJ Construction Group has successfully delivered projects of similar scale and complexity for Merri-bek and other councils, with strong performance outcomes. Onsite construction is scheduled to begin in the last week of August 2025 and is expected to be completed over a four-month period by December 2025 (weather permitting). The works will be delivered in up to two distinct sections to minimise disruption to residents and local traffic.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Previous Council Decisions

There has been no prior Council decision in relation to this specific contract or project.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$350,000 (incl GST) as well as the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy.

2. Background

The purpose of the report is to award a tender to a suitably qualified contractor to undertake the Road Reconstruction of Katawa Grove, Brunswick (Cooraminta Street to Dead End) and Drainage Along Cooraminta Street (Blyth Street to Katawa Grove) as per the detailed drawings and specifications.

The tender was advertised via Council Procurement portal and in *The Age* newspaper on 8 May 2025, inviting tenderers via the e-tender portal from suitably experienced contractors to undertake the works.

The Tender closed on Tuesday 03 June 2025, with tenders received from following twelve contractors. Ten out of twelve tenderers were deemed conforming.

	Tenderers	ABN
1	ADP Constructions Pty Ltd	46 118 588 097
2	CDN Construction Pty Ltd	62 884 294 341
3	Cole Civil (Metro Asphalt Pty Ltd)	27 593 149 786
4	Etheredge Mintern Pty Ltd	36 006 521 151
5	Fulton Hogan Constructions Pty Ltd	54 000 538 689
6	GP Bluestone Pty Ltd	21 664 700 435
7	Kaizen Civil Pty Ltd	▪ 18 619 423 068
8	Kalow Holdings Pty Ltd	▪ 51 006 811 641
9	MJ Construction Group Pty Ltd	▪ 56 092 432 730
10	New Horizon Construction Pty Ltd	29 360 543 618
11	Presta & Sons Pty Ltd	88 089 320 918
12	Salah Construction	283 472 423 02

Tender Evaluation

The tenders were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, at the time of tendering and in accordance with the approved Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan for this project.

The tender evaluation criteria included cost, traffic management, work program, working methodology, capability, capacity, experience and past performance, complete project management plan, customer service, social, environmental, and economic sustainability considerations.

The membership of the tender evaluation panel was as follows:

Title	Generalist or Nominated Speciality	Full Voting / Advisory Member
Senior Construction Engineer	Engineering Services (Chair)	Full Voting
Project Engineer Roads and Drainage	Engineering Services	Full Voting
Team Leader Transport Infrastructure	Generalist	Full Voting
Senior Design Engineer	Engineer	Non-Voting
Senior Procurement Partner	Procurement	Procurement Compliance

In assessing the tenders, consideration was given to the following pre-defined criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Cost	40%
Traffic Management	2%
Work Program	3%
Work Methodology and Staging Plan	5%
Capability	5%
Experience and Past Performance	5%
Capacity	5%
Complete Project Management Plan	10%
Customer Service	7%
Social Sustainability	5%
Economic Sustainability	4%
Environmental Sustainability	4%
Environmentally sustainable construction Options	5%
Total Scores	100%

The evaluation process identified as the preferred supplier based on the results of the evaluation matrix, as identified in **Confidential Attachment 1**.

3. Issues

Collaboration

Note that section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies which may be available.

Under this contract there are no opportunities to collaborate with other Councils or public bodies because it is a local stand-alone road re-construction and drainage project for which there is a healthy local market of contractors.

Social Implications

MJ Constructions has implemented a Social Procurement Policy, along with Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Modern Slavery Policies. These policies reflect the company’s commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce by employing individuals from varied social, political, and cultural backgrounds.

Local Implications

MJ Constructions is located in Thomastown within the Northern Councils Alliance area. Demonstrating a strong commitment to supporting the local economy, the company regularly engages local suppliers in its operations and has identified six local businesses to be involved in the upcoming Katawa Grove Road Reconstruction project.

Environmental Implications

MJ Constructions has established processes to recycle and reuse waste materials wherever possible and actively incorporates recycled products into their projects. For the Katawa Grove Road Reconstruction, the company will ensure that all excavated spoil, concrete, and asphalt are transported to appropriate recycling facilities. Additionally, they have mentioned that they will use tip truck to carry material both ways, making the process more efficient and reducing environmental impact.

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Consultation / Recommendation from Management

As part of the design phase, community consultation was carried out in April 2025 via a letter drop to property owners and residents, along Katawa Grove, Brunswick (Cooraminta Street to Dead End) and Cooraminta Street (Blyth Street to Katawa Grove). Several residents expressed their support for the proposed works, and their feedback has been carefully considered in the final road design.

Prior to the commencement of construction, further notifications will be issued to the community through another letter drop by both the Contractor and Council to ensure clear communication and awareness.

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council Officers, external consultants and all other parties involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

A total budget of \$700,108 has been allocated in Council Capital Works Program for the financial year of 2025/26 for the Road Reconstruction Works of Katawa Grove, Brunswick from Cooraminta Street to the dead end.

In this case there may be contract variations required due to latent conditions outside of Council’s and Contractor’s control.

The table below shows the breakdown of the 2025/26 budget for the entire works.

Project Name (Roads Reconstruction)	Allocated Budget (Excluding GST)
Road Reconstruction, Katawa Grove from Cooraminta Street to dead end	\$700,108
Total Budget	\$700,108
Less	
<i>Recommended contract award RFT-2025-24 Road Reconstruction, Katawa Grove, Brunswick (Cooraminta Street to Dead End) and drainage along Cooraminta Street (Blyth Street to Katawa Grove)</i>	\$826,958
Provision for latent conditions or unforeseen costs	\$ 41,347
Shortfall in budget	\$168,197

This budget shortfall of \$168,197 occurred due to the inclusion of drainage works along Cooraminta Street that are required to improve the drainage problem of Katawa Grove. This shortfall is to be allocated from savings from other projects in the quarterly budget review process.

7. Implementation and Timeline

It is proposed that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to do all things necessary to execute the contract/s and any other required documentation.

The contract will commence as soon as possible following Council endorsement by 13 August 2025.

Construction works are planned to commence in late August 2025 and be completed by the end of December 2025.

Attachment/s

- 1 Confidential - RFT-2025-24 Tender Recommendation Report- Katawa Grove, Brunswick D25/348661

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7.23 WASTE COLLECTION UPDATE: SOUTHERN COLLECTION AREA CONTRACT MATTERS 529T AND FORTNIGHTLY RUBBISH TIMING

Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow
City Services

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute the final extension option with Cleanaway Pty Ltd ABN 79 000 164 938 (Contractor) for Contract 529T Waste Services Agreement for the provision of kerbside collection of general waste, recycling, food and garden organics and glass for the Southern Collection Area (Contract) subject to the terms outlined in Confidential Attachment 1.
2. Commences the procurement tender process for the Provision of Waste Services for the Southern Collection Area as further described in Confidential Attachment 1, noting that the contract award will be subject to a Council resolution.
3. Approves a delay in the decision on the ongoing municipal-wide frequency of fortnightly rubbish collections to no later than June 2026; enabling:
 - a) A longer period for active evaluation of the trial areas of parts of Hadfield, Brunswick West and Brunswick.
 - b) Further community engagement on fortnightly rubbish collection following the trial outcomes.
 - c) Adequate time for procurement of bins required for a municipal-wide fortnightly rubbish service.
4. Notes that:
 - a) Collection contract arrangements for the Southern Collection Area will allow for either fortnightly or weekly rubbish collections, pending the June 2026 decision.
 - b) If it is decided not to proceed with municipal-wide fortnightly rubbish in June 2026, arrangements will be made to discontinue the fortnightly services in the trial areas of parts of Hadfield, Brunswick West and Brunswick as soon as practicable.

REPORT

Executive Summary

Council currently collects kerbside waste, south of Bell Street, through a contract. Contract 529T Waste Services Agreement was originally with Citywide Service Solutions. From 1 July 2025 the Contract was novated to Cleanaway Pty Ltd, which has recently acquired Citywide's waste business. The current contract expiry date is 30 June 2026, with one more 12-month extension option available.

Extending the contract will allow time for proper planning and preparation of tender documents to get the best market response. Negotiations are proposed to commence immediately to secure the extension.

In December 2021, Council endorsed the staged implementation of the Kerbside Waste Service and Charge Policy and resolved to trial fortnightly rubbish service in 2025 at two locations. The trial has been established with a 3-month period of data collection, time to analyse the outcomes and a report to Council in December 2025 for a decision on a municipal-wide fortnightly service.

Moving to a municipal-wide fortnightly service from 1 July 2026 (as originally envisaged) from a December 2025 decision date is no longer practicable due to constraints in procurement of bins and complexities relating to the Southern Collection Area contract. A date of 1 July 2027 is now proposed.

This date change allows for an extension of the formal trial period of fortnightly rubbish with more robust data collection and with time to see household behaviour changes bedded down. It also allows for an additional round of community engagement. The decision on proceeding with a municipal-wide fortnightly service is now proposed to occur in June 2026 and if resolved, would be delivered from 1 July 2027 in line with the new Southern Collection Area contract.

Previous Council Decisions

Notice of Motion - Adequate Notice of Contract Expiry for Major Council Services – 12 March 2025

That Councillors receive notice via Councillor briefings about any proposals to extend contracts for waste collection, leisure centres and the wat djerring Animal Facility at least 12 months before the initial term of the contract expires.

Contract Variation: Contract 529T Waste Services Agreement – 26 June 2024

That Council:

1. *Enters a Deed of Variation with Citywide Service Solutions Pty Ltd ABN 94 066 960 085 (Contractor) to extend Contract 529T Waste Services Agreement for the provision of kerbside collection of general waste, recycling, FOGO (Food Organics Garden Organics) and glass for the Southern Collection District (Contract) subject to a schedule of rates with a maximum additional spend of \$19,644,717.83 (incl GST) over two extension terms:*
 - a) *22 months and 18 days to 30 June 2026; and*
 - b) *an optional further 12 months to 30 June 2027.**on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with Part 2 of this Resolution.*
2. *Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and finalise the terms of the Deed of Variation between Council and the Contractor provided that:*
 - a) *the terms specified in Part 1 of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and*
 - b) *other than terms referred to in Part 1 of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer.*
3. *Conditional on acceptance of the Deed of Variation by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution, authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary in accordance with the provisions within the Contract to implement the immediate extension option and if required, by mutual agreement, the further extension option until 30th June 2026.*
4. *If required, by mutual agreement, the further extension option outlined in 1(b) must be exercised via a Council resolution.*
5. *Notes that if an overspend is incurred in 2024/25 for the kerbside waste collection service, the waste reserve will be used to account for this.*
6. *Provides a briefing to Councillors in the first half of 2025 on the future provision of the waste services.*

Contract Award RFT-2022-359: Glass Collection and Mixed Recycling and Glass Processing Contracts – 12 April 2023 (confidential report)

That Council:

.....

2. Endorses that:

- *For the area north of Bell Street, Council progresses with in-house Glass Collection service; and*
- *For the area south of Bell Street, Glass Collection is included in the Citywide delivered services as a contract variation.*
 - o *Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate with Citywide a variation under the provisions of Contract 529T, up to a maximum value \$XXX,XXX (including GST), for Glass Recycling Collection and modified services necessary to support the 4-stream waste collections in the area serviced under Contract 529T.*

...

8. Publishes the Executive Summary and this resolution in the public minutes of this Council meeting, with the redaction of the authorised maximum value for the Chief Executive Officer's negotiation on a variation to Contract 529T.

Kerbside Waste Reform - Proposed Kerbside Waste Service and Charge Policy – 8 December 2021

That Council:

1. *Thanks the community for the 4,259 contributions across the fourteen weeks (three stages) of community consultation about reform of Council's kerbside waste service.*
2. *Recognises the great efforts of the community to recover food waste for composting through the opt-in Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection service, which diverted 13,052 tonnes (a 9% increase) of food and garden organics from landfill last financial year.*
3. *Notes the community feedback from the completed Stage 3 engagement and associated officer response, including officer supported revisions reflected in the proposed Policy (refer Section 3 and 4 and Attachments 1 and 2).*
4. *Adopts the Kerbside Waste Service and Charge Policy as presented at Attachment 3 noting that this is reflective of an 'End State', with implementation to occur in stages:*
 - a) *2022 – commence new booked hard waste service.*
 - b) *2023 – transition to 4-bin service, introducing weekly FOGO, fortnightly Recycling, monthly Glass, BUT maintaining weekly Garbage collection as a transition stage.*
 - c) *from 2023 to 2025, undertakes a number of trials, education programs, evaluation of waste patterns including:*
 - *an assessment about the usage of the weekly FOGO bins and whether the FOGO bins are used sufficiently to make the shift to fortnightly landfill collection feasible*
 - *assessment of changes in patterns of dumping of rubbish, including additional household rubbish in park bins*
 - *a trial of fortnightly landfill collection is conducted at two sites, one in the south and one in the north.*

- d) *2025 (TBC) – following the actioning of resolution 4c) above, receives a report which includes an assessment of the trials, usage of the FOGO bins and reporting on any increase in dumping of rubbish, including additional household rubbish in park bins in order to inform a decision to switch to fortnightly Garbage collection as standard, achieving the End State defined in the Policy.*
5. *Notes that a decision on the timing of the switch to fortnightly Garbage collection and two booked hard waste collections would be subject to a future Council decision.*
6. *Notes that to achieve the timeframes to implement 4a) and 4b) above, Council officers will now:*
 - a) *Plan for the commencement of the trial of a new booked and one hard waste service by mid-2022;*
 - b) *Enter into negotiations with existing collection, receipt and bin supply contractors on adjustments to current contracts as required;*
 - c) *Commence procurement of bin supply and fleet as required;*
 - d) *Participate in collaborative procurement on recycling and glass receipt and look for further opportunities for collaborative procurement; and*
 - e) *Progress public awareness and behaviour change programs timed to complement the implementation schedule and facilitate the best outcomes.*
7. *Notes the updated analysis on reusable nappy and sanitary rebate options (refer Attachment 4) and intent to participate in a nappy subsidy program for 12 months, at a cost of \$10,000, from within the existing waste education budget.*
8. *Authorises the Director City Futures to make final amendments to the final Kerbside Waste Service and Charge Policy to reflect Council resolutions.*

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to conduct a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$350,000 (incl. GST) as well as the policy commitments contained in the Procurement Policy.

Council Plan 2021-2025

Strategic Objective 1: To strive for maximum protection of people's health, plants and animals through leading as urgent response to the climate emergency and a regeneration of our natural environment.

Strategy 1.1: Lead by example and partner with others to accelerate the shift to zero carbon emissions in energy, transport and waste in ways that are efficient, financially responsible, healthy and socially fair.

State policy - Recycling Victoria: A New Economy 2020–2030

The State Government action plan on waste, Recycling Victoria – A New Economy 2020–2030:

- Cut total waste generation by 15 per cent per capita by 2023.
- Divert 80 per cent of waste from landfill by 2030, with an interim target of 72 per cent by 2025.

Kerbside Waste Service and Charges Policy

The Kerbside Waste Service and Charges Policy was approved by Council in December 2021. The policy has formed the basis for the implementation of the 4-stream waste service that commenced in July 2023. Fortnightly rubbish is part of the 'end state' described in the policy but Council resolved to retain weekly rubbish collections upon introduction of the 4-stream service and to trial fortnightly rubbish in 2025. Following the trial, Council will review the outcomes before a decision on whether to implement fortnightly rubbish.

2. Background

At its meeting of 8 December 2021, Council resolved to change Merri-bek's kerbside waste services including increasing frequency of food and garden organics (FOGO), introducing glass, and reducing the frequency of recycling. While Council acknowledged the eventual desire to shift to a fortnightly rubbish service, it resolved that this change to the rubbish be delayed until the other services are bedded in, the impact is trialled and benefits measured.

The Contract 529T for the collection of all four kerbside waste bins in the Southern Collection Area has one possible 12-month extension remaining, as laid out in the record of the June 2024 Council meeting (resolution wording provided above). As referenced in the resolution, a Council decision is required to exercise the final extension in Contract 529T Waste Services Agreement.

Councillors received a briefing on the impending expiry of the waste collection contract term on 30 June 2025, in line with resolutions in March 2025 and June 2024 for such a briefing to be held.

Previous variations to Contract 529T with Citywide (now Cleanaway) have related to the Multi Unit Development trial (now complete), the introduction of Glass Collections and the Fortnightly Rubbish Trial that is currently underway. An extension of time to 20 June 2026 was negotiated in June 2024 and it also established a further option, by mutual agreement, for another 12-month extension to 30 June 2027.

Extension of Contract 529T aligns with Council's Procurement Policies.

3. Issues

Officers have assessed the complexity of the waste collection landscape and are recommending that the final extension option be taken up on the basis of the following context:

- The lead time needed by tenderers following award of contract for procuring fleet, establishing resources and operations centre.
- The interplay between the fortnightly rubbish trial and a decision about the future rubbish service frequency and a new Southern Collection Area contract and strong benefit in a change of service frequency to align with a new contract.
- The lead time needed for bin orders required to adjust service frequencies as the State's deadline for all Councils to introduce a glass service by 1 July 2027 draws near and demand for bins peaks.

Following the successful extension of Contract 529T, it is proposed to tender for a new contract for Provision of Kerbside Waste Collection Services for the Southern Collection Area to allow seamless transition in services. A significant lead time is needed for procurement of this key contract for Council. In part this is to allow early appointment of the Contractor so that vehicles may be ordered and ready in time for the commencement of services.

Without an extension in Contract 529T, the time allowed for Contractor readiness will be significantly truncated and would require urgent and careful planning by officers to ensure service continuity.

Community impact

Kerbside waste services are a core Council service. The Southern Collection Area currently collects waste from approximately 35,000 households. Exercising the extension of Contract 529T and approving the tendering for Provision of Kerbside Waste Collection Services for the Southern Collection Area provides the lowest risk to continuity of services through a transition on 1 July 2027.

There would also be a high potential impact on customer experience if a hurried processes to tender for a new contract for services commencing 1 July 2026. The potential impacts are:

- The inability to fast-track fortnightly rubbish collections to align with this date given constraints on bin procurement.
- If fortnightly rubbish collections were to be introduced, this may occur outside the normal annual rating and waste charge cycle.
- If fortnightly rubbish collections were to be introduced, may not provide opportunity for residents to elect to retain their 80L bin or request another non-standard service.
- If fortnightly rubbish collections were to be introduced part way into the contract, inefficiency of modifying and renegotiating the contract to enable this significant service variation.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

Waste services are significant contributors to reducing carbon emissions and this is directly affected by how much waste is diverted to landfill. Councils in Melbourne with fortnightly rubbish services achieve higher diversion rates to landfill than those with weekly rubbish services.

Service continuity improves the environmental and social impact of waste services. When waste services are disrupted, residents are not always able to maintain their efforts with separating waste streams as bins begin to fill. This leads to higher levels of contamination and associated costs.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Contract extensions and decisions to proceed to tender are not subject to community engagement.

The decision to trial fortnightly rubbish in 2025 was made following consultation in 2021. In that extensive community consultation on a preferred kerbside collection model, 57 per cent of the community supported a weekly food and garden organics service and a fortnightly rubbish service.

The fortnightly trial commenced on 1 July 2025. It has involved considerable engagement with the 3,000 households participating in the trial. Council will evaluate success of the trial based on metrics relating to waste collection, observations of household actions to reduce waste to landfill and survey feedback from participants.

After the trial is completed in early 2026, it is proposed that the broader community will be engaged regarding kerbside waste services.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The cost of Council's waste services is fully recovered by the charges for kerbside waste set in the Council budget.

Charges to residents and businesses that cover the costs of the 12-month extension of Contract 529T will be set as part of the waste charge for 2026/27.

Charges to residents and businesses that cover the costs for the new contract proposed to commence from 1 July 2027 will be set as part of the waste charge for 2027/28 and beyond.

7. Implementation

It is proposed that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to do all things necessary to exercise the contract option, and any other required documentation.

Preparation of the tender for the Provision of Waste Services for the Southern Collection Area will occur as soon as possible following Council endorsement with the intention for it to be advertised in September 2025.

Attachment/s

1 Confidential Attachment 1 - August 2025

D25/401968

Pursuant to section 3(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

8. NOTICES OF MOTION

8.1 JOHN ENGLART RECOGNITION

Cr Sue Bolton

Motion

That Council:

1. Recognises the significant contribution that John Englart made to the Merri-bek community over many years.
2. Initiates a discussion with John Englart's family and the community groups that John was most associated with, to plan a suitable way of commemorating his work.

1. Background

Cr Bolton's background:

Well-known local community and climate advocate, John Englart, passed away unexpectedly in July 2025. John's prime focus was on the need for all levels of government to take serious action to address the climate emergency. John was the convenor of Climate Action Merri-bek. As well as campaigning for national and global action, John campaigned for Merri-bek Council to take stronger action, such as calling for Council to stop using gas to heat Merri-bek's swimming pools.

John attended several United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COPs) as an accredited observer. His citizen journalism helped explain what happened at these COPs, and exposed Australia's failures to act on climate.

As well as climate action, John also took up all issues of environmental sustainability, the need for better cycling infrastructure and the need for better public transport. John was one of the founders of the Upfield Transport Alliance to campaign for the Upfield line to be duplicated to enable more trains and less cancellations, as well as for the line to be extended to Craigieburn and then onto Wallan.

He was also very focused on improving cycling infrastructure in the northern suburbs of Merri-bek, especially the need to build the missing link in the Upfield shared path up to and across the Western Ring Road. John was a member of Merri-bek Bicycle User Group.

As a resident of Fawkner, John took a special interest in the needs of residents in Fawkner and the northern suburbs. He supported all initiatives to improve facilities for people in Fawkner.

John was a citizen journalist for decades. He has left behind a significant body of work that is an important resource for activists and advocates, especially on climate, environment, cycling and public transport issues. His research and encyclopaedic knowledge of issues made it easier for community groups to make submissions on important issues. It is difficult for community groups that are made up of 100% volunteers to have the time to do extensive research when the volunteers are also working full-time and have family responsibilities.

Through John's citizen journalism and research, he was able to document promises, obfuscation, bungles and lapses. Often this involved digging up hard to find documents which indicate that governments have abandoned implementing promises. This work also helped make Merri-bek Council more accountable.

John has run the Climate Citizen blogspot since 2004, as well as writing extensively on the Climate Action Merri-bek, the Upgrade Upfield Line, Extend the Upfield Bike Path to Upfield and Sustainable Fawkner blog sites.

He also took thousands of photos of various actions, and uploaded them to flickr. John was awarded the Eureka Australia Medal in 2009 for social contributions in the spirit of the Eureka Oath.

In 2019, he won the Moreland Award for Environment Sustainability.

2. Policy context

Officer's comments:

In 2018, Council endorsed declaring a climate emergency, recognising the need for urgent action across all levels of government. In September 2018, Council adopted the *Zero Carbon Merri-bek 2040 Framework* which outlines our vision for a zero-carbon future by 2040. In November 2019, Council adopted the *Zero Carbon Merri-bek Action Plan 2020-2025* which outlines key initiatives and programs for the first five-year period of the *Zero Carbon Merri-bek 2040 Framework*.

In December 2021, Council adopted more ambitious targets: a 75 per cent emissions reduction by 2030 (against a 2011-12 baseline), net zero by 2035, and carbon drawdown ('negative emissions') by 2040 for community emissions. For Council's operational emissions, we're aiming for an 80 to 100 per cent reduction by 2030, excluding offsets.

In May 2021, Council endorsed the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. The treaty seeks to halt the expansion and production of oil, gas, and coal in alignment with the Paris Agreement.

3. Financial implications

Officer's comments:

There are no financial resource implications arising from a discussion with John Englart's family and community groups.

The subsequent delivery of activities may entail costs, depending on what they are. Any future implementation would be subject to Council budget decision making.

4. Resources Implications

Officer's comments:

The motion can be delivered within existing staff resources.