



Merri-bek
City Council

Minutes of the Planning and Related Matters Meeting

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

on Wednesday 26 August 2026

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The Mayor opened the meeting at 6.31 pm and stated the Council meeting is being held on the traditional country of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and acknowledged them as Traditional Owners. The Mayor paid respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.

Present	Time In	Time Out
Cr Nat Abboud, Mayor	6.31 pm	6.39 pm
Cr Helen Davidson, Deputy Mayor	6.31 pm	6.59 pm
Cr Sue Bolton	6.43 pm	6.59 pm
Cr Liz Irvin	6.31 pm	6.39 pm
Cr Dr Jay Iwasaki	6.31 pm	6.59 pm
Cr Chris Miles	6.31 pm	6.59 pm
Cr Helen Politis	6.31 pm	6.59 pm
Cr Adam Pulford	Leave of absence	
Cr Ella Svensson	6.31 pm	6.59 pm
Cr Katerine Theodosis	6.31 pm	6.59 pm
Cr Oscar Yildiz JP	6.31 pm	6.59 pm

OFFICERS

Chief Executive Officer – Kate McCaughey
 Director Place and Environment – Pene Winslade
 Unit Manager Urban Planning – Mark Hughes
 Planning Coordinator – Vita Galante
 Unit Manager Governance and Risk – Sophie Barison
 Team Leader Governance – Naomi Ellis

APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cr Pulford was on an approved leave of absence from 10 August 2026 to 28 August 2026 inclusive.

DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr Irvin disclosed a general conflict of interest in report 5.2 Amendment to approved East Brunswick Village Development Plan as she lives in the vicinity of East Brunswick Village.

Mayor, Cr Abboud disclosed a general conflict of interest in report 5.2 Amendment to approved East Brunswick Village Development Plan as she is a part owner in a business located within East Brunswick Village.

MINUTE CONFIRMATION

Resolution

Cr Irvin moved, Cr Svensson seconded -

The minutes of the Planning and Related Matters Meeting held on 22 July 2026 be confirmed.

Carried

COUNCIL REPORTS

5.1 CITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY REPORT - JUNE QUARTER

Executive Summary

The City Development Urban Planning Unit has continued to produce positive results with the overall application caseload remaining at manageable levels. Having addressed the higher caseloads that resulted from pandemic years the Unit has maintained decision-making timeframes that continue to be better than the metropolitan average.

The 1,336 applications received in the past 12 months (2025/26 financial year) was a 15 per cent increase compared to the previous 12 months, although notably lower than the pre-pandemic years. The caseload of planning applications awaiting determination continues to be at an ideal level to enable timely decision-making and great customer service.

The focus for the Urban Planning Unit is to influence high quality planning outcomes, while maintaining the timeliness of planning permit decisions. The June quarter saw a return to higher performance of timely decision-making above the current State average of 68 per cent, with 78 per cent of decisions being made within 60 statutory days at Merri-bek. The Vic Smart performance has reduced slightly this quarter, with performance now matching the State average of 83 per cent of decisions made within 10 statutory days at Merri-bek. In 2025 State planning reform expanded Vic Smart to include two dwelling proposals. Merri-bek receives a notably higher number of applications for two dwellings in comparison to many other Councils which may be contributing factor to timelines now dipping to only slightly exceed State average for the 2025/26 financial year.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) activity remains at a lower level when compared to the pre-pandemic case numbers. When decisions including consent orders are included, Council won or its concerns were addressed, with agreement reached by revised plans, in 87 per cent of cases in the 2025/26 financial year.

The Planning Enforcement Unit has also had a productive quarter. The overall performance of the reactive enforcement service has continued to improve this year, with 486 cases closed this year, despite a 17 percent increase in cases received, helping to maintain the overall backlog of cases at now manageable levels. The proactive enforcement program met its target of 90 proactive audits being commenced in 2025/2026. The team were able to close 36 per cent of cases without the need to escalate to formal enforcement actions.

Officer Recommendation

That Council notes the City Development Activity Report – June Quarter 2026.

Resolution

Cr Irvin moved, Cr Politis seconded -

That Council notes the City Development Activity Report – June Quarter 2026.

Carried

Cr Irvin having disclosed a general conflict of interest in report 5.2 Amendment to approved East Brunswick Village Development Plan, left the meeting at 6.39 pm.

Mayor, Cr Abboud having disclosed a general conflict of interest in report 5.2 Amendment to approved East Brunswick Village Development Plan, vacated the Chair and left the meeting at 6.39 pm.

6.39 pm The Deputy Mayor assumed the Chair.

6.43 pm Cr Bolton entered the meeting.

5.2 AMENDMENT TO APPROVED EAST BRUNSWICK VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Property:	127-137, 139 and 149 Nicholson Street, 3 Elm Grove and 98 John Street, Brunswick East
Proposal:	Amend the Approved Development Plan
Zoning and Overlays:	- Mixed Use Zone (MUZ) (Part) - Commercial Zone – Schedule 1 (C1Z) - Development Plan Overlay – Schedule 11 (DPO11) - Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 20 (DDO20) - Special Building Overlay – Schedule 2 (SBO2) - Parking Overlay – Schedule 1 (PO1) - Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO) - Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO)
Strategic setting:	Minimal change Incremental change Significant change
Submissions:	- Seventeen (17) submissions received to date - Key issues: - Visual bulk - Overshadowing - Combined impacts of building setback changes
Key reasons for support:	The proposal is generally in accordance with the Development Plan Overlay, subject to the condition of the recommendation to increase the upper-level setback to John Street to 18 metres
Recommendation:	Council resolves to amend the approved development plan subject to a condition to increase the level 6 setback to John Street to eighteen (18) metres.

Officer Recommendation

That Council resolves to approve the amended development plans prepared by Jam Architects revision W, dated 15 April 2026 (Drawing numbers 1050_DA.4, 1050_DA.9 - 1050_DA.12, 1050_DA.17 – 1050_DA.19, 1050_DA.23), subject to the following changes:

- An increase in the upper-level setback to John Street to a minimum of 18 metres.

Resolution

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Svensson seconded -

That Council resolves to approve the amended development plans prepared by Jam Architects revision W, dated 15 April 2026 (Drawing numbers 1050_DA.4, 1050_DA.9 - 1050_DA.12, 1050_DA.17 – 1050_DA.19, 1050_DA.23), subject to the following changes:

- An increase in the upper-level setback to John Street to a minimum of 18 metres.**

Carried

URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

The Council meeting closed at 6.59 pm.

Confirmed

Cr Nat Abboud
MAYOR