CITY OF Melton

Council Meeting Minutes

28 September 2026

Minutes of the Meeting of the Melton City Council

PUBLIC COPY

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MELTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MELTON CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MELTON CIVIC CENTRE, 232 HIGH STREET MELTON ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 6:00 PM

Present: Cr Lara Carli (Mayor)
Cr Dr Phillip Zada (Deputy Mayor)
Cr Steven Abboushi
Cr Kathy Majdlik
Cr Brandi Morris
Cr Sophie Ramsey
Cr Julie Shannon
Cr Bob Turner
Cr Ashleigh Vandenberg
Cr John Verdon

Roslyn Wai	Chief Executive Officer
Liz Rowland	Chief Financial Officer
Sam Romaszko	Director City Futures
Troy Scoble	Director City Life
Neil Whiteside	Director City Delivery
Emily Keogh	Head of Governance
Sian Rainford	Senior Lawyer and Property Advisor
Troy Delia	Acting Manager Governance
Bernadette Bensley	Acting Senior Coordinator Governance

1. OPENING PRAYER AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT

The Mayor, Cr Carli opened the meeting at 6.05pm with the opening prayer and reconciliation statement.

2. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

Cr Vandenberg requested a leave of absence from 29 September 2026 to 1 December 2026 inclusive.

Motion

Crs Verdon/Vandenberg.

That Cr Vandenberg's request for leave of absence from 29 September 2026 to 1 December 2026 inclusive be granted.

For: Crs Majdlik, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg and Verdon

Against: Nil

Abstained: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Morris and Zada

CARRIED

3. CHANGES TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

Motion

Crs Majdlik/Abboushi.

That Item 14.3 Notice of Motion 1010 (Cr Dr Zada) – Commonwealth Home Support Program Future Service Delivery be heard prior to Item 12 – Presentation of Staff Reports.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED

4. DEPUTATIONS

Nil.

5. DECLARATION OF ANY PECUNIARY INTEREST, OTHER INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST OF ANY COUNCILLOR

Cr Carli declared a Conflict of Interest at Item 14.5 Notice of Motion 1012 (Cr Vandenberg) – Vote of No Confidence.

6. ADOPTION AND CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 24 August 2026 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Motion

Crs Verdon/Majdlik.

That the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 24 August 2026 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Cr Abboushi departed the Chamber at 6.14pm.

7. SUMMARY OF INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

7.1 SUMMARY OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

- Monday 10 August 2026 Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors
- Monday 24 August 2026 Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors
- Monday 7 September 2026 Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Summaries of Informal Meetings of Councillors dated 10 August 2026, 24 August 2026, and 7 September 2026 provided as **Appendices 1 to 3** respectively to this report, be received and noted.

Motion

Crs Majdlik/Shannon.

That the Summaries of Informal Meetings of Councillors dated 10 August 2026, 24 August 2026, and 7 September 2026 provided as Appendices 1 to 3 respectively to this report, be received and noted.

For: Crs Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors - 10 August 2026
2. Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors - 24 August 2026
3. Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors - 7 September 2026

CITY OF Melton

Informal Meeting of Councillors

MEETING DETAILS:			
Meeting Name:	Briefing of Councillors		
Meeting Date:	Monday 10 August 2026	**Time Opened:**	5.15 pm
		Time Closed:	8.08 pm
Councillors Present:	Cr Lara Carli (Mayor) Cr Dr Phillip Zada (Deputy Mayor) Cr Steve Abboushi Cr Kathy Majdlik Cr Brandi Morris Cr Sophie Ramsey Cr Bob Turner Cr John Verdon		
Officers Present:	Roslyn Wai Liz Rowland Neil Whiteside Sam Romaszko Troy Scoble Emily Keogh Renee Hodgson Toni Toaldo Debbie Blandford Caroline Rantall	Chief Executive Officer Chief Financial Officer Director City Delivery Director City Futures Director City Life Head of Governance Manager Governance Chief People Officer (Item 1) Manager Operations (Item 2) Coordinator Waste & Cleaning Operations (Item 2)	
Guests:	Nil		
Apologies:	Cr Julie Shannon		
Matters Discussed:	1. Response to Notice of Motion 816 (Cr Deeming) Decriminalisation of Sex Work and Child Safety Considerations 2. Mandated Glass Bin Update 3. Naming of aquatic facility in Fraser Rise 4. Councillor Social Media Policy 5. Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, Annual Action Plan 2025/26 Fourth Quarter Progress Report 6. Draft Reports 7. General Updates from Officers		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:			
Were there any conflict of interest disclosures by Councillors?			No
REPORT PRODUCED BY:			
Officer name:	Renee Hodgson, Manager Governance	**Date:**	Monday 10 August 2026

CITY OF Melton

Informal Meeting of Councillors

MEETING DETAILS:			
Meeting Name:	Briefing of Councillors		
Meeting Date:	Monday 24 August 2026	**Time Opened:**	5.09 pm
		Time Closed:	5.41 pm
Councillors Present:	Cr L Carli (Mayor) Cr Dr P Zada (Deputy Mayor) Cr S Abboushi Cr K Majdlik Cr B Morris Cr S Ramsey Cr J Shannon Cr B Turner Cr A Vandenberg (arrived 5.41pm) Cr J Verdon		
Officers Present:	R Wai — Chief Executive Officer S Romaszko — Director City Futures L Rowland — Chief Financial Officer N Whiteside — Director City Delivery T Scoble — Director City Life E Keogh — Head of Governance R Hodgson — Manager Governance		
Guests:	Nil		
Apologies:	Nil		
Matters Discussed:	1. Council Agenda		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:			
Were there any conflict of interest disclosures by Councillors?			No
REPORT PRODUCED BY:			
Officer name:	**Renee Hodgson, Manager Governance**	**Date:**	Monday 24 August 2026

CITY OF Melton

Informal Meeting of Councillors

MEETING DETAILS:			
Meeting Name:	Briefing of Councillors		
Meeting Date:	Monday 7 September 2026	**Time Opened:**	5.08pm
		Time Closed:	7.57pm
Councillors Present:	Cr Lara Carli (Mayor) Cr Dr Phillip Zada (Deputy Mayor) Cr Kathy Majdlik (online) (left at 6.06pm - after Aquatic and Leisure Centre – Fraser Rise Project Quarterly Update) Cr Brandi Morris Cr Sophie Ramsey Cr Julie Shannon Cr Bob Turner Cr John Verdon (online)		
Officers Present:	Roslyn Wai — Chief Executive Officer Liz Rowland — Chief Financial Officer Neil Whiteside — Director City Delivery Sam Romaszko — Director City Futures Troy Scoble — Director City Life Emily Keogh — Head of Governance Debbie Blandford — Manager Operations (Item 1) Kerry Walton — Manager Roads & Traffic (Item 2) Levi Phipps — Head Major Project Delivery (Item 3 & 4) Joel Farrell — Manager Customer Experience (Item 5)		
Guests:	Nil		
Apologies:	Cr Steve Abboushi Cr Ashleigh Vandenberg		
Matters Discussed:	1. Response to Notice of Motion 1000 (Cr Verdon) - Support for Cost of Rubbish Removal 2. Leakes Road Corridor Review 3. Cobblebank Community Hub Project Quarterly Update 4. Aquatic and Leisure Centre – Fraser Rise Project Quarterly Update 5. Annual Community Satisfaction Survey 6. Corporate Identity Standards Guide Implementation Plan Update 7. General Updates from Officers		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:			
Were there any conflict of interest disclosures by Councillors?			No
REPORT PRODUCED BY:			
Officer name:	Emily Keogh, Head of Governance	**Date:**	Monday 7 September 2026

Cr Abboushi returned to the Chamber at 6.16pm.

8. CORRESPONDENCE INWARD

8.1 PARLIAMENTARIAN AND DEPARTMENTAL LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE MAYOR IN RESPONSE TO NOTICES OF MOTIONS

- Wayne Johnson, CEO and Managing Director, ARTC – Response to Notice of Motion 1003
- Adam Maguire, Deputy Secretary Network Design and Integration, Department of Transport and Planning – Response to Notice of Motion 1003
- Joseph Solomon, Chief of Staff, Office of the Hon Catherine King MP – Response to Notice of Motion 1003

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive and note the following Departmental letters received by the Mayor in response to Notices of Motions, provided as **Appendices 1 to 3** to this report:

1. Wayne Johnson, CEO and Managing Director, ARTC – Response to Notice of Motion 1003
2. Adam Maguire, Deputy Secretary Network Design and Integration, Department of Transport and Planning – Response to Notice of Motion 1003
3. Joseph Solomon, Chief of Staff, Office of the Hon Catherine King MP – Response to Notice of Motion 1003

Motion

Crs Turner/Verdon.

That Council receive and note the following Departmental letters received by the Mayor in response to Notices of Motions, provided as **Appendices 1 to 3** to this report:

1. Wayne Johnson, CEO and Managing Director, ARTC – Response to Notice of Motion 1003
2. Adam Maguire, Deputy Secretary Network Design and Integration, Department of Transport and Planning – Response to Notice of Motion 1003
3. Joseph Solomon, Chief of Staff, Office of the Hon Catherine King MP – Response to Notice of Motion 1003.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Wayne Johnson, CEO and Managing Director, ARTC dated 14 August 2026
2. Adam Maguire, Deputy Secretary Network Design and Integration, Department of Transport and Planning dated 19 August 2026
3. Joseph Solomon, Chief of Staff, Office of the Hon Catherine King MP, dated 21 August 2026

Unit 5/33 Newton Street,
Broadmeadow NSW 2292
Locked Bag 1,
Broadmeadow, 2292

P 02 4941 9600
E info@artc.com.au
W artc.com.au

14 August 2026

Cr Lara Carli
Mayor
City of Melton
232 High St
Melton VIC 337
Email: mayor@melton.vic.gov.au

Dear Mayor Carli

Transport resilience for the Melton Line and Western Highway corridor

Thank you for your letter of 6 August 2026 about the impact of the Telstra network outage on rail services in Melbourne's west. I appreciate you taking the time to share Council's concerns, particularly given the disruption experienced by your community.

The outage on 8 July was a significant national telecommunications incident that affected a range of essential services, including rail.

The outage disrupted telecommunications services to the National Train Communications System which meant ARTC's Network Control Centres could not communicate with train crews and frontline workers.

As result ARTC, V/Line and other rail operators nationally could not operate their networks safely leading us to suspend services to protect the safety of people and passengers.

Telstra is currently working with ARTC and V/Line to identify the causes of the outage and opportunities to strengthen the resilience of the National Train Communications System.

ARTC manages Australia's interstate rail network, including the corridor between Melbourne and the New South Wales border at Albury.

The Melton and Ballarat rail corridors form part of the Victorian rail network managed by V/Line.

I appreciate Council's broader concerns about transport capacity and resilience in Melbourne's rapidly growing western suburbs. These issues are managed by the Victorian Government and are outside of ARTC's network.

Thank you again for writing and for advocating on behalf of your community.

Yours sincerely

Wayne Johnson
CEO and Managing Director

1

Department of Transport and Planning

GPO Box 2392
Melbourne, Victoria 3001 Australia

Ref: CSEC-1-26-5878

Cr Lara Carli
Mayor
City of Melton
PO Box 21
MELTON VIC 3337
mayor@melton.vic.gov.au

Dear Cr Carli

Transport resilience for the Melton Line and Western Highway corridor

I refer to your letter of 6 August 2026 to Mr Jeroen Weimar, Secretary of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). Your letter has been referred to me for response.

The Victorian Government is delivering major transport upgrades in Melbourne's west, boosting capacity, improving reliability and making it easier for locals to get where they need to go.

In relation to your specific questions, I provide the following advice.

A commitment for the Melton Line electrification and new stations at Mt Atkinson and Thornhill Park to be delivered by 2030.

The Melton Line upgrade continues to progress with the removal of four level crossings and the new Melton Station expected to open in 2026. The 2026-27 Victorian Budget provided $76.4 million in funding, which is matched by the Commonwealth Government for a combined total of $152.7 million, to undertake planning and development activities for the future electrification of the Melton rail line such as:

- Site investigations;
- Environmental assessments;
- Planning approvals;
- Secure power supply for the future electrified line; and
- Detailed design and costing with delivery partners.

As you would be aware, the Victorian Government is partnering with the Australian Government to get on with building a rail link to Melbourne Airport. Delivery has already started on Stage 1: West Footscray to Albion and includes a program of works spanning 6 kilometres to untangle this complex rail junction, making way for a rail line to Melbourne Airport and critically, enabling the future electrification of the Melton Line.

In addition to this, government fast tracked implementation of a new bus route 140A Mt Atkinson to Rockbank Station in June 2026, which is servicing southern Rockbank, Grandview and Mt Atkinson estates, making it easier to access Rockbank Station, jobs and nearby suburbs. A new bus route (route 451) connecting Thornhill Park residents to Cobblebank Station was delivered in July 2026.

VICTORIA State Government

The 2026-27 State Budget also announced funding of $14.8 million to boost capacity on the Wyndham Vale Line by operating longer 9-carriage trains during peak times.

Improved V/Line reliability, bus reform, upgrades to the Western Highway/Western Freeway and supporting arterial road network to be treated as priority transport resilience projects for Melbourne's west.

Planning is progressing for the Western Freeway Upgrade between Melton and Caroline Springs to improve safety, freeway access and road capacity to help accommodate growing demand. The Western Freeway is a critical road link and every single day approximately 86,000 vehicles travel the stretch between Melton and Caroline Springs, with this figure expected to rise to approximately 113,000 by 2031.The Commonwealth government has committed $1.1 billion to upgrade the Western Freeway and is working with Victoria to enhance safety and efficiency for both cars and freight.

Through the 25/26 and 26/27 State Budgets more than $262 million is being invested in new and improved bus services, with a focus on connecting communities in Melbourne's growing suburbs to key local destinations including train stations, schools, health services, shops and employment.

Recent improvements to bus services in the west include:

- New route 405 from Deer Park Station to Brimbank Shopping centre via Cairnlea Drive.
- New route 451 from Thornhill Park to Cobblebank Station, which includes more than 20 new bus stops.
- New route 140A from Mt Atkinson to Rockbank Station.
- Buses on all three new services run every 20 minutes on weekdays and every 40 minutes on weeknights and weekends, seven days a week.

Funded improvements to bus services still to come include:

- Extension of the Route 140A through to Tarneit Station (to become the Route 140).
- New Route 186 in northern Tarneit and an upgrade to service frequency of Route 182, delivering access to the new West Tarneit Station.
- Upgraded services to improve access to Caroline Springs town centre and Watergardens Station including for residents of Aintree and Deanside.
- A new bus network for Melton South with two new routes, and an extension and uplift to the Route 454 through to Woodgrove Shopping Centre

Urgent advice on rail communication redundancy, backup systems and contingency arrangements to reduce the risk of a similar outage again causing widespread rail disruption before the Melton Line is electrified.

The nation-wide Telstra outage in early July had a significant impact on the Victorian community, businesses and transport users, particularly passengers of the V/Line regional rail network.

As you may be aware, the Telstra outage impacted the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) National Train Communication System (NTCS) that supports all regional rail passenger and rail freight services in Victoria.

The Victorian Government is seeking for Telstra and for the Commonwealth to review and address the resilience of the national ARTC communications system so passenger and freight rail transport are treated as essential services. This includes assessing options for implementing a back-up system to help ensure rail services reliant on ARTC's NTCS can continue to operate at a network level during any future outage.

These issues of transport and telecommunications resilience are of the utmost importance. The recent history of outages has shown the vulnerabilities of our existing telecommunications networks and the importance of Telstra and other providers prioritising network resilience.

Stronger replacement transport and passenger management arrangements for the western growth corridor during rail disruptions.

Prior to any planned works taking place, V/Line undertakes significant planning to identify and implement replacement services that meet operational and safety requirements and consider the impact to passengers.

During planned disruptions, V/Line reviews expected patronage, normally scheduled service offerings, and previous like-for-like events planned closures to influence its planning. V/Line replaces disrupted services with a mixture of semi-express and stopping-all-station services. These coaches are distributed to various locations on the network to make the most of the coaches available.

DTP, Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority (VIDA) and operators work hard to provide advance notice when disruptions occur to ensure passengers can plan ahead and allow extra time for their journey. DTP also works with stakeholders, event partners and transport operators to deliver coordinated customer communications and promote ease of getting to and from events. Where possible, DTP provide content for social media channels, EDMs direct to event goers, and event venue websites.

When unplanned disruptions occur, V/Line's Integrated Operations Centre closely monitors situations as they evolve to restore services and provide updates to passengers as soon as they are available. This includes working with coach operators to arrange as many replacement coaches as possible. Coach availability, road conditions, and the time of day can all affect the replacement coaches provided for an incident, depending on the location of the disruption.

After any major disruption event, a review is completed, which includes assessing issue trends identified from passenger feedback, safety incidents, bus replacement operations, other operational constraints, and any key learnings that may be applied to future events to improve the experience for customers.

Thank you for raising these matters with DTP. Should you have any further questions, please contact Stuart Johns, Executive Director, Modal Planning, Network Design and Integration via stuart.johns@transport.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Adam Maguire
Deputy Secretary Network Design and Integration

Date: 19/08/2026



Office of the Hon Catherine King MP

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
Member for Ballarat

Ref: MC26-011081

Cr Lara Carli
Mayor
City of Melton
PO Box 21
MELTON VIC 3337

via: mayor@melton.vic.gov.au

Dear Mayor,

Thank you for your correspondence of 6 August 2026 to the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, regarding the Telstra network outage and transport resilience for the Melton Line and Western Highway corridor. The Minister has asked me to respond on her behalf.

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding the recent Telstra outage and the disruption that was caused to V/Line services across Victoria. The Australian Government takes outages of this kind very seriously and acknowledges the disruption the outage had on the economy and the ability for Australians to go about their daily lives.

I appreciate your advocacy for the City of Melton and your commitment to securing the best outcomes for Melbourne's west. The Australian Government recognises the rapid growth of the region and is committed to investing in the transport infrastructure needed to support its expanding communities.

As part of this commitment, the Government is contributing more than $76 million to the Melton Line Electrification – Development project. This work will help inform future funding and delivery decisions for the electrification of the Melton line.

The Government has also made significant investments in other major transport projects that will benefit Melbourne's west. This includes $7 billion towards the Melbourne Airport Rail Link, which will deliver a rail connection to the airport while enabling broader improvements across the transport network. In addition, the Government is providing $284.6 million for the Melton Line Upgrade project to help address overcrowding on the corridor.

PO Box 6022 Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 | Tel: (02) 6277 7520

The Western Freeway between Melton and Caroline Springs has also been identified as a priority for upgrade in response to continuing population growth. The Australian Government is funding $50 million in pre-construction works as part of our commitment to invest $1 billion in upgrades to the Western Freeway between Melton and Caroline Springs. These upgrades are aimed at improving network efficiency and connectivity, enhancing access to services and employment, improving road safety, reducing congestion, and delivering more reliable travel times.

The Australian Government has also committed over $1 billion towards projects along the Western Highway to increase capacity of the route and intersections to allow traffic to flow more freely. The Western Highway is one of the busiest national undivided highways in Australia, and a critical freight and tourism route for western Victoria.

While the Australian Government provides significant funding towards transport infrastructure projects in Victoria, the responsibility for project planning and delivery rests with the Victorian Government. As such, I encourage you to continue engaging with the Victorian Department of Transport and Planning as these projects progress.

I note that you have also written to the Premier of Victoria, the Victorian Minister for Public Transport, V/Line and the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC). As these matters fall largely within Victorian Government and operational responsibilities, I am confident they will be best placed to respond to your requests for improved public transport and road network outcomes, stronger contingency and communications arrangements during service disruptions, and more effective passenger management and replacement transport when incidents occur.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to the Minister's attention.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Solomon

Chief of Staff

21 / 8 / 2026

9. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

9.1 PETITION - SAVE MELTON AGED CARE (1)

SUMMARY

A petition has been received containing 495 valid signatories in relation to aged care services.

The petition states:

'We urge Melton City Council to reverse its decision, to not exit aged care services, and to continue providing these quality services that your community needs and deserves.'

Pursuant to section 64.1 of Council's Governance Rules, this petition is being tabled with a report to come back to a future Meeting of Council, noting that no motion may be made at tonight's meeting other than a motion to receive the petition.

9.2 PETITION - SAVE MELTON AGED CARE (2)

SUMMARY

A petition has been received containing 100 valid signatories in relation to aged care services.

The petition states:

'We urge Melton City Councillors to reverse their decision made on June 22nd and recommit to the provision of aged care services through the Commonwealth Home Support Program to continue providing the quality services that our community needs and deserves.'

Pursuant to section 64.1 of Council's Governance Rules, this petition is being tabled with a report to come back to a future Meeting of Council, noting that no motion may be made at tonight's meeting other than a motion to receive the petition.

10. RESUMPTION OF DEBATE OR OTHER BUSINESS CARRIED OVER FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil.

11. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Submitter: Arpita Patel	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
What action, such as additional restrictions, signage or enforcement, will Council take to improve road and pedestrian safety in the residential streets of Strathtulloh, particularly near parks and intersections, where they obstruct visibility, create blind spots and restrict traffic flow?	Council understands that the presence of large commercial vehicles in residential areas can create safety concerns. Council monitors parking issues proactively through our Community Safety Parking Officers and reactively through reports received from residents. The area will continue to be monitored, and enforcement action will be taken where vehicles are found to be parked in breach of road rules or parking restrictions. Any illegally parked vehicle may be issued with an infringement notice. Council encourages residents to report specific locations where parked vehicles create safety hazards, particularly near intersections, parks or pedestrian access points, as this assists Officers in identifying and investigating priority areas.

Submitter: Arpita Patel	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
To encourage responsible dog ownership at the park along Atherstone Park opposite Roehampton Drive, can Council install clear “Dogs Must Be On A Leash” signage and provide dog waste bag dispensers and bins?	Council encourages responsible dog ownership and understands the concerns raised regarding dogs being walked off-leash and dog waste not being collected. Council's Community Safety Officers undertake regular patrols of public open spaces and may issue infringements where breaches of the relevant Local Law are identified, including failing to keep a dog under effective control or failing to remove dog waste. Under Council's Local Law 2025, dog owners are required to carry a bag or other suitable means to collect and dispose of their dog's waste. Council provides dog waste bag dispensers at designated off-leash dog parks only, and therefore bag dispensers are not generally installed in other public open spaces. Council will continue to monitor the area and consider appropriate measures such as signage to support a safe, clean and enjoyable environment for all park users.
Submitter: Mya Debono	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
What can Council do to assist or support the homeless population in the Melton community?	Council delivers a State-funded homelessness support program and Commonwealth-funded Youth Homelessness early intervention program, which provide direct supports to our in-need community. In addition, Council works in partnership with external service providers to deliver the ‘Responding to Rough Sleepers’ initiative. Council continues to advocate to State and Federal Governments for increased social and affordable housing and homelessness services across our City.

Submitter: Eunice Franco **Organisation: G & G Healthcare**	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
Has the council explored opportunities to maximise community access to public services such as unstaffed library hours until 10pm daily?	Reviewing opening hours of Council's library services is regularly undertaken to ensure that our services meet the community need. The Melton Library and Learning Hub is open 4 evenings a week until 6pm, and Thursdays until 8pm plus also being open on both Saturdays and Sundays. Current attendance data shows that patronage of our facilities between 6pm and 8pm remains low.
Submitter: Eunice Franco **Organisation: G & G Healthcare**	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
What measures are in place to consider people with sensory issues especially with noise and using the library?	Library staff are able to provide quieter spaces and study areas which are lower noise environments, or by identifying quieter spaces or times to visit. Council also has an 'Access Keys' webpage which provides additional information about the facility to assist users with sensory needs to prepare for their visits in advance.
Submitter: James Seddon	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
Worn and faded Red brick is found along many road ways in Melton South, including at roundabouts, speed humps - does the council have a maintenance plan in place to restore/upkeep the red brick so it does not become an eye sore and negatively impact the neighbourhood amenity?	Council undertakes condition audits of all assets in accordance with Council's Asset Management Policy 2026 to assess the state of physical assets to inform maintenance, compliance, lifecycle planning, and investment decisions. Council officers will inspect the speed humps in Monash Street, Morshead Road & Exford Road to determine whether any maintenance works are required and action accordingly.

Submitter: James Seddon	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
Any plans to introduce plants to the middle of the roundabout Exford Rd Melton south?	Council officers will inspect the location and assess the suitability of landscaping or other amenity improvements. Any potential improvement works will need to consider factors, including road safety, sightline requirements, maintenance obligations, available space, and the suitability of the location for landscaping. Should the location be identified as suitable, any improvements will be considered as part of Council's ongoing maintenance and asset planning processes.
Submitter: Beverley Price	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
Given that Federal Government funding will continue until 2029 and councillors are no longer considered "responsible persons" under the Aged Care Act, will Council formally review its decision from 22nd June, to cease delivering Commonwealth Home Support Programme services?	The Australian Government announcement to extend the Commonwealth Home Support Program for a further 2 years occurred on 20 August 2026. Council has sought further information from theAustralian Government regarding what the extension of the program to 30 June 2029 would look like for Council as a provider including funding and terms of agreement. Council has not yet been provided with any information regarding this for further consideration. The current Council decision was based on all information at the time assessing the significant changes in the aged care sector and Council's ability to be a provider of the Australian Government service. This included changes to aged care legislation and regulatory requirements, increased governance, reporting compliance obligations, increased funding commitments for Council to continue to deliver a program considering the growing number of specialist providers available in the community. As at today Councillors are required to be Responsible Persons of the service along with all Senior Officers within Council. Proposed changes to legislation will remove Councillors only as responsible persons.

Submitter: Beverley Price	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
What consultation has Council undertaken with residents like me—a 91-year-old Melton resident who uses these services to remain safe and independent in my own home?	The Commonwealth Home Support Program is an Australian Government aged care service program not a Council owned program. The program has been under review by the Australian Government for over 6 years. It intended to transition to the Support at Home program but has now had a 6th extension of funding as a further review by the Australian Government continues. The Australian Government are solely responsible for the providers in the City of Melton, and the framework compliance and pricing that the providers work within. Council has written to all existing Commonwealth Home Support Program clients about the Aged Care Act, the Statement of Rights and will continue engaging with clients throughout Council's transition process which has been approved by the relevant Australian Government department. Council will continue to support our older residents to access appropriate providers within the Australian Government's approved network of providers in the City of Melton. Council will also continue to deliver the other services it provides to our older residents.

In accordance with Governance Rule 62.9, like questions have been grouped together and a single answer provided	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
Submitter: Sandra McMenemie Why did Council make such an important decision to cease Aged Care Services with no consultation with seniors it directly affects? **Submitter: Lorna Pawley** **Organisation:Combined Pensioners Association** Why did Council make the decision to cease providing aged care services without consulting the people it effects? **Submitter: Hayley Quinn** **Australian Services Union (ASU)** Councillors voted to cease the delivery of its federally funded aged care services at the June council meeting. This decision was done in confidence and was hidden under "legislative reforms" on the June agenda. Can councillors explain why no consultation with your constituents, particularly seniors who receive these services occurred prior to such a significant decision being made?	The Commonwealth Home Support Program is an Australian Government aged care service program not a Council owned program. The program has been under review for over 6 years with a planned transition to the Support at Home program in July 2027. It has now had a 6th extension of funding as a further review by the Australian Government continues. More than 50 of Victoria's Council's have reviewed its role in being able to deliver the Australian Government Program and have either already withdrawn from delivery or in the process of transitioning to external providers. Council's decision of June 22 was based on the information that it had available at that point in time regarding the existing Council delivered CHSP contract that was ending June 30, 2027 and considered whether to become a Support at Home provider from July 2027. It also considered impacts of the new Aged Care Act and what they were going to have on Council's ability to be a provider in the Australian Governments program. Council does acknowledge that some community members feel they should have been engaged to determine whether Council could continue to be a provider of the Australian Government Service before that decision was made. The decision though followed a strategic review of Council's role and capability in delivering the current CHSP service and being able to transition to being a provider of the Support at Home program considering the significant aged care reforms, regulatory requirements and availability of specialist aged care providers in the City. Council is aware how important the current service is to our community that access it through our annual surveys undertaken and are committed to ongoing engagement with clients and carers through the transition period to ensure all are well informed, supported and able to provide feedback as transition planning progresses.

Submitter: Brendan Kitchen	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
When will the new BMX track at Blackwood Drive reserve be rebuilt?	The BMX track at Blackwood Drive Recreation Reserve was constructed by members of the community over 20 years ago. Planning into upgrades to the sports playing fields at the reserve are underway, which include consideration of impacts on the BMX track. There is no current planned project to renew the BMX track.
Submitter: Faredin Nuredini	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
In regard to the Leakes Road interchange upgrade, will the new bridge/upgrade follow the alignment identified in the Rockbank Precinct Structure Plan (PSP 1099) along the proposed Rockbank Road alignment, or will the new bridge/upgrade follow the alignment of the existing Leakes Road interchange?	The scope of works for the Leakes Road interchange will be determined by the Victorian Government. Based on the information currently available, the works are planned to follow the existing Leakes Road alignment.
Submitter: Karen Austria	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
What action will Council take to ensure Aboriginal cultural heritage is appropriately assessed and protected, with meaningful engagement with the relevant Traditional Owners and Registered Aboriginal Party, in relation to major data-centre development in the municipality?	The Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018, prescribe circumstances which require the preparation of Cultural Heritage Management Plans. Where a CHMP is required, an application for a planning permit cannot be determined, until the CHMP has been approved. CHMP's are prepared in consultation with and approved by, the relevant Registered Aboriginal Party. Compliance with an approved CHMP, is a statutory requirement and enforcement action may be taken, if compliance is not achieved.

Submitter: Karen Austria	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
What action will Council take to advocate for an independent, site-specific fire and emergency risk assessment for the proposed Plumpton data centre, and to ensure identified risks are incorporated into Council's relevant municipal emergency and fire-management planning?	Council is not aware of any formal application for a proposed data centre in Plumpton. For other data centre proposals notified to Council by the Department of Transport and Planning, detailed risk and hazard assessment reports prepared by suitably qualified professionals have been provided.
Submitter: Hayley Quinn **Australian Services Union (ASU)**	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
Can Council explain why the decision to cease delivery of its Commonwealth Home Support Program funded aged care services, including the Council officer report and motion details was made confidentially?	Items are considered by Council as confidential business where they meet the definition of confidential information as set out in the Local Government Act 2020. At the time of the report being presented to Council, Council considered the report to contain information which related to the personal affairs of individual staff and personnel matters, and to which the disclosure was, at that time, unreasonable.
Submitter: Ralf Schumann	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
Will council please confirm that no political organisation, candidate, or current member of parliament will be represented with a stall or marquee at the 2026 Djerriwarrh festival. Thank you.	Council confirms that for the 2026 Djerriwarrh Festival that stallholder Terms and Conditions include no political stalls will be permitted.

Submitter: Terri Franklin	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
Will Council please clarify the actual reasoning behind the cancellations of the Street Parade and the Lions' Club Carnival from this year's Djerriwarrh Festival?	Council completes a review after each major event. The DJ Festival review 2025 included engagement with the community, which identified that improving affordability and strengthening community participation were amongst the most important to our community. Council has continued to expend substantial funds on Djerriwarrh Festival each year, whilst participation, engagement and attendance at the parade has continued to significantly decline. With no parade at this year event Council can reduce road closures, and redirect resources into other festival activities at a lower cost which can be enjoyed by the broader community. All former participants of the parade will be engaged as to the level of participation in this years festival. The carnival at the event has previously been facilitated by the Lions Club of Melton. Prior to the 2025 event, Council was made aware of the ongoing risks associated with responsibilities for the event, that they were very unclear, exposing the relevant parties to substantial risk. The Lions Club have been advised of the requirements and are able to make an application through Council's event permit process for hosting of any future public events, including the requirements around traffic and site management, safety and insurance. To date, Council has not received any application from the Lions Club to run any public event in the City of Melton.
Submitter: David O'Connor	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
At each Council meeting, a verbal notice advises the Council retains copyright over its livestream and recorded meeting content. How does Council apply and enforce that copyright where unauthorised copying, editing or republication of meeting recordings comes to Council's attention?	Council considers any use of its copyright material, on a case by case basis and in accordance with the Copyright Act. Council reserves its right to take enforcement action for infringements of Council's copyright.

Submitter: David O'Connor	
Question asked of Council	**Response**
Given the number of entries in Council's Notice of Motion Register that only record outcomes as "This Notice of Motion has been actioned", will Council consider improving the register so that completed motions include a brief description of the action taken, any response or outcome received, and links to relevant reports or correspondence where publicly available?	Thanks for this suggestion – the intent of the current wording is that it will be marked as completed when all actions outlined in the motion are completed. As part of our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, the suggestion will be considered moving forward where the current process may provide a lack of clarity.

At Item 3 – Change to the Order of Business, it was resolved by Council that Item 14.3 – Notice of Motion 1010 (Cr Dr Zada) – Commonwealth Home Support Program: Future Service Delivery, be heard prior to Item 12 – Presentation of Staff Reports.

14.3 NOTICE OF MOTION 1010 (CR DR ZADA) - COMMONWEALTH HOME SUPPORT PROGRAM: FUTURE SERVICE DELIVERY

Councillor: Phillip Zada

NOTICE:

That Council requests an urgent briefing of Councillors to inform time-critical funding or transition decisions, on the options for revisiting its decision of 22 June 2026 to cease direct CHSP service delivery on 30 June 2027, addressing:

1. The feasibility of deferring Council's planned exit by two years and continuing direct CHSP delivery until 30 June 2029, including Commonwealth funding terms, financial and operational sustainability, and workforce, contractual and regulatory implications.
2. The current status and implications of Commonwealth amendments concerning elected Councillors as "responsible persons", and Council's remaining obligations as an aged care provider.
3. Options for a staged integrated model in which Council and external providers deliver services alongside one another, with external provider performance assessed against Council-delivered services through client feedback, service quality, reliability, affordability, accessibility, continuity of care and resident outcomes.
4. The safeguards and evidence needed to establish that residents would receive equivalent or better outcomes before any permanent withdrawal from Council delivery, including the internal capability needed to respond to service failures or market gaps.
5. The status of the existing transition, commitments already made and remaining deadlines or decisions affecting Council's ability to defer its exit and retain its workforce and service.
6. Arrangements for Council to reconsider ongoing participation if Commonwealth funding continues beyond 30 June 2029, without committing Council to future contracts or predetermining a future Council's decision.

Motion

Crs Zada/Abboushi.

That Council requests an urgent briefing of Councillors to inform time-critical funding or transition decisions, on the options for revisiting its decision of 22 June 2026 to cease direct CHSP service delivery on 30 June 2027, addressing:

1. The feasibility of deferring Council's planned exit by two years and continuing direct CHSP delivery until the 30 June 2029, including Commonwealth funding terms, financial and operational sustainability, and workforce, contractual and regulatory implications.
2. The current status and implications of Commonwealth amendments concerning elected Councillors as "responsible persons", and Council's remaining obligations as an aged care provider.
3. Options for a staged integrated model in which Council and external providers deliver services alongside one another, with external provider performance assessed against Council-delivered services through client feedback, service quality, reliability, affordability, accessibility, continuity of care and resident outcomes.

4. The safeguards and evidence needed to establish that residents would receive equivalent or better outcomes before any permanent withdrawal from Council delivery, including the internal capability needed to respond to service failures or market gaps.
5. The status of the existing transition, commitments already made and remaining deadlines or decisions affecting Council's ability to defer its exit and to retain its workforce and service.
6. Arrangements for Council to reconsider ongoing participation if Commonwealth funding continues beyond 30 June 2029, without committing Council to future contracts or predetermining a future Council's decision.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

Cr Majdlik called for a division thereby setting aside the vote.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

The Mayor declared the Motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

12. PRESENTATION OF STAFF REPORTS

12.1 ANNUAL COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY 2026

Author: Joel Farrell - Manager Customer Experience
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Annual Community Satisfaction Survey Results 2026.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Notes the *Melton City Council – 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey Findings Report* at **Appendix 1**.
2. Approves key findings of the report to be communicated to the community and other stakeholders through appropriate communication channels.

Motion

Crs Morris/Verdon.

That Council:

1. Notes the Melton City Council – 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey Findings Report at Appendix 1.
2. Approves key findings of the report to be communicated to the community and other stakeholders through appropriate communication channels.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The Community Satisfaction Survey is conducted annually to provide Council with an evidence-based understanding of community perceptions of Council performance, services, facilities and the key issues affecting residents. In 2026, the survey was undertaken by Metropolis Research through face-to-face interviews with 800 randomly selected residents during May and June, consistent with the methodology used in previous years.

The survey examines community satisfaction with Council's overall performance, governance and leadership, customer service, planning and development, and a broad range of Council services and facilities. It also assesses the importance of Council services and facilities to residents, identifies the key issues facing the municipality, and explores community perceptions of safety, sense of community and volunteering.

The survey sample reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of the municipality, with 37% of respondents reporting that a language other than English is spoken at home, consistent with Census data for the City of Melton.

The survey fulfils Local Government Victoria requirements by providing importance and satisfaction ratings across the mandatory core measures and Council's overall performance. It also supports Council's legislative reporting obligations, including the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework, and assists in monitoring progress against the *Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029*.

The findings provide a valuable measure of community sentiment and enable Council to identify areas of strong performance, emerging community priorities and opportunities for ongoing improvement. The survey results also assist Council in monitoring performance over time and support evidence-based planning, service delivery, advocacy and decision-making.

2. Background/Issues

The *Melton City Council – 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey Findings Report* is provided at **Appendix 1**.

Overall satisfaction with Melton City Council was 6.9 out of 10, a decrease of one percentage point from 2025. Overall satisfaction remains within the “good” range; however, the result is slightly lower than the metropolitan Melbourne and western region council averages of 7.2 and 7.6 respectively.

Key satisfaction results, including the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework reporting requirement scores for the City of Melton are outlined below:

Satisfaction with	City of Melton 2026	City of Melton 2025
Overall satisfaction customer service experience	7.8	7.4
Council's Overall performance	6.9	7.0
Making decisions in the interests of community	7.0	7.0
Community consultation and engagement	6.9	7.0
Representation, lobbying and advocacy	7.0	7.0
Maintaining trust and confidence of the community	7.1	7.0
Responsiveness of Council to local community needs	7.0	7.0
Maintenance and repair of sealed local roads	7.1	6.9

Average satisfaction with the core measures of governance and leadership remained stable at 7.0 out of 10, representing a “good” level of satisfaction.

The average satisfaction with Council services and facilities increased to 7.9 out of 10, up from 7.8 in 2025 and representing a record high result for the City of Melton.

The highest levels of satisfaction were recorded for Green waste collection (8.7), Regular garbage collection (8.7), Regular recycling collection (8.6), Library services (8.5), and Hard rubbish collection (8.5).

The stand-out improvement in satisfaction this year was customer service, with a four-percentage point increase in overall satisfaction with the customer service experience, moving from “very good” to “excellent”. Notable improvements in satisfaction were also recorded for parking enforcement (up 5 percentage points), provision and maintenance of playgrounds (up 4 percentage points), public toilets (up 4 percentage points), and animal management (up 3 percentage points).

The average perception of safety across all situations and locations measured increased by two percentage points to 7.1 out of 10, reversing the decline recorded in 2025. Perceptions of safety improved in nine of the ten measures, with satisfaction ranging from 7.9 for safety in public areas during the day to 6.0 for safety in public areas at night. While perceptions of safety have improved, they remain below metropolitan Melbourne, western region, and growth area council averages.

Areas for further assessment

The main issues identified in this year’s survey were traffic management (17%, down from 23% in 2025), roads including roadworks (13%, down from 15% in 2025), and safety, policing and crime (12%, down from 19% in 2025).

The continued nomination of traffic management by respondents reinforces the importance of traffic and road related issues in the municipality. The feedback provides Council information on what matters to residents and supports Council in organisational improvement, or advocacy to responsible levels of Government for more effective service and infrastructure delivery that is responsive to community needs.

Summary Comments

Council thanks those community members who gave their time and shared insights to participate in the 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey. The feedback provided gives Council direction on what matters to residents and supports Council in organisational improvement for more effective service and infrastructure delivery that is responsive to community needs.

The Findings Report of this survey has been made public (in this meeting’s agenda) and will be communicated to residents via a media release and Council’s website.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A progressive and trusted Council

3.4 A future focused organisation where success is measured by outcomes, impact and continuous improvement.

4. Financial Considerations

The costs associated with the 2026 survey have been included in the 2025/26 and 2026/27 operational budgets and was the final year of the existing five-year contact. Future budget considerations will need to be considered in the design and procurement of a new contact from 2027 onwards.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

The survey is an important aspect of Council’s community consultation program and represents Council’s ongoing commitment to engaging with the community to improve performance, advocacy, and service delivery.

6. Risk Analysis

There are no risks identified in receiving the results of the Survey.

7. Options

That Council notes the Melton City Council – *2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey Findings Report* in **Appendix 1** and that specific areas have been identified for further attention or improvement.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey Findings Report

Metropolis RESEARCH

Melton City Council

2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey Findings Report

July 2026



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Contact details

This report was prepared by Metropolis Research Pty Ltd on behalf of the Melton City Council. For more information, please contact:

Dale Hubner
Managing Director
Metropolis Research Pty Ltd

P O Box 1357
CARLTON VIC 3053

(03) 9272 4600
d.hubner@metropolis-research.com

Melton City Council
232 High Street
Melton Vic 3337
(03) 9747 7200

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Executive summary

Survey aims and methodology:

Metropolis Research conducted Council's 12th independent *Annual Community Satisfaction Survey* as a door-to-door, in-person interview survey of 800 respondents in May and June 2026.

The aim of the research was to measure community satisfaction with the broad range of Council services and facilities, aspects of governance and leadership, planning and development, customer service, and the overall performance of Council.

The survey also measured the importance to the community of 32 individual services and facilities, explored the top issues the community feel need to be addressed in the municipality 'at the moment', as well as measuring the perception of safety in the City of Melton's public areas, the local sense of community, physical activity, food security, commuting times, transport choices to local facilities, and volunteering.

The survey meets the needs of the Local Government Victorian annual satisfaction survey by providing ratings on importance and satisfaction for the major services and facilities provided by Council, as well as scores for satisfaction with Council.

The response rate for this survey (i.e., the proportion of residents who were invited to participate who did participate) was 37% (down from 41%), which was significantly higher than is typically obtained using the telephone methodology.

The 95% confidence interval around these results is plus and / or minus 3.4% at the 50% level. In other words, if a yes / no question obtains a result of 50% yes, it is 95% certain that the true value of this result is within the range of 46.6% and 53.4%.

The report provides a categorisation of satisfaction with aspects of performance, ranging from "excellent", "very good", "good", "solid", "poor", "very poor", and "extremely poor".

The details of the scores within each range are outlined in the main report but importantly scores of 7.75 or more are categorised as "excellent", and scores of less than 6.5 are categorised as "solid".

Key findings:

The key finding from the survey is that satisfaction with almost all areas of Council performance remained relatively stable this year, maintaining the improvement in satisfaction recorded in 2023 following the lower-than-average pandemic-era results.

Many aspects of Council's performance remain at or around record high levels for the City of Melton, at many remain stable again this year, reflecting a steady and consistent level of satisfaction at relatively elevated levels.

This included the following broad service areas:

- Satisfaction with 31 Council services and facilities 7.9 (up 1pt to record high)
- Overall satisfaction with customer service experience 7.8 (up 4pts)
- Satisfaction with 2 planning and development outcomes 7.4 (stable)
- Satisfaction with 6 aspects of governance and leadership 7.0 (stable)
- Satisfaction with Council's overall performance 6.9 (down 1pt)
- Planning for population growth by all levels of government 6.6 (down 5pts)

The stand-out positive improvement in satisfaction this year was customer service, with the four-percentage point increase in overall satisfaction with the customer service experience.

Other significant improvements were parking enforcement (up 5pts), provision and maintenance of playgrounds (up 4pts), public toilets (up 4pts), and animal management (up 3pts).

There were small declines in satisfaction for services for people with disability (down 3pts by 57 respondents), regular recycling (down 2pts), and services for seniors (down 2pts by 68 respondents)

The key issues highlighted by respondents remain traffic management (17% down from 23%), road maintenance and repairs (13% down from 15%), and safety, policing, and crime (12% down from 19%).

All three of these issues appear to be negative influences on satisfaction with Council's overall performance.

While there was an increase in the perception of safety in the public areas of the City of Melton this year, the perception of safety in public areas at night remained measurably (7pts) lower than the metropolitan average, and the lowest result recorded by Metropolis Research this year (including 16 other municipalities).

The following table outlines the key satisfaction results, including the *Local Government Performance Reporting Framework* reporting requirement scores:

Satisfaction with	***metro. Melb. 2026***	***City of Melton 2025***	***City of Melton 2026***
Overall satisfaction customer service experience	7.6	7.4	7.8
Council's overall performance	7.2	7.0	6.9
Making decisions in the interests of community	7.3	7.0	7.0
Community consultation and engagement	7.6	7.0	6.9
Representation, lobbying and advocacy	7.3	7.0	7.0
Maintaining trust and confidence of the community	7.3	7.0	7.1
Responsiveness of Council to local community needs	7.2	7.0	7.0
Maintenance and repair of sealed local roads	7.4	6.9	7.1

Satisfaction with the performance of Council:

Satisfaction with the overall performance of Melton City Council declined marginally this year, down one percentage point to 6.9 out of 10, which remained a "good" level of satisfaction.

This result was measurably lower than the metropolitan (3pts) and the unusually high western region councils' (7.6) averages, as recorded in the *Governing Melbourne* research conducted independently by Metropolis Research in January 2026 using the same methodology.

More than one-third (34% down from 39%) of respondents providing a score were "very satisfied" with Council's overall performance (rating satisfaction at eight or more out of 10), while seven percent (up from 6%) were dissatisfied (rating from zero to four).

There was some variation in satisfaction with Council's overall performance observed across the municipality and by respondent profile groups this year, as follows:

- ***Marginally to somewhat MORE satisfied than average*** – included respondents from Kurunjang, Melton precinct, and Cobblebank / Strathtulloh, respondents from rental households, new residents (less than one year in the city), and respondents from group households.
- ***Marginally to somewhat LESS satisfied than average*** – included respondents from Hillside, Harkness, and Taylors Hill, adults (aged 35 to 44 years), respondents from households with a member with disability, respondents from mortgagor households, respondents who had contacted Council in the last 12 months, respondents from two-parent families (youngest child aged under 5 years), respondents from one-parent families (with children of any age), and respondents who owned or managed a business in Melton.

The most common reasons why 52 respondents were "dissatisfied" with Council's overall performance included issues with Council support, governance, and performance (27 comments), various Council services and facilities (14 comments), and communication, consultation, and responsiveness (13 comments).

The average satisfaction with the six core aspects of governance and leadership remained stable again this year at 7.0 out of 10, which remained a "good" level of satisfaction. This result was somewhat (2%) lower than the metropolitan and western region councils' averages.

These results confirm that most respondents remain satisfied with Council's performance in meeting its environmental responsibilities (up 2pts to 7.6), advocacy on behalf of the community for local educational opportunities (up 1pt to 7.2), maintaining community trust and confidence (up 1pt to 7.1), making decisions in the interests of the community (stable at 7.0), responsiveness of Council to local community needs (stable at 7.0), representation, lobbying, and advocacy (stable at 7.0), opportunities offered by Council to engage or be consulted with on Council decisions (up 1pt to 7.0), and community consultation and engagement (down 1pt to 6.9).

Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with three statements about Melton City.

The average agreement with all three statements declined marginally to somewhat this year, including that Council infrastructure is equitable, inclusive, and accessible (down 2pts to 7.3), that Melton is a city that encourages and enables people to work, shop, and spend time locally (down 1pt to 7.2), and that Council is efficient and well run (down 2pts to 7.0).

Approximately half of the respondents providing a score "strongly agreed" with each of these three statements, while less than 10 percent "disagreed".

Satisfaction with Council's customer service delivery was at an "excellent" level, up four percentage points this year to an average satisfaction of 7.8 out of 10.

This result was marginally (1pt) higher than the historically high metropolitan average of 7.7.

The courtesy and professionalism of staff remained the aspect of customer service with the highest satisfaction, at 8.3 (up 4pts), which remains an "excellent" level.

By contrast, satisfaction with the speed and efficiency of service was the lowest rated aspect of customer service, at 7.3 (up 3pts), which was a "very good", up from a "good" level.

Satisfaction with planning for population growth by all levels of government declined measurably this year, down five percentage points to 6.6, although it remains at a "good" level. This result was measurably (10pts) lower than the growth area councils' average (7.6).

Satisfaction with the planning and development outcomes including maintaining local heritage and sites of significance (up 1pt to 7.4) and the appearance and quality of new developments (down 1pt to 7.3) remained essentially stable at historically high, and "very good" levels. Both of these results were similar to the metropolitan average (within 1pt).

The average satisfaction with the 31 Council provided services and facilities included in the survey increased marginally again this year, up one percentage point to 7.9 out of 10, which was an "excellent", up from a "very good" level, and identical to the metropolitan average.

This was the highest average satisfaction with Council delivery of services and facilities recorded for the City of Melton and was up seven percentage points (10%) from the low point of 7.2 out of 10 recorded in 2022 (at the tail end of the pandemic).

Satisfaction with 26 of the 32 services and facilities increased this year, and satisfaction with three declined, including:

- ***Notably HIGHER satisfaction this year*** – included parking enforcement (up 5pts), the provision and maintenance of playgrounds (4pts), and public toilets (4pts).
- ***Somewhat LOWER satisfaction this year –*** included services for people with disability (down 3pts by 57 respondents), regular recycling (2pts), and services for seniors (down 2pts by 68 respondents).



Metropolis Research notes that the average satisfaction with the 31 included services and facilities was 10 percentage points (up from 8pts) higher than satisfaction with Council's overall performance.

The 10-percentage point (14%) difference between average satisfaction with services (7.9) and overall satisfaction with Council (6.9) reflects well on the performance of the Melton City Council providing services and facilities to the community.

Further, satisfaction with all 31 Council provided services and facilities recorded satisfaction scores higher than the overall satisfaction with Council this year. This was the first year that this was observed for the City of Melton.

This implies that the delivery of services and facilities by Melton City Council was mostly a positive rather than a negative influence on overall satisfaction.

Satisfaction with sealed local roads (managed by Council) was measurably (4pts up from 3pts) higher than satisfaction with major arterial roads and highways (managed by VicRoads) (7.1 compared to 6.7).

There was significant variation in satisfaction with the 32 included services and facilities observed, as follows:

- ***Measurably HIGHER than average satisfaction*** - included the green waste collection, regular garbage collection, regular recycling, library services, and hard rubbish collection.
- ***Measurably LOWER than average satisfaction*** – included the maintenance and repair of major arterial roads (managed by VicRoads), local traffic management, the maintenance and repair of sealed local roads (managed by Council), public toilets, services for people with disability, and footpath maintenance and repairs.

Many of the services and facilities with the highest levels of satisfaction were also those with higher-than-average importance scores (i.e., received an average importance score measurably higher than the average of all services and facilities).

This shows that many of the services and facilities of most importance to the community are those with which the community was most satisfied.

There were no services to report a "solid", "poor", "very poor", or "extremely poor" level of satisfaction, reflecting the strong performance of Council providing services and facilities.

Issues to address for the City of Melton:

The main issues to address for the City of Melton were traffic management (17% down from 23%), roads including roadworks (13% down from 15%), and safety, policing, and crime related issues (12% down from 17%).

These were also the top three issues in 2025 and 2024.

The substantial proportion of respondents nominating traffic management and roads as the top issues to address for the City of Melton at the moment remains one of the significant results in the survey again this year.

This reinforces the importance of traffic and road related issues in the municipality and was in line with the measurably lower-than-metropolitan average satisfaction with local traffic management (6pts or 8% lower), the maintenance and repair of sealed local roads (managed by Council) (3pts lower), and the maintenance and repair of major arterial roads and highways (managed by VicRoads) (5pts lower).

The significant decrease in community concern around issues with safety, policing, and crime (12% down from 19%) was of note this year, although it remains at an elevated level. This issue was more prominent in the City of Melton than the metropolitan average, and higher than for many other municipalities. This issue was, however, less common in the City of Melton than in several neighbouring western region municipalities this year.

The most significant issues that were negatively related to overall satisfaction and likely to be exerting a negative influence on overall satisfaction were traffic management (135 respondents, 2 pts less satisfied), road including roadworks (101 respondents, 4pts less), and safety, policing, and crime related issues (93 respondents, 2pts less).

All three of these issues were, at least partly the responsibility of the state government, which may suggest that increased advocacy on behalf of the community in relation to these issues may be a positive influence on community satisfaction with the performance of Council.

A range of other issues were also negatively related to overall satisfaction for the smaller number of respondents who raised the issues.

These included the issues of Council customer service (12 respondents, 8pts less satisfied), general infrastructure such as internet (28 respondents, 7pts less), street trees (25 respondents, 6pts less), parks and gardens (51 respondents, 6pts less), and communication (15 respondents, 4pts less).

It is important to bear in mind, however, that these results reflect the views of the respondents who raised each of these issues and does not imply that these services are a negative influence on community satisfaction with the overall performance of Council for all or most respondents.

Community engagement consultation activities:

In 2026, 13% (up from 11%) of respondents reported that they had been involved in a community engagement activity in the past 12 months, with completing a Council survey, the most common method.

Local employment and educational opportunities:

Respondents were again in 2026, asked to rate the importance of and their satisfaction with the accessibility of local education and local job opportunities.

Both these aspects were considered extremely important with scores of approximately nine out of 10.

Satisfaction with local job opportunities declined measurably this year, down three percentage points to 6.6 out of 10, although it remained at a "good" level.

Satisfaction with the accessibility of local education increased somewhat this year, up two percentage points to 7.5, which remained "very good".

Perception of safety in the public areas of the City of Melton:

The perception of safety in the public areas of the City of Melton across 10 locations and situations all increased this year, somewhat reversing the decline recorded last year.

The perception of safety varied from a high of 7.9 (up from 7.7) in public areas during the day, to a low of 6.0 (up from 5.7) in public areas at night.

The stand-out improvement this year was the measurably (4pt) increase in the perception of safety at Lake Caroline at night.

The perception of safety in the public areas of the City of Melton at night was measurably (7pts down from 16pts) lower than the metropolitan average, which despite the significant reduction in the gap, remains a significant issue for the City of Melton.

Additionally, the City of Melton recorded the lowest perception of safety in public areas at night recorded by Metropolis Research in 2026, compared to 16 other municipalities.

In 2026, 24% (up from 18% last year) of respondents felt "very safe" in the public areas of the City of Melton at night, while 20% (down from 24%) felt "unsafe".

Female respondents felt measurably (4pts up from 2pts) less safe than male respondents.

Additional perception of safety variables were included in the survey again this year, including perception of safety at local community events (up 1pt to 7.4), at home alone after dark (up 1pt to 7.3), in and around local shopping areas (up 2pts to 7.2), in and around Caroline Springs Shopping Centre (stable at 7.2), travelling on / waiting for public transport (up 3pts to 7.2), in and around Woodgrove Shopping Centre (up 3pts to 7.1), in and around the Melton Town Centre (up 1pt to 7.1), and at Lake Caroline at night (up 4pts to 6.9).

The most common reasons for feeling unsafe were related to fear or experience of crime including theft, robbery, violence (62 comments), youth / youth crime (30 comments), police presence / lack of consequences (27 comments), drug and alcohol issues (21 comments), image / feel of place and news reports (18 comments), lighting issues (17 comments), general safety (15 comments), vandalism and anti-social behaviour (15 comments), and concerns around people (10 comments).

Sense of community:

There were 18 statements about aspects of the local sense of community and associated issues.

The average agreement with all 18 of these statements increased somewhat to measurably this year, reversing the declines recorded last year, with many at or near record high levels.

The average agreement with these statements were at strong to extremely strong levels of agreement.

Agreement varied from a high of 8.0 out of 10 that respondents could turn to the neighbours for help, and that Melton City Council respects, reflects, and is inclusive of our diverse community, to a low of 7.2 out of 10 that it's an active community, people do things and get involved in local issues.

Average commuting times:

Average commuting times increased again this year, with 66% (up from 46% in 2023) of respondents reporting that the commute to and from work took one hour or more, and 34% (down from 53% in 2023) reporting that it took less than one hour.

Food security:

In 2026, 117 of the 800 respondent households (14%) reported that their household had run out of food and couldn't afford to buy more at least once in the last 12 months. This result has increased significantly in recent years, up from an average of four percent (2015 to 2023), nine percent in 2024, 10% last year, to 14% this year.

Family violence:

In 2026, 19% (up from 15%) of respondents agreed that family violence was common in their community, 35% were neutral or could not say, and 47% (up from 43%) disagreed.

On average, respondents reported similar results to previous years as to whether they agreed or disagreed with five statements. 75% (up from 72%) of respondents disagreed that family violence can be excused if it is acceptable in the person's culture, and 64% (up from 58%) disagreed that women prefer men to be in charge of the relationship.

Volunteering:

In 2026, 18% (up from 14%) of respondents reported that they volunteer.

This includes 11 percent (up from 8%) who report that they volunteer locally, and seven percent (up from 6%) who report that they volunteer elsewhere.

Introduction

Metropolis Research was commissioned by Melton City Council to undertake this, its *Annual Community Satisfaction Survey*.

The survey has been designed to measure community satisfaction with a broad range of Council services and facilities as well as to measure community sentiment across a range of additional issues of concern in the municipality.

The *Community Satisfaction Survey* program comprises the following core components which are included each year:

- Satisfaction with Council's ***overall performance*** and ***change in performance***.
- Satisfaction with aspects of ***governance and leadership***.
- Importance of and satisfaction with a range of 32 ***Council services and facilities***.
- ***Issues of importance*** to address for the City of Melton "at the moment".
- Satisfaction with aspects of ***planning and housing development***.
- Community ***perception of safety*** in public areas of Melton.
- Satisfaction with Council's ***customer service performance***.
- Respondent profile.

In addition to these core components, *Community Satisfaction Survey* program includes questions exploring current issues of importance that reflect Council's current requirements. The 2026 survey includes questions related to the following issues:

- Local employment and educational opportunities
- Sense of community
- Average commuting time
- Food security
- Family violence
- Volunteering.

Rationale

The *Community Satisfaction Survey* has been designed to provide Council with a wide range of information covering community satisfaction, sentiment, and involvement.

The survey meets the requirements of Local Government Victoria (LGV) requirements by providing importance and satisfaction ratings for the core measures and satisfaction with Council's overall performance.

The survey is used by Council in meeting its legislative requirements, including reporting performance indicators against the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework and associated requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.*

The survey also assists Council in gauging achievement toward the delivery of the commitments contained within the Community Vision, Council and Wellbeing Plan, and other strategic plans of Council.

The survey questions were determined based on the need to maintain consistency with questions asked in previous surveys, and council's statutory reporting requirements.

The *Community Satisfaction Survey* provides an in-depth coverage of Council services and facilities as well as additional community issues and expectations.

This information is critical to informing Council of the attitudes, levels of satisfaction and issues facing the community in the City of Melton.

In addition, the *Community Satisfaction Survey* includes a range of demographic and socio-economic variables against which the results can be analysed including age structure, period of residence, language, gender, and household structure.

These variables have been included to facilitate in-depth analysis of the results of the survey by demographic profile and to ensure that the sample selected represents the underlying population of the City of Melton.

Methodology, response rate and statistical significance

The survey was conducted as a door-to-door interview style survey of a representative sample of 800 households drawn proportionally from across all the suburbs and localities that comprise the City of Melton.

The fieldwork for this survey was conducted from the 9th of May till the 17th of June 2026.

Trained Metropolis Research fieldwork staff conducted face-to-face interviews of approximately 15 to 20 minutes duration of a representative sample of randomly approached households (of all dwelling types).

This methodology has produced highly consistent results in terms of the demographic profile of respondents, obtaining a sample of respondents that more closely reflects the underlying population of the municipality than can be obtained using the alternative telephone methodology.

The sample was pre-weighted by suburb / locality population to ensure that each of the suburbs / localities contributed proportionally to the overall municipal result.

The final sample was then weighted by respondents' age and gender to reflect the age and gender profile of the City of Melton community, as reported in the 2021 *Census*.

This two-stage process ensured that the municipal results effectively reflect both the geographical and demographic makeup of the City of Melton community.

A total of 4,232 households were approached to participate in the survey. Of these households, 2,083 were unattended when approached, were therefore not invited to participate, and played no further part in the research.

A total of 1,349 refused the offer to participate in the research and 800 completed the survey.

This provides a response rate of 37% (down from 41%), and down significantly on the unusually high 53% recorded in 2023, but consistent with the 35% obtained in 2019 pre-pandemic, using the same door-to-door methodology.

The 95% confidence interval (margin of error) of these results is plus or minus 3.4% at the 50% level. In other words, if a yes / no question obtains a result of 50% yes, it is 95% certain that the true value of this result is within the range of 46.6% and 53.4%.

This is based on a total sample size of 800 respondents, and an underlying estimated population of the City of Melton of approximately 231,567 as of the 30th of June 2025.

The margin of error increases as the sample size decreases, such as for the precinct results, and the breakdown of results for individual age groups, genders, and other sub-groupings for which results are provided. Each separate result has a different margin of error based on its unique sample size and the actual result.

Governing Melbourne

Governing Melbourne is a service provided by Metropolis Research since 2010. *Governing Melbourne* included a sample of 800 respondents in 2026, drawn in equal numbers from all 31 metropolitan Melbourne municipalities.

Governing Melbourne provides an objective, consistent and reliable basis on which to compare the results of the survey. It is not intended to provide a "league table" for individual councils, rather to provide both a metropolitan and local region framework within which to understand these survey results.

This report provides some comparisons sourced from *Governing Melbourne* against the 31 of the metropolitan municipalities, the western region (i.e., Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley, and Wyndham), and the growth area councils (i.e., Cardinia, Casey, Hume, Knox, Melton, Whittlesea, and Wyndham).

Glossary of terms

Precinct

The results of this report are presented at both the municipal and precinct level. The term precinct is used by Metropolis Research to describe the sub-municipal areas for which results are presented, as agreed with officers of Council. The precinct boundaries are most often the sub-municipal areas as published on Council's *Community Profile*.

Measurable and statistically significant

A measurable difference is one where the difference between or change in results is sufficiently large to ensure that they are in fact different results, i.e., the difference is statistically significant. This is because survey results are subject to a margin of error or an area of uncertainty.

Significant result

Metropolis Research uses the term *significant result* to describe a change or difference between results that Metropolis Research believes to be of sufficient magnitude that they may impact on relevant aspects of policy development, service delivery and the evaluation of performance and are therefore identified and noted as significant or important.

Marginal / somewhat / notable

Metropolis Research will describe some results or changes in results as being marginally, somewhat, or notably higher or lower. These are not statistical terms, rather they are interpretive. They are used to draw attention to results that may be of interest or relevant to policy development and service delivery.

In order of significance, "marginal" is the least significant, followed by "somewhat", and with "notable" the most significant of the subjective terms used to describe variations that were not statistically significant.

These terms are often used for results that may not be statistically significant due to sample size or other factors but may nonetheless provide some insight into the variation in community sentiment across the municipality or between groups within the community, or in changes in results over time.

95% confidence interval

Average satisfaction results are presented in this report with a 95% confidence interval included. These figures reflect the range of values within which it is 95% certain that the true average satisfaction falls.

The 95% confidence interval based on a one-sample t-test is used for the mean scores presented in this report. The margin of error around the other results in this report at the municipal level is plus or minus 3.4%.

Satisfaction categories

Metropolis Research typically categorises satisfaction results to assist in the understanding and interpretation of the results.

Metropolis Research has worked primarily with local government and developed these categories as a guide to satisfaction with the performance of local government across a wide range of service delivery and policy related areas of Council responsibility.

The scores presented in the report are designed to give a general context about satisfaction with variables in this report, and are defined as follows:

- ***Excellent -*** scores of 7.75 and above are categorised as excellent.
- ***Very good -*** scores of 7.25 to less than 7.75 are categorised as very good.
- ***Good -*** scores of 6.5 to less than 7.25 are categorised as good.
- ***Solid -*** scores of 6 to less than 6.5 are categorised as solid.
- ***Poor -*** scores of 5.5 to less than 6 are categorised as poor.
- ***Very Poor -*** scores of 5 to less than 5.5 are categorised as very poor.
- ***Extremely Poor*** – scores of less than 5 are categorised as extremely poor.

Precincts

This report provides results at both the municipal and precinct level.

The precincts are consistent with those used for the *Melton Community Profile* as available via Council's website.

The precincts used in this report are as follows:

- ***Melton Township precincts*** – includes the precincts of Melton precinct (32 respondents), Melton West (34), Kurunjang (41), Melton South / Brookfield (99), and Harkness (52).
- ***Eastern Corridor precincts*** – includes the precincts of Burnside / Burnside Heights (48), Caroline Springs (96), Hillside (64), Taylors Hill (63), Cobblebank / Strathtulloh (39), and Fraser Rise (51).
- ***Rural and other location precincts*** - includes Diggers Rest and surrounds including Toolern Vale (25), and the 'other precinct' (156) which includes Aintree, Bonnie Brook, Deanside, Exford, Fieldstone, Grangefields, Ravenhall, Thornhill Park, Weir Views, Mount Cottrell, Truganina, Eynesbury, and Rockbank.

Council's overall performance

Respondents were asked:

"On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), can you please rate your satisfaction with the performance of Council across all areas of responsibility?"

Satisfaction with the performance of Melton City Council across all areas of responsibility (overall performance) declined marginally this year, down one percentage point to 6.9 out of 10.

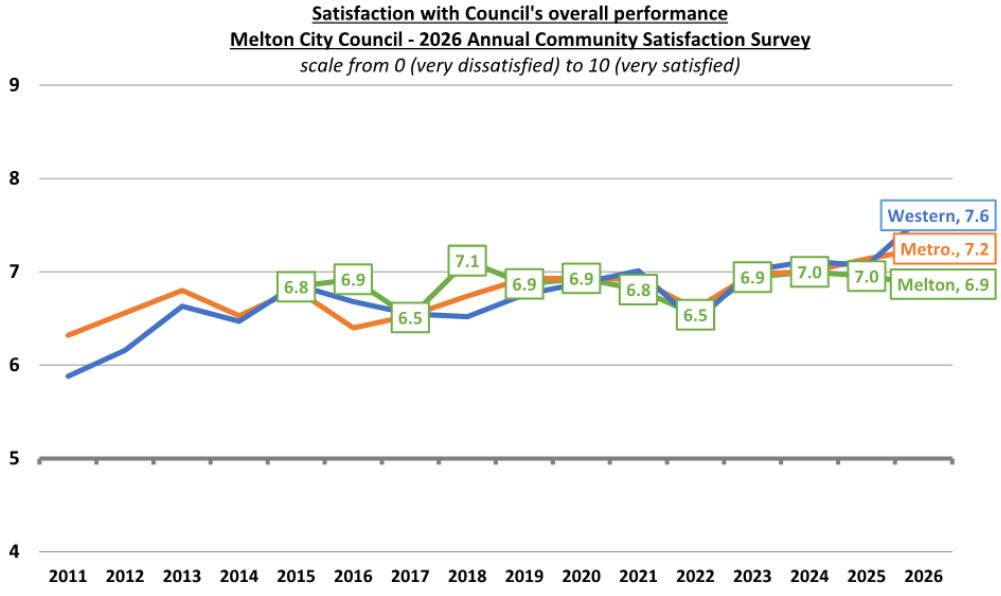
This remains a "good" level of satisfaction, and identical to the long-term average satisfaction since 2015 of 6.9.

By way of comparison, this result was measurably (3pts or 4%) lower than the metropolitan average of 7.2, and seven percentage points lower than the unusually high western region councils' average of 7.6 or "very good", as recorded in the 2026 *Governing Melbourne*.

Governing Melbourne was conducted independently by Metropolis Research in January 2026, using the same door-to-door, in-person interview methodology.

This result continues a longer term of consistent satisfaction with the performance of Melton City Council over the course of the 12 years of the survey program, apart from the unusually low results of 6.5 out of 10 recorded in 2017 and 2022.

Both of these years were unusual for a variety of reasons including the pandemic in 2022, and safety and crime related concerns in 2017. The metropolitan average satisfaction, as recorded in *Governing Melbourne*, also declined measurably in both years.



The following graph provides a breakdown of these results into the proportion of respondents (providing a score) who were "very satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at eight or more out of 10), those who were "neutral to somewhat satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at five to seven), and those who were "dissatisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at less than five out of 10).

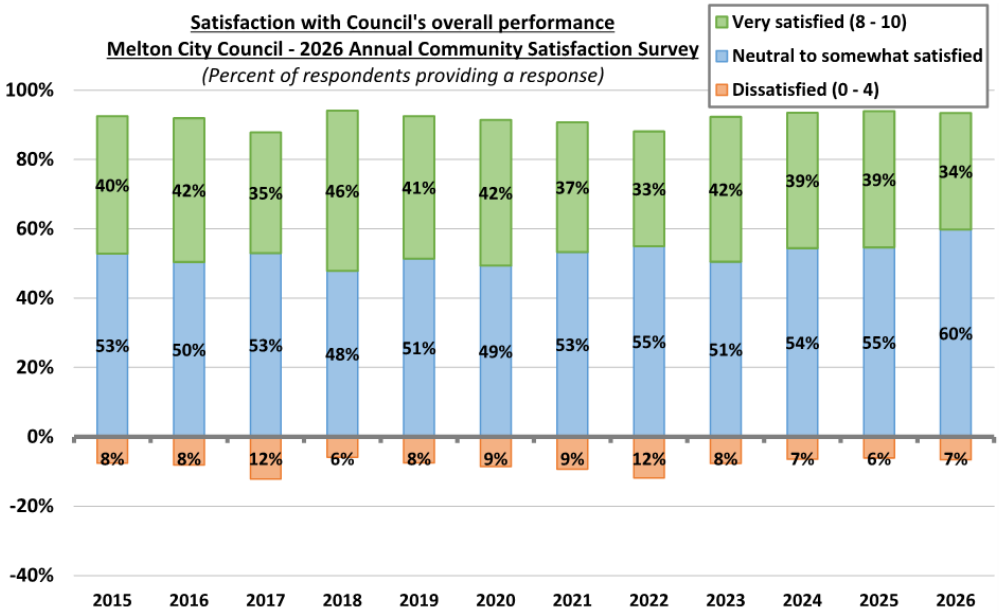
Consistent with the marginal decline in average satisfaction, there was a notable (5pt) decline in the proportion of respondents who were "very satisfied" with Council's overall performance, and a marginal (1pt) increase in the proportion who were "dissatisfied".

The long-term average proportion of "very satisfied" respondents from 2015 was 39%, while the long-term average proportion of "dissatisfied" respondents was eight percent.

These results reinforce the consistency of community satisfaction with the performance of Melton City Council over the last 12 years.

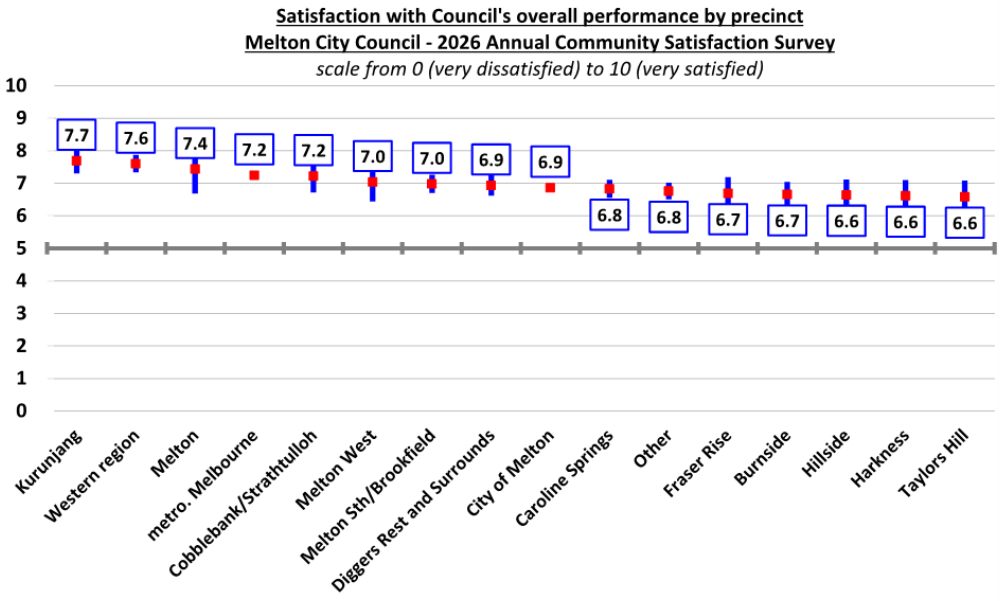
This includes that in just two of the last 12 years were more than 10% of respondents (who provided a score) "dissatisfied" with Council's overall performance, and that in every one of the last 12 years, at least one-third of respondents were "very satisfied".

Metropolis Research notes that it has historically been unusual for less than five percent of respondents to be "dissatisfied" with the performance of their local council, and that the 2026 metropolitan Melbourne average was five percent.

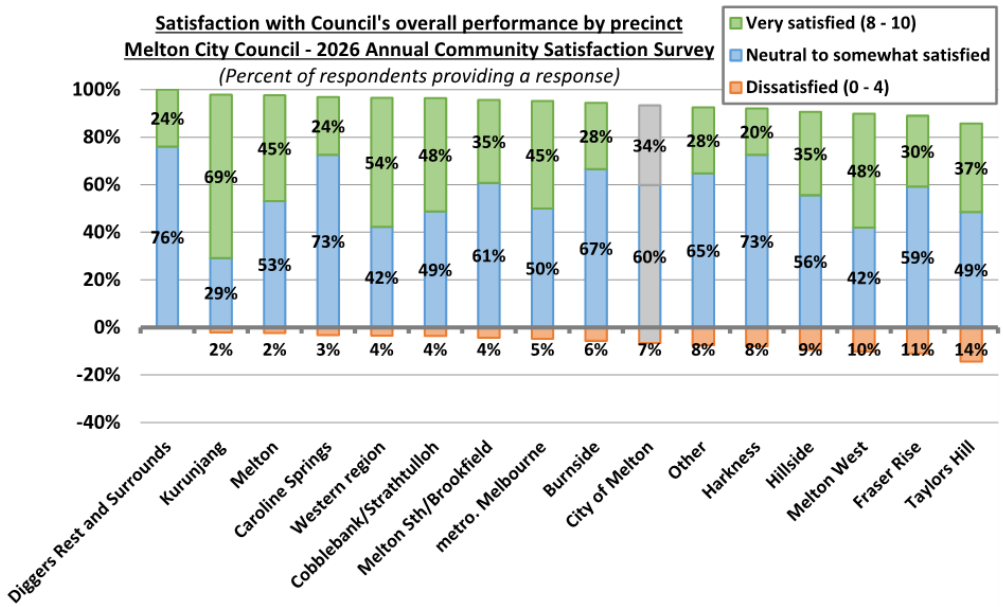


There was some measurable variation in satisfaction with Council's overall performance observed across the municipality, with respondents from Kurunjang measurably (8pts) and respondents from Melton precinct notably (5pts) more satisfied than average, and at "very good" levels.

These results reinforce the consistency of overall satisfaction with Melton City Council, with respondents from 11 of the 13 precincts rating satisfaction at "good" levels, and within three percentage points of the municipal average of 6.9 out of 10.



Two-thirds (69%) of respondents from Kurunjang and almost half (48%) of respondents from Cobblebank / Strathtulloh and Melton West were "very satisfied" with Council's overall performance. By contrast, at least 10% of respondents from Melton West (10%), Fraser Rise (11%), and Taylors Hill (14%) were "dissatisfied".



Overall performance by respondent profile

The following section provides a comparison of satisfaction with Council's overall performance by respondent profile, including age structure, gender, language spoken at home, household disability status, housing situation, period of residence in the City of Melton, whether or not a business owner or manager in the City of Melton, and household structure.

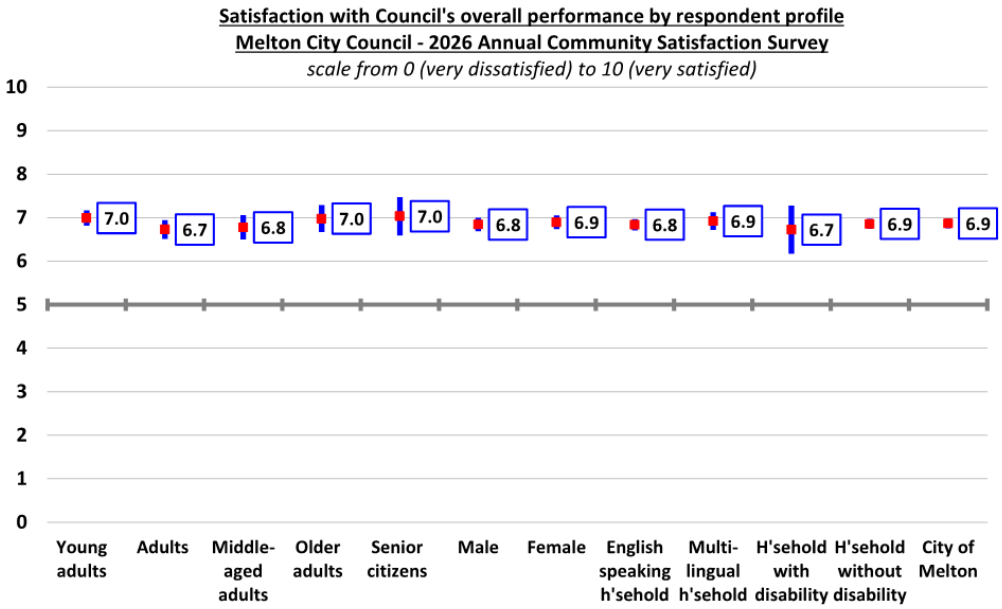
There was no measurable variation in satisfaction with Council's overall performance observed by respondent profile, which again reinforces the consistent level of satisfaction with Melton City Council observed across the community.

Metropolis Research notes that it is unusual for satisfaction with overall performance to be as consistent across the community as has been recorded for the City of Melton in recent years.

This was a positive result as less variation in satisfaction is preferable to more variation in satisfaction, as local government aims to provide consistent, high level service delivery across the entire, diverse local communities.

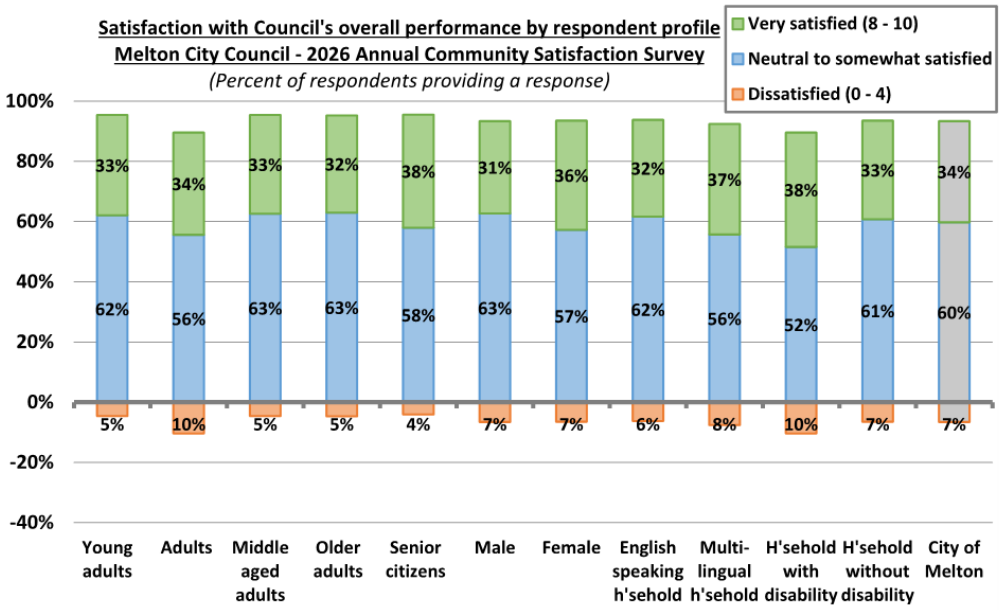
There was, however, some minor variation in satisfaction observed, as follows:

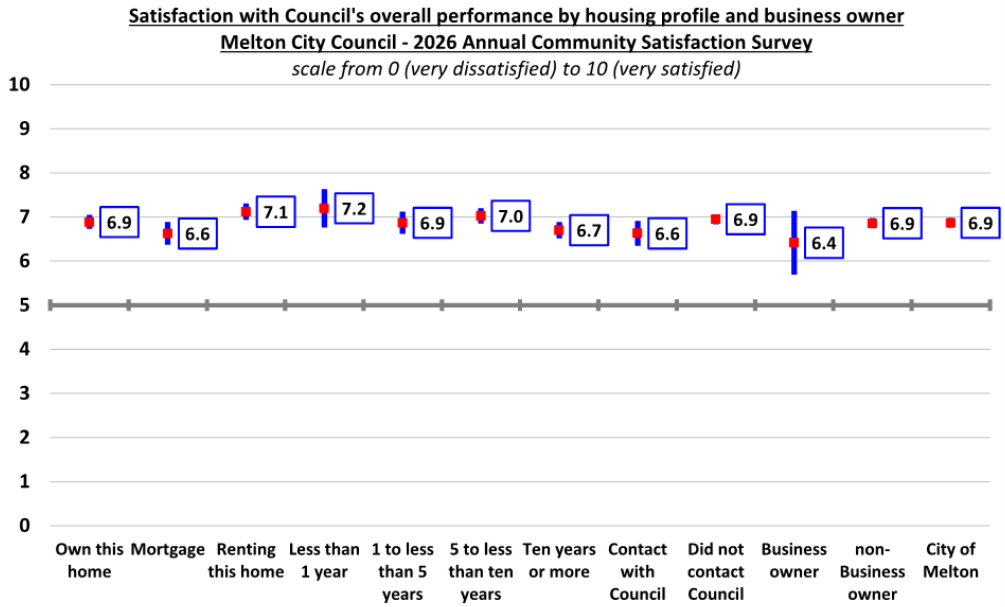
- ***Marginally to somewhat MORE satisfied than average*** – included respondents from rental households, new residents (less than one year in the city), and respondents from group households.
- ***Marginally to somewhat LESS satisfied than average*** – included adults (aged 35 to 44 years), respondents from households with a member with disability, respondents from mortgagor households, respondents who had contacted Council in the last 12 months, respondents from two-parent families (youngest child aged under 5 years), respondents from one-parent families (with children of any age), and respondents who owned or managed a business in Melton.



Approximately one-third of respondents from all age groups, gender, language spoken at home, and household disability status were "very satisfied" with Council's overall performance.

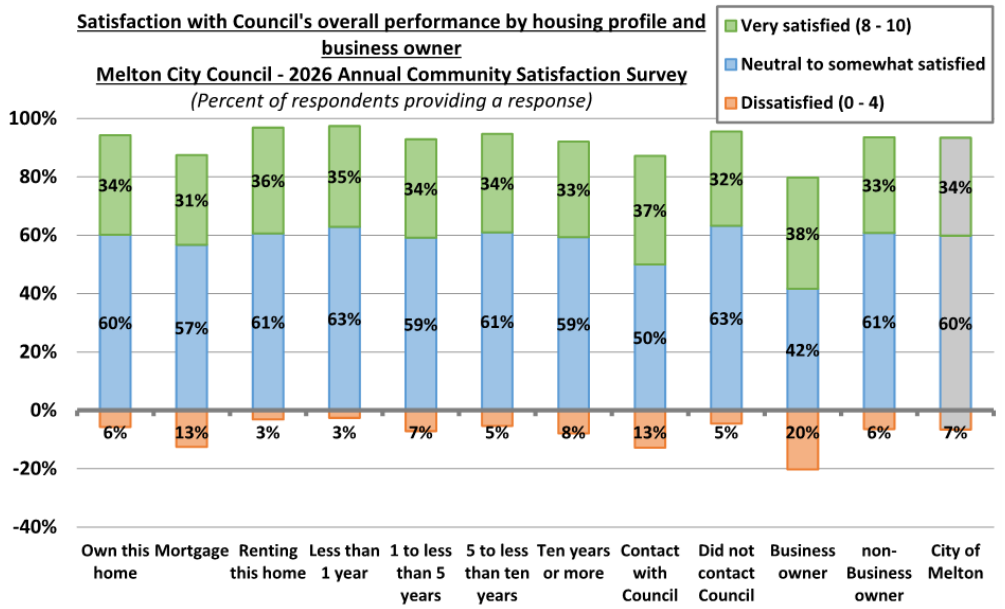
By contrast, 10% of adults (aged 35 to 44 years) and respondents from households with a member with disability were "dissatisfied".

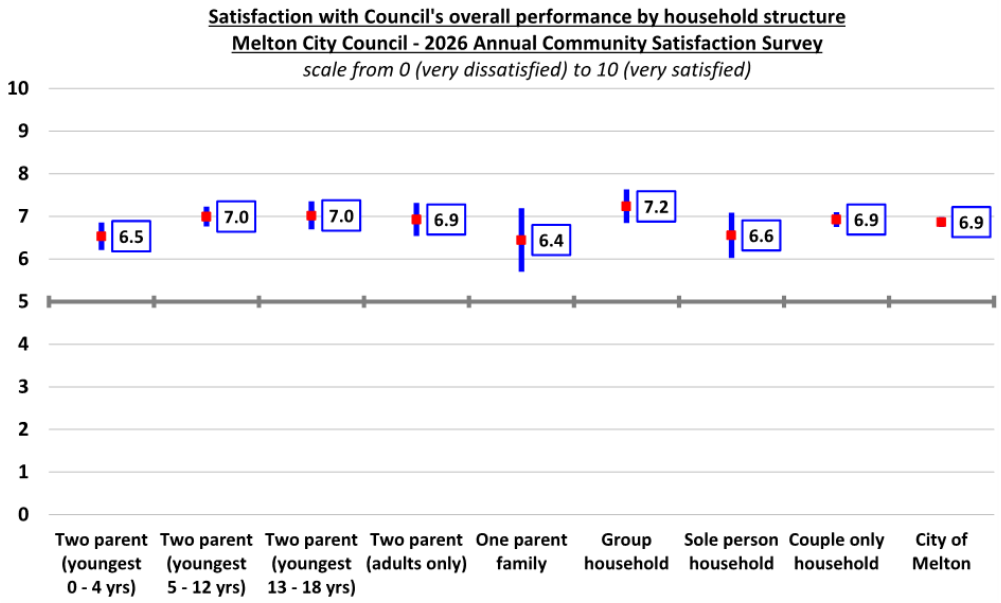




Approximately one-third of respondents from all housing situations, period of residence in the city, contact with Council, and local business owner / manager status were "very satisfied" with Council's overall performance.

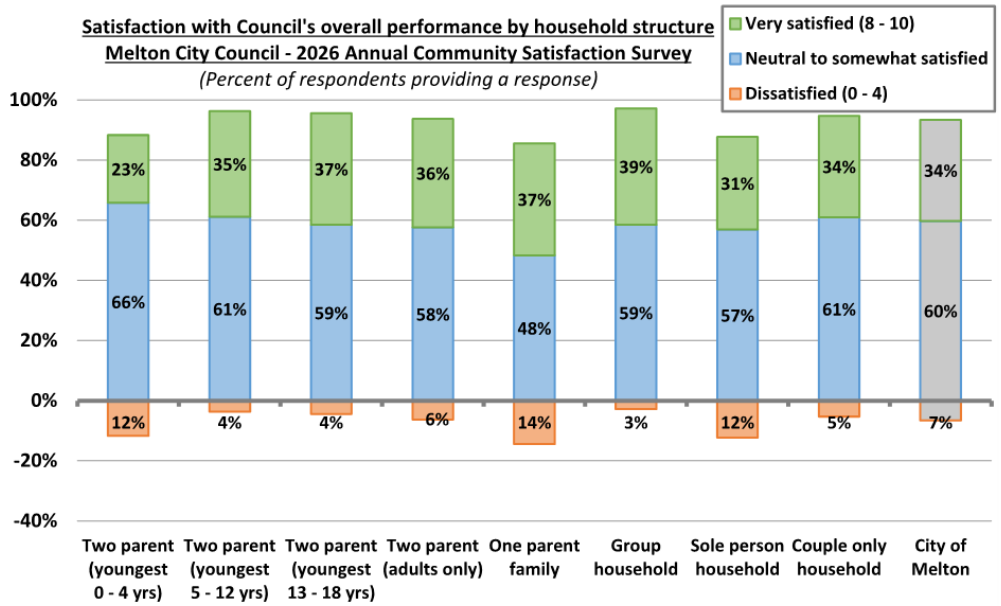
By contrast, 20% of business owners / managers, and 13% of respondents from mortgagor household and respondents who had contacted Council in the last 12 months were "dissatisfied".





Apart from respondents from two-parent families (youngest child aged under 5 years), approximately one-third of respondents from all other household structures were "very satisfied" with Council's overall performance.

By contrast, more than 10% of respondents from one-parent families (14%), two-parent families (youngest child aged under 5 years) (12%), and sole person households (12%) were "dissatisfied".

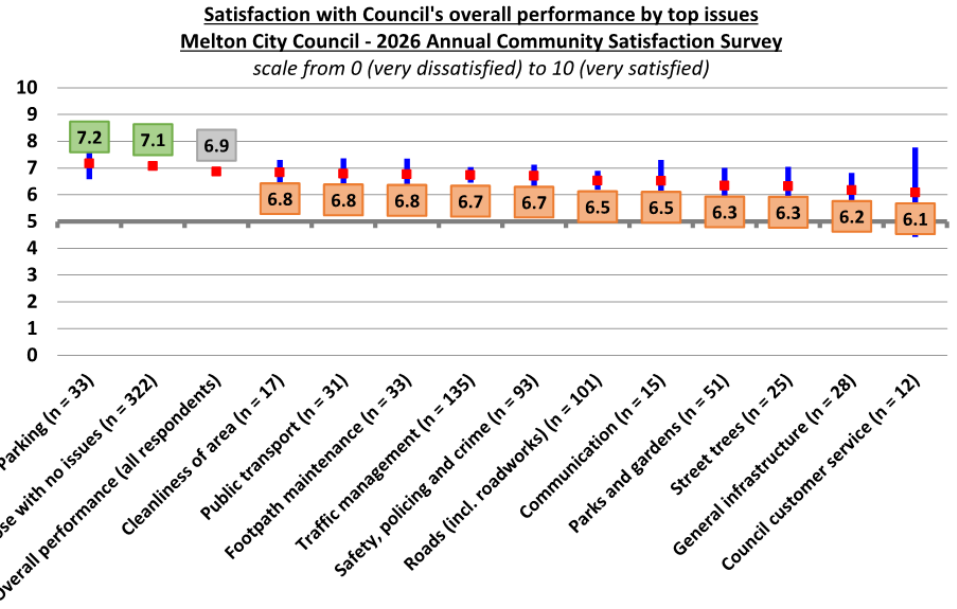


Relationship between issues and satisfaction with overall performance

The following graph displays the average overall satisfaction score for respondents nominating each of the top 12 issues to address for the City of Melton 'at the moment'.

The graph includes a comparison to the overall satisfaction score of all respondents (6.9), as well as to the overall satisfaction of the 322 respondents who did not nominate any issues to address (7.1).

The detailed analysis of the top issues to address in the City of Melton 'at the moment' is discussed in the Current Issues for the City of Melton section of this report.



The aim of this data is to explore the relationship between the issues raised by respondents and their satisfaction with Council's overall performance.

The data does not prove a causal relationship between the issue and satisfaction with Council's overall performance but does provide meaningful insight into whether these issues are likely to be exerting a positive or negative influence on these respondents' satisfaction with Council's overall performance.

Clearly the number of respondents nominating each of these issues varies substantially, which is reflected in the size of the blue vertical bars (the 95% confidence interval).

The 322 (up from 256) respondents who did not raise any issues that they felt needed to be addressed in the municipality, recorded marginally (2pts) higher overall satisfaction with Council than the municipal average of all respondents.

This result was observed in previous years for the City of Melton and is a somewhat unusual result.

Metropolis Research has typically observed over many years across metropolitan Melbourne and elsewhere in Victoria and Tasmania, that those in the community who cannot think of any issues that they feel need to be addressed will, on average, be more satisfied with their local council than those who do have issues that they feel need to be addressed.

There was a range of issues that were negatively related to overall satisfaction (for the respondents who raise the issues).

The most significant issues that were negatively related to overall satisfaction and likely to be exerting a negative influence on overall satisfaction were traffic management (135 respondents, 2 pts less satisfied), road including roadworks (101 respondents, 4pts less), and safety, policing, and crime related issues (93 respondents, 2pts less).

Metropolis Research notes that all three of these issues (traffic management, roads, and safety and crime) were, at least in part, the responsibility of the state government rather than local government.

This result suggests that attention to advocacy on behalf of the City of Melton community in relation to roads, as well as traffic management (i.e., traffic congestion and commuting) and safety, policing, and crime-related issues may well have a positive impact on community satisfaction with the performance of Council.

A range of other issues were also negatively related to overall satisfaction for the smaller number of respondents who raised the issues.

These included the issues of Council customer service (12 respondents, 8pts less satisfied), general infrastructure such as internet (28 respondents, 7pts less), street trees (25 respondents, 6pts less), parks and gardens (51 respondents, 6pts less), and communication (15 respondents, 4pts less).

The following table provides an alternative method of exploring the relationship between issues to address for the City of Melton and satisfaction with Council's overall performance.

It is important to bear in mind that just 51 respondents were "dissatisfied" with Council's overall performance, and only 43 of these "dissatisfied" respondents provided an issue to address.

The table displays the proportion of respondents who were dissatisfied with Council's overall performance and who nominated each of the top 15 issues, with a comparison to the proportion of all respondents who nominated each of these issues.

These results highlight the fact that respondents who were "dissatisfied" with Council's overall performance were more likely than average to nominate almost all of these 15 issues, particularly roads (25% compared to 13%), safety, policing, and crime (21% compared to 12%), Council governance and performance (17% compared to 2%), and parks and gardens (15% compared to 6%).

These results reinforce the average satisfaction results discussed above and highlight the degree to which these issues appear to influence community satisfaction with Council.

Top issues for Melton of respondents' dissatisfied with overall performance
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of total respondents who dissatisfied with overall performance)

Issue	*Dissatisfied respondents*		*All respondents*
	Number	*Percent*	
Roads *(including roadworks)*	13	25%	13%
Traffic management	12	23%	17%
Safety, policing and crime	11	21%	12%
Council governance and performance	9	17%	2%
Parks, gardens and open spaces	8	15%	6%
General infrastructure *(e.g. internet, electricity)*	5	10%	4%
Footpath maintenance and repairs	3	6%	4%
Community services quality and provision	3	6%	1%
Council customer service / responsiveness	3	6%	2%
Parking	2	4%	4%
Public transport	2	4%	4%
Street trees	2	4%	3%
Retail and hospitality	2	4%	1%
Education and schools	1	2%	1%
Drains maintenance and repairs	1	2%	0%
All other issues *(33 separately identified issues)*	15	29%	28%
Total responses	**92**		**797**
Respondents identifying at least one issue	*43*		*478*
(percent of total respondents)	*(83%)*		*(60%)*

Reasons for dissatisfaction with Council's overall performance

Respondents dissatisfied with Council's overall performance were asked:

"If satisfaction with Council's overall performance rated less than 5, why do you say that?"

The following table outlines the 70 (up from 47) reasons for dissatisfaction provided by the 52 respondents who were "dissatisfied" with Council's overall performance.

There were more comments again this year related to issues with Council support, governance, and performance (27 comments, up from 16 last year and 8 in 2024).

Comments around specific Council services and facilities (14 down from 15 comments), communication, consultation, and responsiveness (13 up from 7 comments) the most common issues raised by "dissatisfied" respondents.

There were also several comments around cleanliness and maintenance (4 comments), rates and money (4 comments), and roads (4 comments).

Reasons for dissatisfaction with Council's overall performance
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of responses from respondents rating satisfaction less than 5 out of 10)

Comment	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*
	Number	*Percent*				
Council support, governance, performance	27	39%	34%	11%	19%	16%
Service and facilities	14	20%	32%	34%	40%	23%
Communication, consultation, responsiveness	13	19%	15%	14%	19%	20%
Cleanliness and maintenance	4	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Rates and money spending	4	6%	6%	12%	3%	11%
Roads	4	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Public transport, traffic and parking	2	3%	9%	22%	14%	19%
Safety and crime	1	1%	0%	3%	1%	2%
Other	1	1%	4%	4%	4%	10%
Total	**70**	**100%**	**47**	**73**	**73**	**113**

Governance and leadership

Respondents were asked:

"On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), can you please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of Council's governance and leadership?"

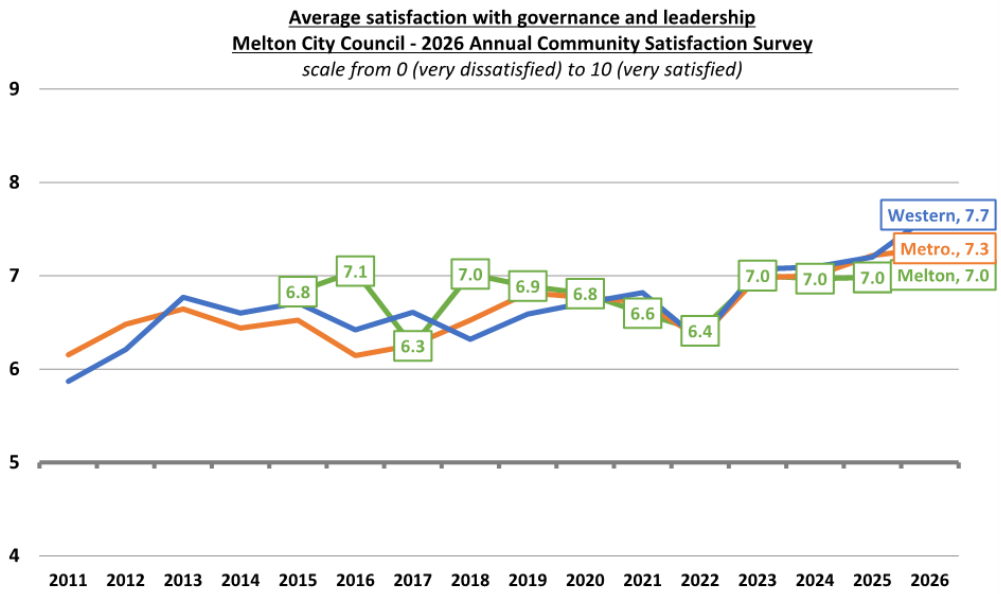
Respondents were again in 2026, asked to rate their satisfaction with eight aspects of governance and leadership.

Six of the eight aspects are considered the core aspects of governance and leadership (representation, making decisions, maintaining trust, responsiveness, consultation and engagement, and opportunities to participate in consultations).

The average satisfaction with the six core measures of governance and leadership remained stable this year at 7.0 out of 10, or a "good" level of satisfaction.

This result was measurably lower than the metropolitan (3pts) and western region councils' (7pts) average satisfaction with the same six aspects of governance and leadership, as recorded in the 2026 *Governing Melbourne* research.

Governing Melbourne was conducted independently by Metropolis Research in January 2026 using the same in-person, door-to-door methodology.



There were eight individual aspects of governance and leadership included in the survey this year.

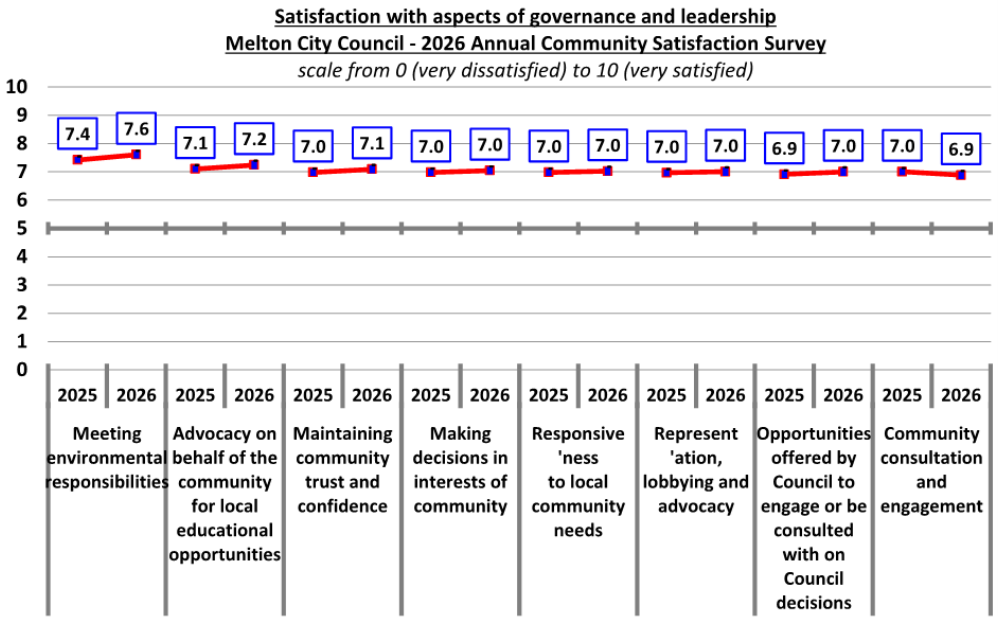
There was an increase in satisfaction with Council performance meeting its responsibilities towards the environment (up 2pts), advocacy on behalf of the community for local educational opportunities (up 1pt), performance maintaining community trust and confidence (up 1pt), and the opportunities provided by Council to engage or be consulted with on Council decisions (up 1pt).

The average satisfaction with three of the eight aspects of governance and leadership remained stable this year.

There was, however, a marginal (1pt) decline in satisfaction with Council's community consultation and engagement performance.

It does appear that the substantial increase in satisfaction with governance and leadership for the City of Melton recorded back in 2023 has continued to be maintained again this year.

Again in 2026, satisfaction with most of these aspects of governance and leadership remained at or very near historically high levels for the City of Melton.



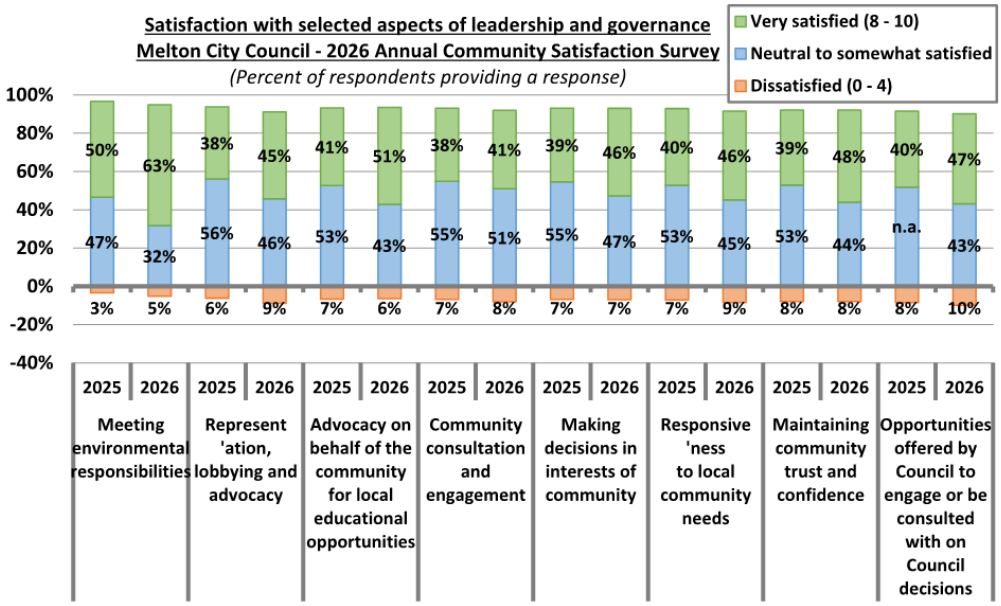
The following graph provides a breakdown of these results into the proportion of respondents (providing a score) who were "very satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at eight or more out of 10), those who were "neutral to somewhat satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at five to seven), and those who were "dissatisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at less than five out of 10).

There was a notable increase this year, in the proportion of respondents (who provided a score) who were "very satisfied" with each aspect of governance and leadership, with the stand-out result being for Council performance meeting its responsibilities towards the environment (up 13pts to 63%), advocacy on behalf of the community for local educational opportunities (up 10 pts to 51%), and Council performance maintaining the trust and confidence of the local community (up 9pts to 48%).

There was not, however, a notable decrease in the proportion of respondents who were "dissatisfied" with these aspects of Council performance, with a small increase in the proportion of respondents "dissatisfied" with five of the eight aspects.

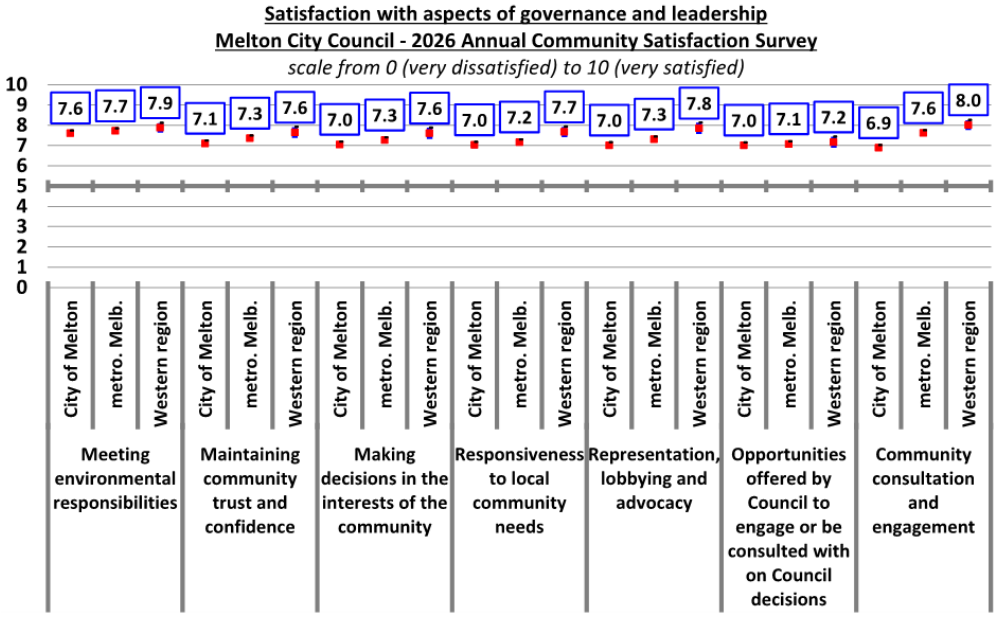
These results, both the average satisfaction and the raw satisfaction results reflect a steady level of satisfaction with Melton City Council's governance and leadership performance at or near record high levels.

Between approximately half and two-thirds of respondents were "very satisfied" with each aspect of governance and leadership this year, while no more than 10% of respondents were "dissatisfied".



The following graph provides a comparison of satisfaction with seven of the eight aspects of governance and leadership against the western region councils and the metropolitan Melbourne average, as recorded in the 2026 *Governing Melbourne* research.

Satisfaction with each of the aspects of governance and leadership was lower than the metropolitan average.



The largest underperformance recorded for Council's community consultation and engagement performance, which was seven percentage points (9%) lower than the metropolitan average.

This was consistent with the result recorded in each of the last four years, over which time the City of Melton satisfaction with community consultation and engagement was five percentage points lower than the metropolitan average.

Statements about Melton City Council

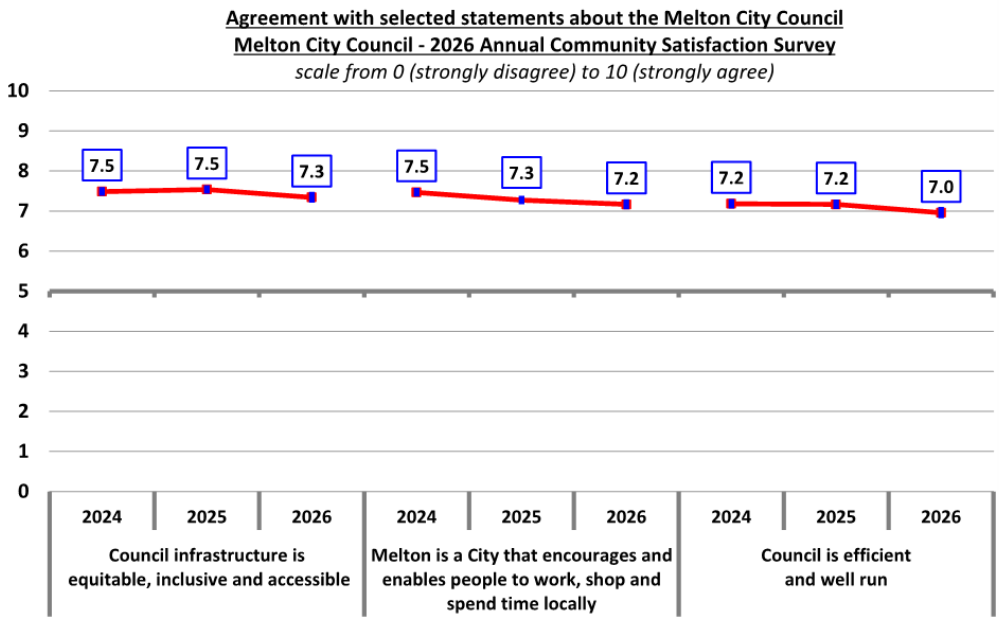
Respondents were asked:

"On a scale of 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree), please rate your agreement with the following statements about the Melton City Council."

Respondents were again in 2026, asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with three statements about Melton City Council as an organisation.

The average agreement with all three statements declined somewhat this year.

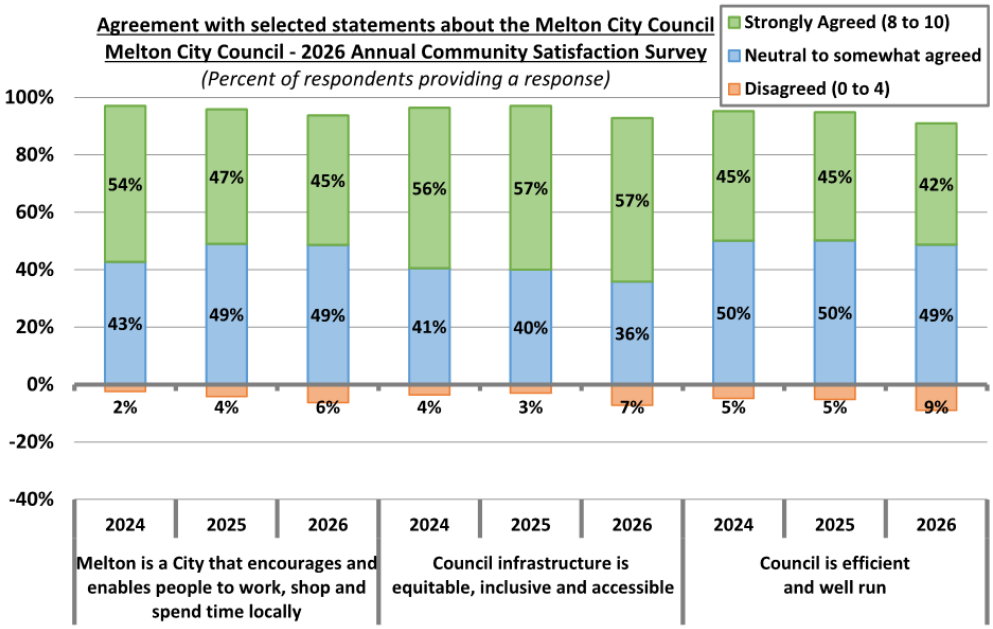
The average agreement with all three statements can, however, still best be summarised as "strong" agreement with scores of at least seven out of 10, consistent with the results recorded in recent years.



The following graph provides a breakdown of these results into the proportion of respondents who "strongly agreed" (i.e., rated agreement at eight or more), those who were "neutral to somewhat agreed" (i.e., rated agreement at five to seven), and those who "disagreed" (i.e., rated agreement at less than five).

It is noted that approximately half of the respondents providing an agreement score "strongly agreed" (i.e., rated agreement at eight or more) with each statement, with the lowest being the 42% of respondents who "strongly agreed" that Council is efficient and well run.

Less than 10 percent "disagreed" (i.e., rated agreement at less than five) with any of the three statements, with nine percent "disagreeing" that Council is efficient and well run.



Customer service

Contact with Council in the last twelve months:

Respondents were asked:

"Have you contacted Melton City Council in the last 12 months?"

In 2026, 25% (up from 27%) of respondents reported that they had contacted Council in the last 12 months.

This was the lowest proportion of respondents reporting that they had contacted Council in the last 12 months recorded over the 12 years of the survey program.

This result also remained significantly below the long-term average result since 2012 of 36%.

This result was still, however, marginally higher than the metropolitan average of 22%, as recorded in the 2026 *Governing Melbourne* research.

Contacted Council in the last 12 months
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
Yes	203	25%	27%	28%	27%	40%	35%
No	596	75%	73%	72%	73%	60%	66%
Not stated	1		9	2	7	9	0
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

Forms of contact

Respondents who had contacted Council were asked:

"When you last contacted Council, was it… (via telephone / email / the website / in person, etc.,)?"

Consistent with the results recorded in recent years, approximately two-thirds (67% up from 65%) of the 203 respondents who had contacted Council in the last 12 months reported that they did so by telephone during office hours.

A significant proportion of respondents reported that they contacted Council by email (stable at 12%), and via the website (12% down from 14%).

Consistent with results during the post-pandemic period, just six percent of respondents reported that they visited Council in person.

These results reflect a new, post-pandemic norm of community interaction with Council.

Form of last contact with Council
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents who contacting Council and providing a response)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
Telephone *(during office hours)*	135	67%	65%	59%	64%	64%	73%
Email	24	12%	12%	18%	10%	14%	14%
Website	24	12%	14%	7%	12%	8%	3%
Visit in person	13	6%	5%	9%	8%	10%	8%
Telephone *(after hours service)*	2	1%	0%	2%	4%	1%	0%
Mail	2	1%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Community Portal	2	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	n.a.
Visitor Information Centre / Pop-Up	1	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Social media	0	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Not stated	0		0	1	2	0	2
Total	**203**	**100%**	**211**	**221**	**219**	**318**	**276**

Satisfaction with Council's customer service

Respondents who had contacted Council were asked:

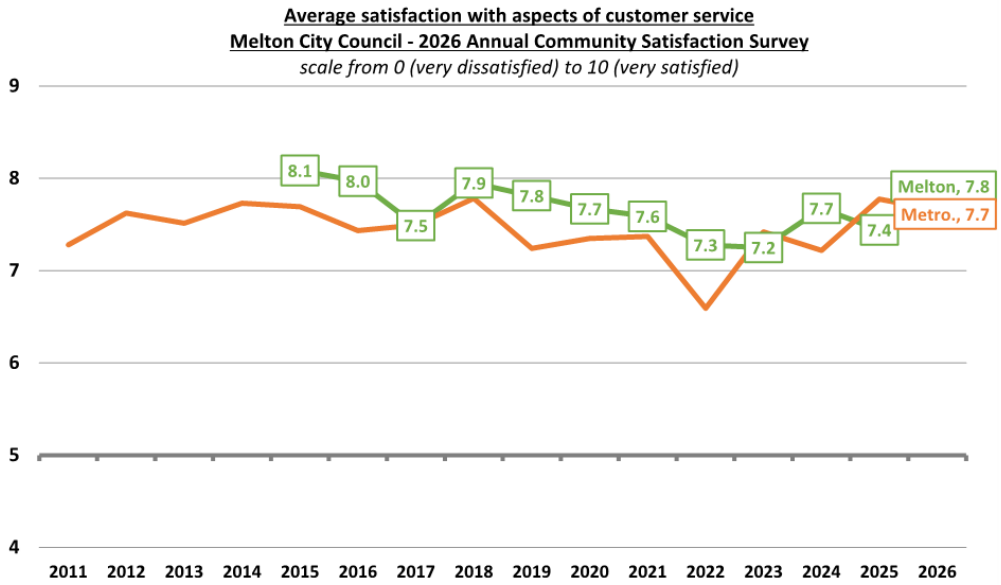
"On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), how satisfied were you with the following aspects of service when you last contacted the Melton City Council?"

The 203 respondents who had contacted Council in the last 12 months, were asked to rate their satisfaction with six aspects of customer service, including satisfaction with the final outcome.

The average satisfaction with the five aspects of customer service (excluding satisfaction with the final outcome) increased somewhat this year, up four percentage points to 7.8 out of 10, which was an "excellent", up from a "very good" level.

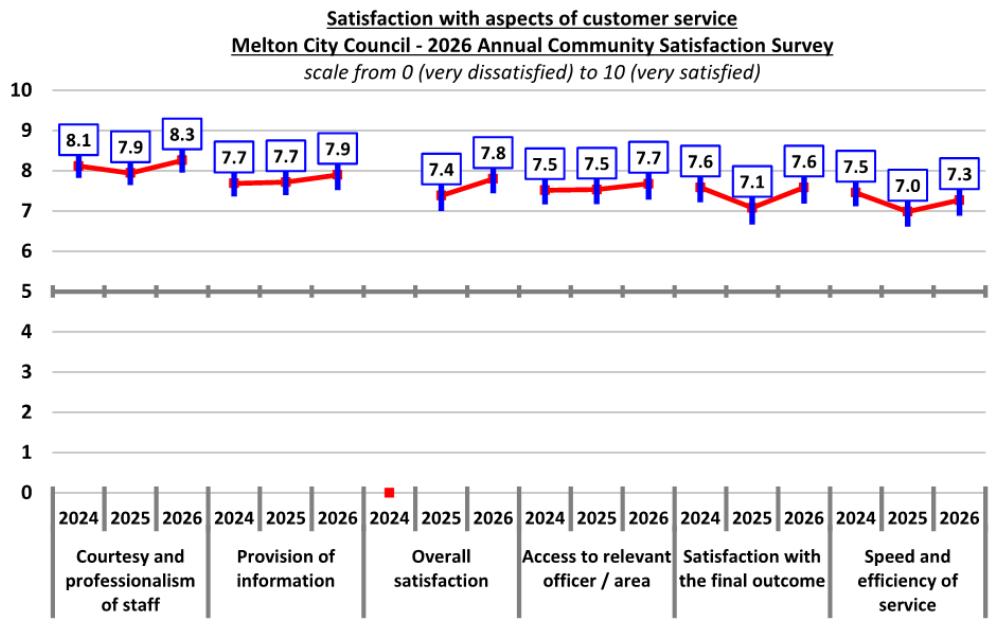
This result was the highest average satisfaction with customer service recorded for the City of Melton since 2019.

This result was almost identical to the metropolitan average satisfaction with the same five aspects of customer service (excluding satisfaction with the final outcome), which have also been at record high levels in recent years.



There were increases in satisfaction recorded for each of the six aspects of customer service, with the stand-out result being the five percentage point increase in satisfaction with the final outcome (7.6 up from 7.1), and the four percentage point increase in satisfaction with the courtesy and professionalism of staff (8.3 up from 7.9).

Satisfaction with staff courtesy and professionalism, the provision of information, and overall satisfaction with the customer service experience was "excellent", while satisfaction with the remaining three aspects categorised as "very good".

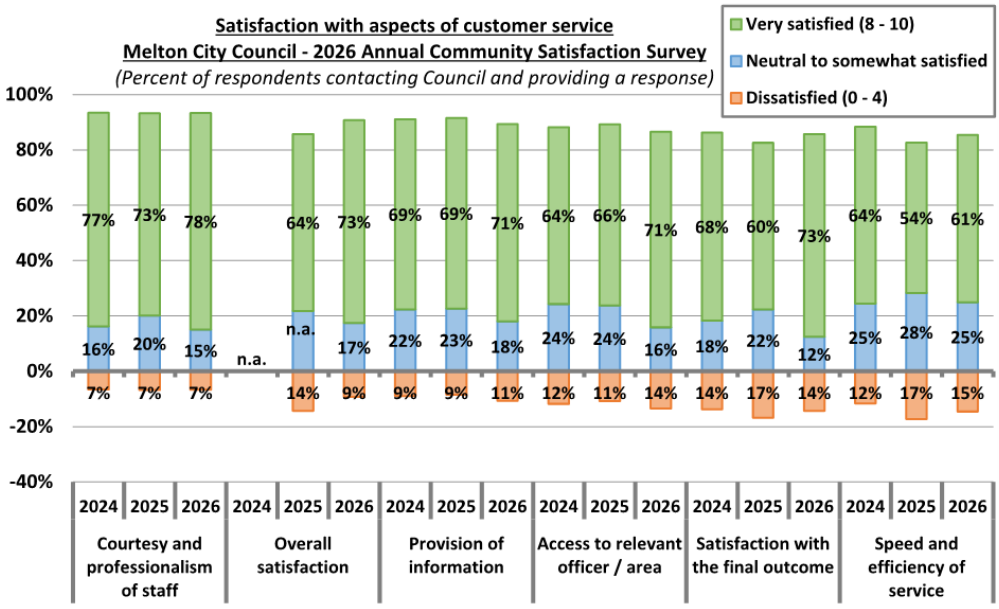


The following graph provides a breakdown of these results into the proportion of respondents (providing a score) who were "very satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at eight or more out of 10), those who were "neutral to somewhat satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at five to seven), and those who were "dissatisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at less than five out of 10).

Consistent with the increase in average satisfaction, there was an increase this year in the proportion of respondents "very satisfied" with each of the six aspects.

The stand-out result was the 13-percentage point increase in respondents "very satisfied" with the final outcome and the nine-percentage point increase in respondents "very satisfied" with the overall satisfaction with the customer service experience.

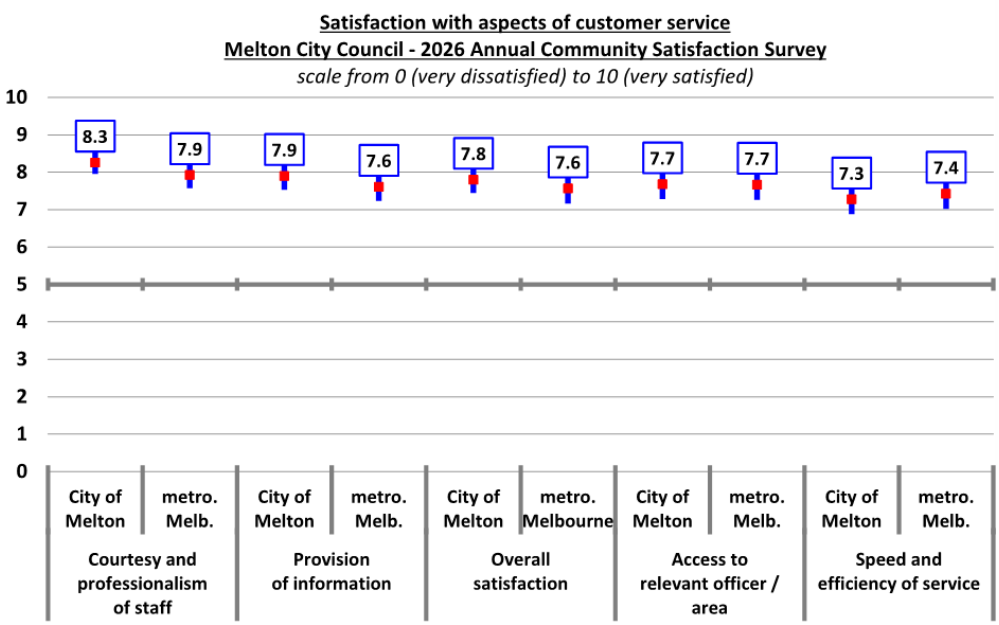
There remained a proportion of respondents "dissatisfied" with each aspect of customer service, including access to relevant officer / area (14% up from 11%), satisfaction with the final outcome (14% down from 17%), and the speed and efficiency of service (15% down from 17%).



The following graph provides a comparison of satisfaction against the metropolitan average, for the five aspects of customer service that were included in *Governing Melbourne*.

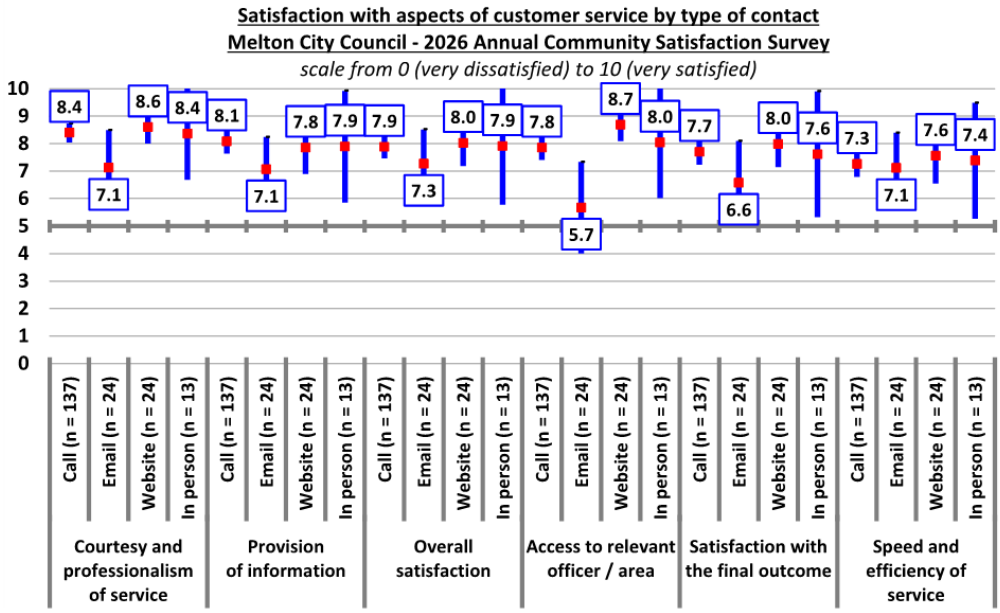
Satisfaction with the courtesy and professionalism of staff (4pts higher), the provision of information (3pts higher), and overall satisfaction with the customer service experience (2pts higher) were all higher in the City of Melton than the metropolitan average.

Satisfaction with access to relevant officer / area (identical), and the speed and efficiency of service (1pt lower) were almost identical to the metropolitan average.



The following graph provides a comparison of satisfaction with the six aspects of customer service between respondents who telephoned Council, visited the website, emailed Council, or visited in person.

While noting the small sample size for some of these results, it is noted that respondents who emailed Council, on average, reported lower levels of satisfaction with the aspects of customer service than respondents who telephoned Council or visited the website.



Planning for population growth by all levels of government

Respondents were informed that:

"The State Government has planned for the population of the City of Melton to double in size to more than 300,000 over the next 20 years. The responsibility for providing services, transport infrastructure, and facilities rests with both Council and the State Government."

Respondents were then asked:

"On a scale from 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), can you please rate your satisfaction with planning for population growth?"

Respondents were again in 2026, asked to rate their satisfaction with planning for population growth by all levels of government.

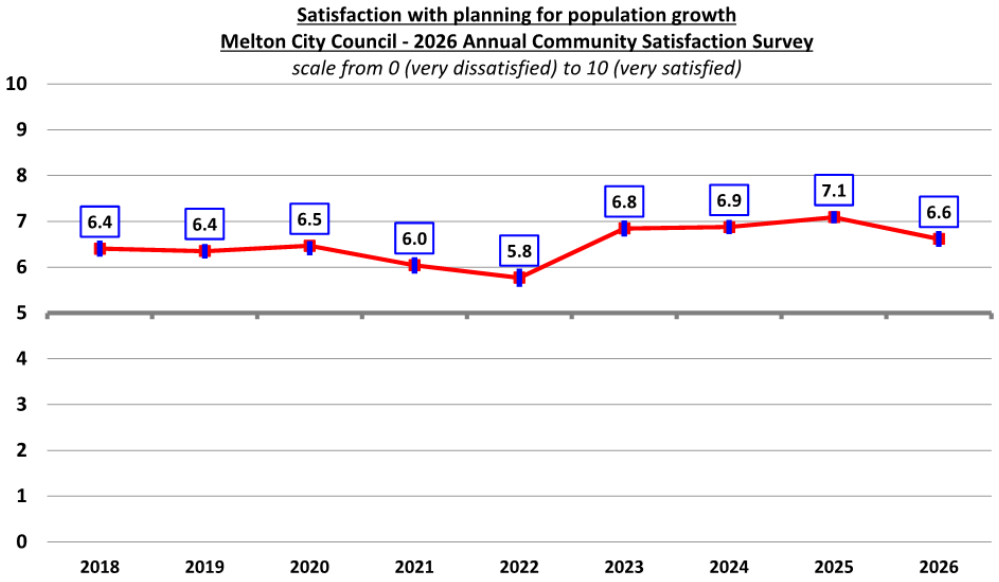
The question specifically references 'by all levels of government' in recognition that it is unreasonable to expect residents to have a detailed knowledge of the split of responsibilities in terms of planning for population growth between local and state government.

The average satisfaction with this aspect declined measurably this year, down five percentage points (7%) to 6.6 out of 10, although it remains at a "good" level.

This result reverses the three consecutive increases in satisfaction with planning for population growth recorded for the City of Melton and was almost identical (1pt) higher than the long-term average satisfaction since 2018 of 6.5 or "solid".

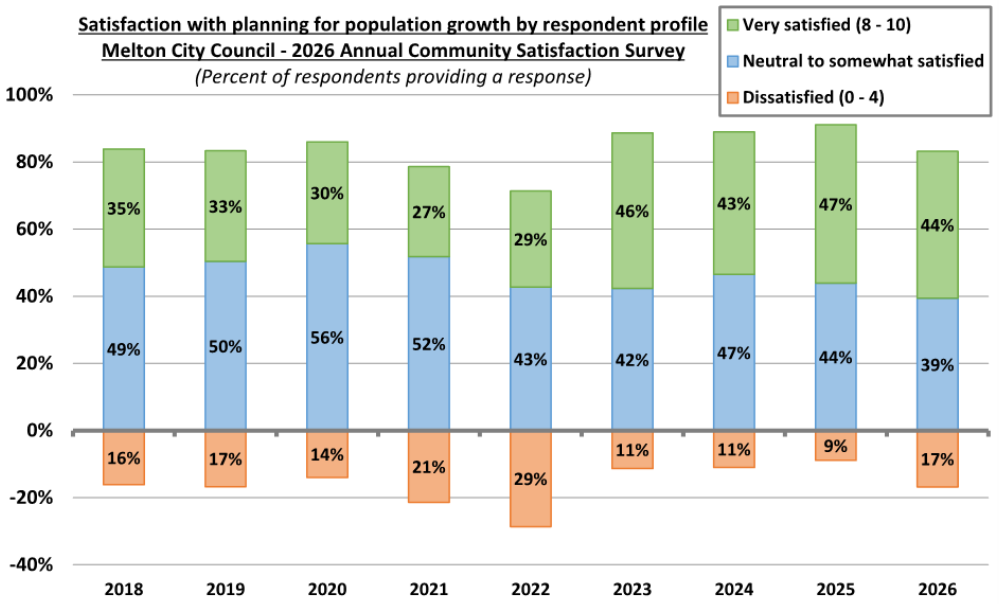
By way of comparison, this result was measurably lower than the metropolitan (6pts lower), western region councils' (9pts lower), and growth area councils' (10pts) averages, as recorded in the 2026 *Governing Melbourne* research.

Governing Melbourne was conducted independently by Metropolis Research in January 2026 using the same door-to-door, in-person interview methodology.



The following graph provides a breakdown of satisfaction into the proportion of respondents (providing a score) who were "very satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at eight or more), those who were "neutral to somewhat satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at five to seven), and those who were "dissatisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at less than five).

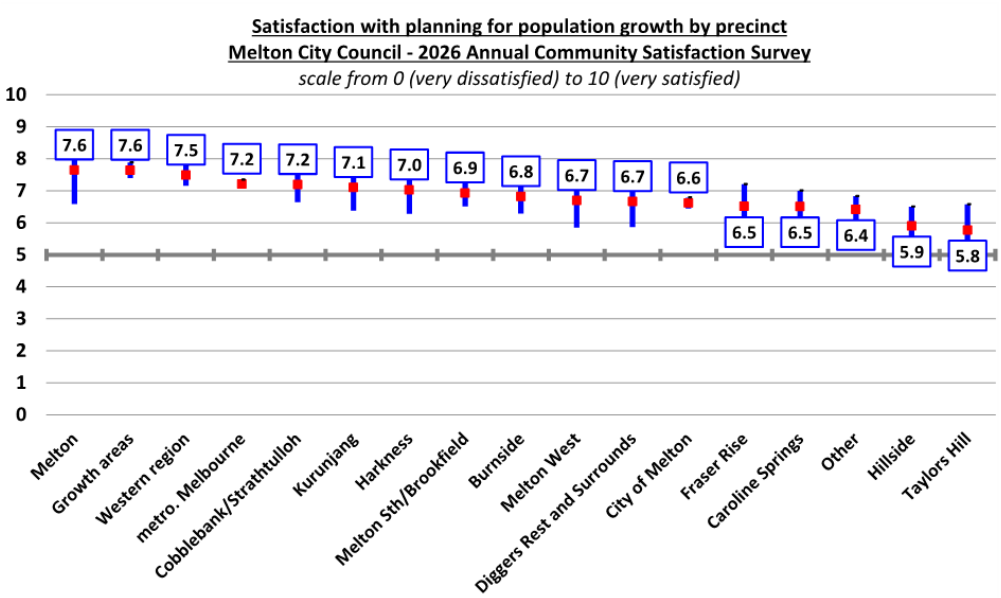
Consistent with the decline in average satisfaction, there was a small (3pt) decline in the proportion of respondents "very satisfied" with planning for population growth, and a measurable (8pt) increase in the proportion of respondents who were "dissatisfied".

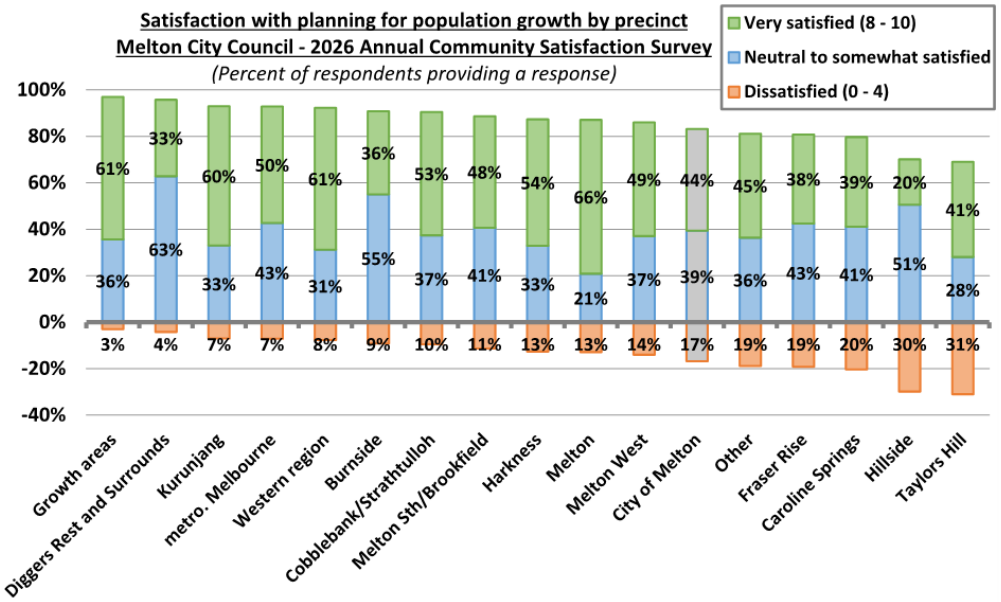


Noting the small sample size at the precinct level, there was no measurable variation in satisfaction with planning for population growth observed across the municipality.

The 26 respondents from Melton precinct were, however, notably (10pts) more satisfied than average, and at a "very good" level.

By contrast, respondents from Hillside (7pts) and Taylors Hill (8pts) were notably less satisfied than average, and at "poor" rather than "good" levels.





Reasons for dissatisfaction with planning for population growth

The following table outlines the 106 comments and eight locations of concern received in relation to planning for population growth by all levels of government.

These comments have been broadly categorised as follows:

- Perceived impacts on parking, traffic, roads and public transport 38 comments
- Perceived impacts on infrastructure / adequacy of infrastructure 22 comments
- Planning and development related 17 comments
- Retail and hospitality related 8 comments
- Perceived impacts on services and facilities 8 comments
- Population 5 comments
- Communication / engagement 4 comments
- Safety, security and policing related 3 comments
- Other issues 1 comment
- Specific Locations of concern 8 locations.

Planning and housing development

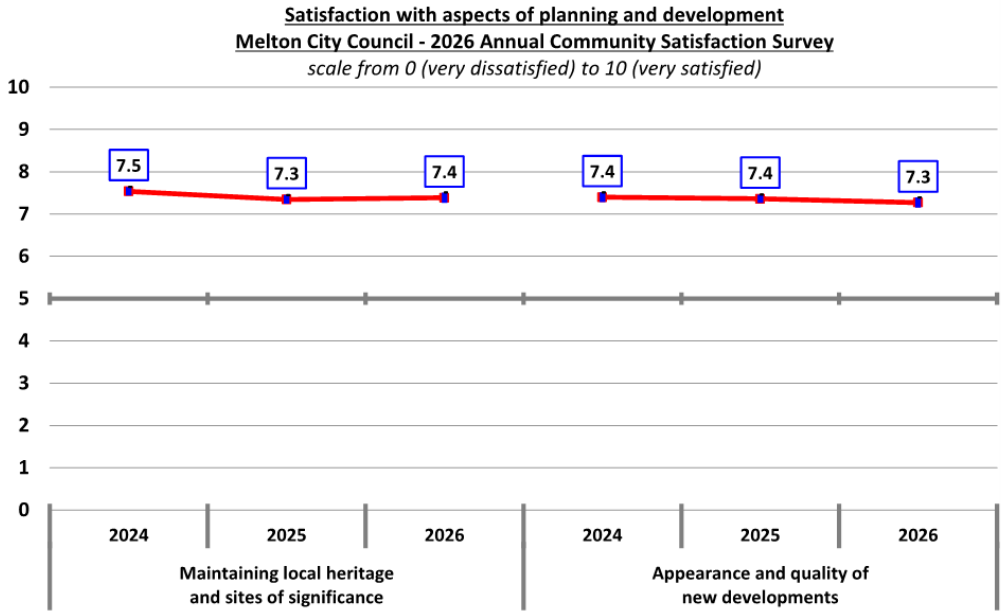
Satisfaction with aspects of planning and housing development

Respondents were asked:

"On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of planning and development in the City of Melton."

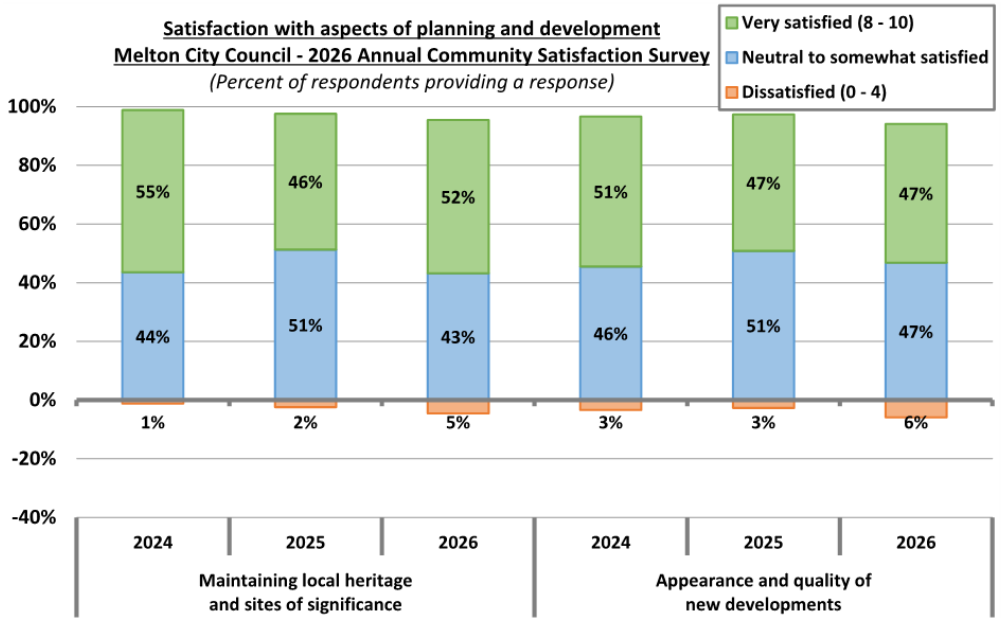
All respondents were again in 2026, asked to rate their satisfaction with two planning and development outcomes in the City of Melton.

Satisfaction with both maintaining local heritage and sites of significance (up 1pt) and the appearance and quality of new developments (down 1pt) remained essentially stable this year at "very good" levels.



The following graph provides a breakdown of these results into the proportion of respondents (providing a score) who were "very satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at eight or more out of 10), those who were "neutral to somewhat satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at five to seven), and those who were "dissatisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at less than five out of 10).

There was a small increase (up 6pts) in the proportion of respondents "very satisfied" with maintaining local heritage and sites of significance, but a small increase (3pts) in the proportion "dissatisfied" with the appearance and quality of new developments.

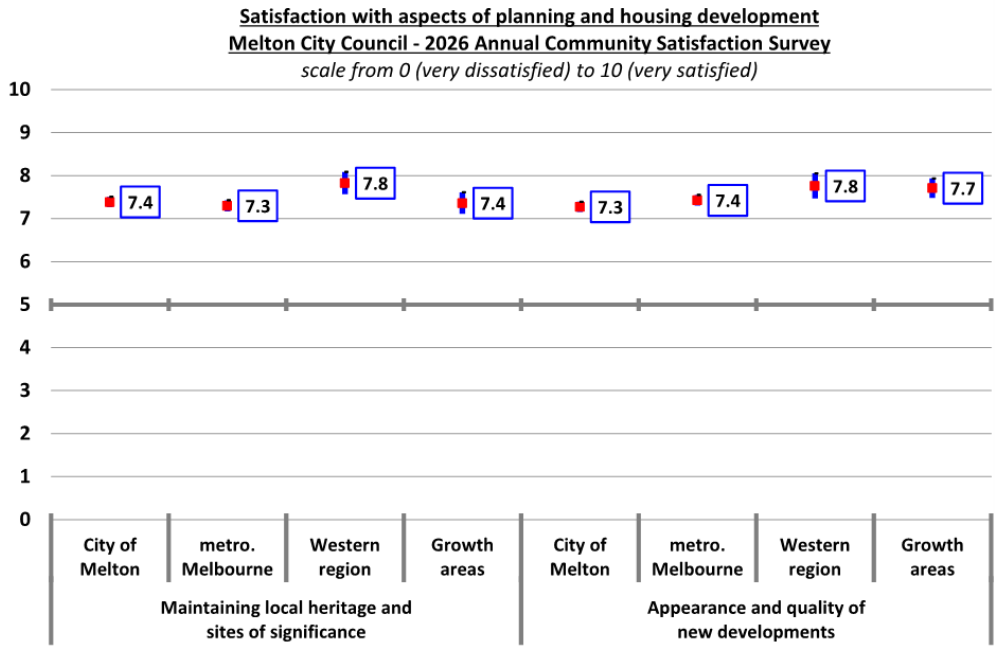


The following graph provides a comparison of these results against the metropolitan Melbourne, growth areas, and western region councils, as sourced from the 2026 *Governing Melbourne* research, conducted independently by Metropolis Research in January 2026, using the same door-to-door, in-person method.

Satisfaction with both aspects of planning and housing development was similar to the metropolitan average.

Both aspects, however, recorded lower satisfaction in the City of Melton than the western region councils' average.

It is also noted that satisfaction with the appearance and quality of new developments was somewhat (4pts) lower in the City of Melton than the growth area councils' average.



Importance of and satisfaction with Council services

Respondents were asked:

"On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), please rate the importance to the community, and your personal level of satisfaction with each of the following Council provided services?"

Respondents were asked to rate the importance to the community of 31 Council provided services and facilities, as well as the maintenance and repair of major arterial roads and highways (managed by VicRoads).

They were then asked their personal level of satisfaction with each of 14 services and facilities that all in the community will have used.

They were then asked their personal level of satisfaction with each of 18 other services and facilities that they or members of their household had used in the last 12 months.

Importance of Council services and facilities to the community

Respondents were asked to rate how important they considered each of the 32 services and facilities included in the survey were to the community, rather than to them or their household as individuals.

The reason for the wording of the question was to measure how important the community considers these services and facilities to the entire community, rather than focusing solely on personal needs.

The average importance of the 31 Council provided services and facilities remained stable this year at 9.1 out of 10.

This average importance of services and facilities to the Melton community was identical to the metropolitan average of 9.1, as recorded in the *Governing Melbourne* research conducted independently by Metropolis Research in January 2026 using the same methodology.

The table below displays the average importance of each of the 32 services and facilities, with a 95% confidence interval around each importance score.

Services and facilities that were measurably more important than the average of all services and facilities, as well as those that were measurably less important than the average of all services and facilities, are indicated on the left-hand side of the table, as follows:

- ***Measurably HIGHER than average importance*** - included regular garbage collection, green waste collection, regular recycling, services for people with disability, health services for babies, infants, and toddlers, and services for seniors.
- ***Measurably LOWER than average importance*** – parking enforcement and *Moving Ahead*.

Importance of selected services and facilities
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and index score scale 0 - 10)

	Service/facility	Number	2026 Lower	2026 Mean	2026 Upper	2025	2024	2023	2026 Metro.*
Higher than average	Regular garbage collection	789	9.3	**9.4**	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.4
	Green waste collection	788	9.3	**9.4**	9.4	9.4	9.5	9.3	9.1
	Regular recycling	788	9.3	**9.4**	9.4	9.4	9.5	9.3	9.4
	Services for people with disability	777	9.3	**9.4**	9.4	9.3	9.3	9.2	9.3
	Health services for babies, infants and toddlers	783	9.3	**9.4**	9.4	9.3	9.2	9.2	n.a.
	Services for seniors	775	9.3	**9.3**	9.4	9.2	9.3	9.2	9.3
Average importance	Council provided services and programs for childre	775	9.2	**9.3**	9.4	9.2	9.3	9.2	9.3
	Hard rubbish collection	784	9.2	**9.2**	9.3	9.1	9.2	9.1	9.1
	Footpath maintenance and repairs	798	9.2	**9.2**	9.3	9.3	9.3	8.9	9.2
	Council provided services for young people	772	9.1	**9.2**	9.3	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2
	Maintenance and repair of sealed local roads	790	9.1	**9.2**	9.3	9.3	9.4	9.0	9.3
	Local traffic management	782	9.1	**9.2**	9.3	9.2	9.3	8.9	9.3
	Maintenance and repair of major arterial roads	795	9.1	**9.2**	9.3	9.2	n.a.	n.a.	9.3
	Melton Recycling Facility	781	9.1	**9.2**	9.2	9.0	9.2	9.1	9.0
	Provision and maintenance of playgrounds	783	9.1	**9.2**	9.2	9.1	9.0	9.0	9.1
	Public toilets	780	9.1	**9.1**	9.2	9.1	9.2	9.0	9.1
	Provision and maintenance of parks and gardens	789	9.1	**9.1**	9.2	9.2	9.3	9.0	9.3
	Community centres / Neighbourhood houses	785	9.1	**9.1**	9.2	9.0	8.8	8.8	9.0
	Library services	791	9.1	**9.1**	9.2	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.2
	Sports grounds and associated facilities	783	9.1	**9.1**	9.2	9.1	9.0	8.9	9.1
	On and off road bike and / or walking paths	783	9.0	**9.1**	9.2	8.9	8.9	8.8	9.0
	Recreation and Leisure Centres	780	9.0	**9.1**	9.2	9.0	8.9	9.0	9.1
	Council's website	780	9.0	**9.1**	9.2	8.9	9.0	8.8	9.0
	Provision and maintenance of street trees	795	9.0	**9.1**	9.2	9.1	9.2	8.9	9.2
	Council activities promoting local business growth	749	9.0	**9.1**	9.1	9.1	9.1	8.8	9.2
	Access services through digital or online channels	782	9.0	**9.0**	9.1	8.9	8.9	8.7	n.a.
	Animal management	735	8.9	**9.0**	9.1	8.9	9.1	8.9	9.1
	Public Spaces	763	8.9	**9.0**	9.1	9.0	9.0	8.8	n.a.
	Provision of cultural events	776	8.9	**9.0**	9.1	8.8	8.5	8.7	8.9
	Provision of community events and festivals	775	8.9	**9.0**	9.1	8.8	8.5	8.7	8.9
Lower	Parking enforcement	777	8.8	**8.9**	9.0	8.7	9.2	8.6	8.9
	Moving Ahead *(Council's printed newsletter)*	736	8.4	**8.5**	8.7	8.6	8.5	8.3	8.8
	Average importance of selected services		*9.1*	***9.1***	*9.2*	*9.1*	*9.1*	*9.0*	*9.1*

(*) 2026 metropolitan Melbourne average from Governing Melbourne

Change in importance between 2025 and 2026

All 32 services and facilities included in the 2026 survey were also included in the 2025 survey. Of these, 17 increased in importance, eight remained stable, and seven decreased in importance. However, none of these variations was notable.

Comparison to metropolitan Melbourne average

Of the 32 services and facilities included in the survey this year, 29 were also included in the *Governing Melbourne* research in a comparable format that allows for metropolitan comparisons to be published.

10 of these services and facilities were more important in the City of Melton than the corresponding metropolitan averages, 10 were identical to the averages, and nine were less important. None of these variations was, however, notable or measurable.

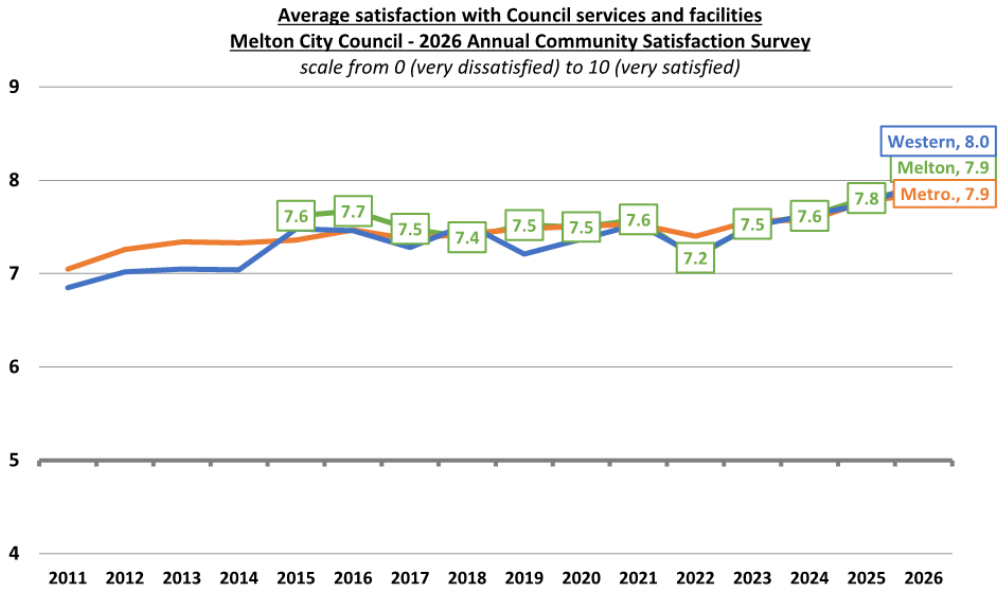
Satisfaction with Council services and facilities

Respondents were asked to rate their personal level of satisfaction with each of the 14 core services and facilities about which everyone in the community is likely to have a view.

They were then asked to rate their satisfaction with each of the 18 non-core services and facilities that they or a member of their household had used in the last 12 months.

The average satisfaction with the 31 Council provided services and facilities remained essentially stable this year, rising one percentage point to 7.9 out of 10, which remains an "excellent" level of satisfaction.

This was a record high average satisfaction with services and facilities recorded for the City of Melton, and was measurably (3pts) above the long-term average satisfaction since 2015 of 7.6 out of 10 or "very good".



This average satisfaction with services and facilities was identical to the metropolitan average of 7.9 out of 10, and broadly consistent with the western region councils' average, as recorded in the 2026 *Governing Melbourne* research.

Governing Melbourne was conducted independently by Metropolis Research in January 2026 using the same door-to-door, in-person methodology.

The recent trend of increasing average satisfaction with services and facilities, from a "good" level in 2022 to an "excellent" level in 2025 and 2026 reflects a strong level of satisfaction with Council's delivery of services and facilities to the City of Melton community.

This "excellent" average satisfaction includes services and facilities that received variable levels of satisfaction.

Satisfaction with services and facilities varied 17 percentage points (24%) from the high of 8.7 or "excellent" for the green waste collection, to a low of 7.0 or "good" for local traffic management.

The left-hand side of the table below identifies the services and facilities that received a measurably higher than average satisfaction score (i.e., measurably higher than the average of all 31 services and facilities), as well as those that received a measurably lower than average satisfaction score, as follows:

- ***Measurably HIGHER than average satisfaction*** - included the green waste collection, regular garbage collection, regular recycling, library services, and hard rubbish collection.
- ***Measurably LOWER than average satisfaction*** – included the maintenance and repair of major arterial roads (managed by VicRoads), local traffic management, the maintenance and repair of sealed local roads, public toilets, services for people with disability, and footpath maintenance and repairs.

Satisfaction with selected Council services and facilities
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and index score scale 0 - 10)

	Service/facility	*Number*	*2026 Lower*	*2026 Mean*	*2026 Upper*	*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2026 Metro.**
Higher	Green waste collection	779	8.6	**8.7**	8.8	8.7	8.8	8.5	8.6
	Regular garbage collection	795	8.6	**8.7**	8.7	8.8	8.7	8.7	8.6
	Regular recycling	785	8.6	**8.6**	8.7	8.8	8.6	8.6	8.5
	Library services	347	8.4	**8.5**	8.6	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.7
	Hard rubbish collection	337	8.3	**8.5**	8.6	8.4	8.2	8.0	8.6
Average satisfaction	Melton Recycling Facility	298	8.1	**8.3**	8.5	8.2	8.0	8.1	8.2
	Sports grounds and associated facilities	275	8.0	**8.2**	8.4	8.0	7.8	7.8	8.4
	Council's website	385	8.0	**8.2**	8.3	8.0	7.8	7.7	8.0
	Health services for babies, infants and toddlers	124	7.8	**8.1**	8.4	8.2	7.5	7.1	n.a.
	Animal management	681	8.0	**8.1**	8.2	7.8	7.7	7.8	8.0



	Provision of community events and festivals	197	7.8	**8.0**	8.3	7.8	8.0	7.9	8.0
	Council provided services and programs for children	87	7.7	**8.0**	8.4	8.0	7.5	7.5	8.4
	Council provided services for young people	65	7.6	**8.0**	8.4	8.0	7.8	7.0	7.7
	Provision and maintenance of playgrounds	341	7.8	**8.0**	8.2	7.6	7.5	7.4	8.3
	Access services through digital or online channels	252	7.7	**8.0**	8.2	8.0	7.7	7.5	n.a.
	Recreation and Leisure Centres	217	7.7	**8.0**	8.2	7.8	7.6	7.5	8.3
	Community centres / Neighbourhood houses	143	7.6	**7.9**	8.2	8.0	7.8	7.7	8.2
	Provision of cultural events	147	7.6	**7.9**	8.1	7.9	7.9	7.7	8.0
	Services for seniors	68	7.3	**7.8**	8.3	8.0	7.8	7.2	8.1
	On- and off-road bike and / or walking paths	251	7.6	**7.8**	8.0	7.6	7.3	7.6	7.9
	Provision and maintenance of parks and gardens	778	7.6	**7.8**	7.9	7.7	7.3	7.2	8.1
	Council activities promoting local business growth	626	7.6	**7.7**	7.9	7.5	7.2	7.4	7.6
	Moving Ahead *(Council's printed newsletter)*	545	7.6	**7.7**	7.9	7.6	7.4	7.5	7.7
	Public Spaces	709	7.6	**7.7**	7.8	7.6	7.5	7.6	n.a.
	Parking enforcement	721	7.4	**7.6**	7.7	7.1	7.1	7.3	7.6
	Provision and maintenance of street trees	783	7.4	**7.6**	7.7	7.4	7.1	7.2	7.6
Lower than average	Footpath maintenance and repairs	786	7.3	**7.4**	7.6	7.2	6.9	7.0	7.4
	Services for people with disability	57	6.7	**7.4**	8.0	7.7	7.5	6.5	8.0
	Public toilets	280	6.9	**7.1**	7.4	6.7	6.3	6.8	7.2
	Maintenance and repair of sealed local roads	790	6.9	**7.1**	7.2	6.9	6.8	6.8	7.4
	Local traffic management	761	6.9	**7.0**	7.2	6.9	6.5	6.9	7.6
	Maintenance and repair of major arterial roads	789	6.5	**6.7**	6.8	6.6	n.a.	n.a.	7.2
	Average satisfaction with selected services		*7.7*	***7.9***	*8.1*	*7.8*	*7.6*	*7.5*	*7.9*

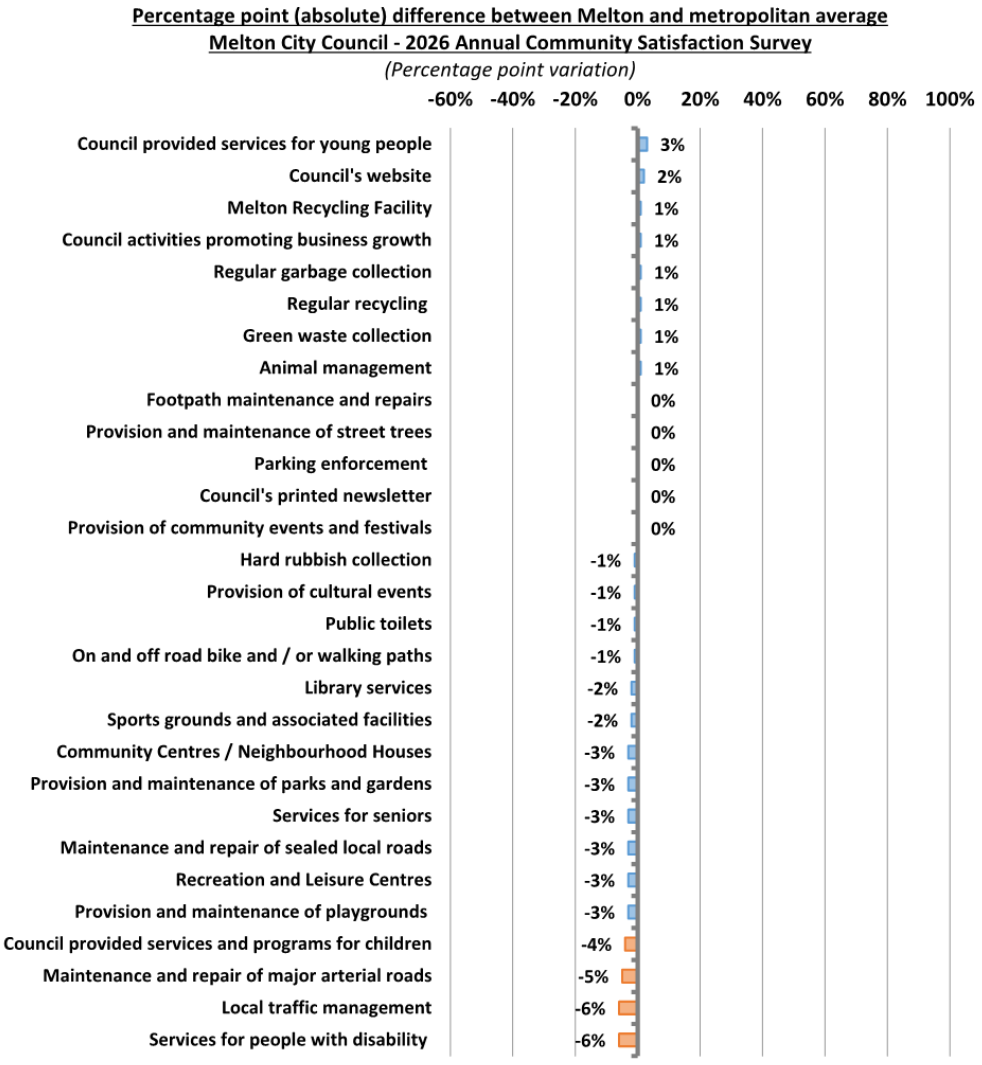
(*) 2026 metropolitan Melbourne average from Governing Melbourne

Comparison to metropolitan Melbourne average

Of the 32 included Services and facilities, 29 were included in a format that facilitated comparison to the metropolitan average, as recorded in *Governing Melbourne*.

Of these, eight recorded at least a marginally higher satisfaction than the metropolitan average, five recorded identical satisfaction, and 16 recorded marginally lower satisfaction:

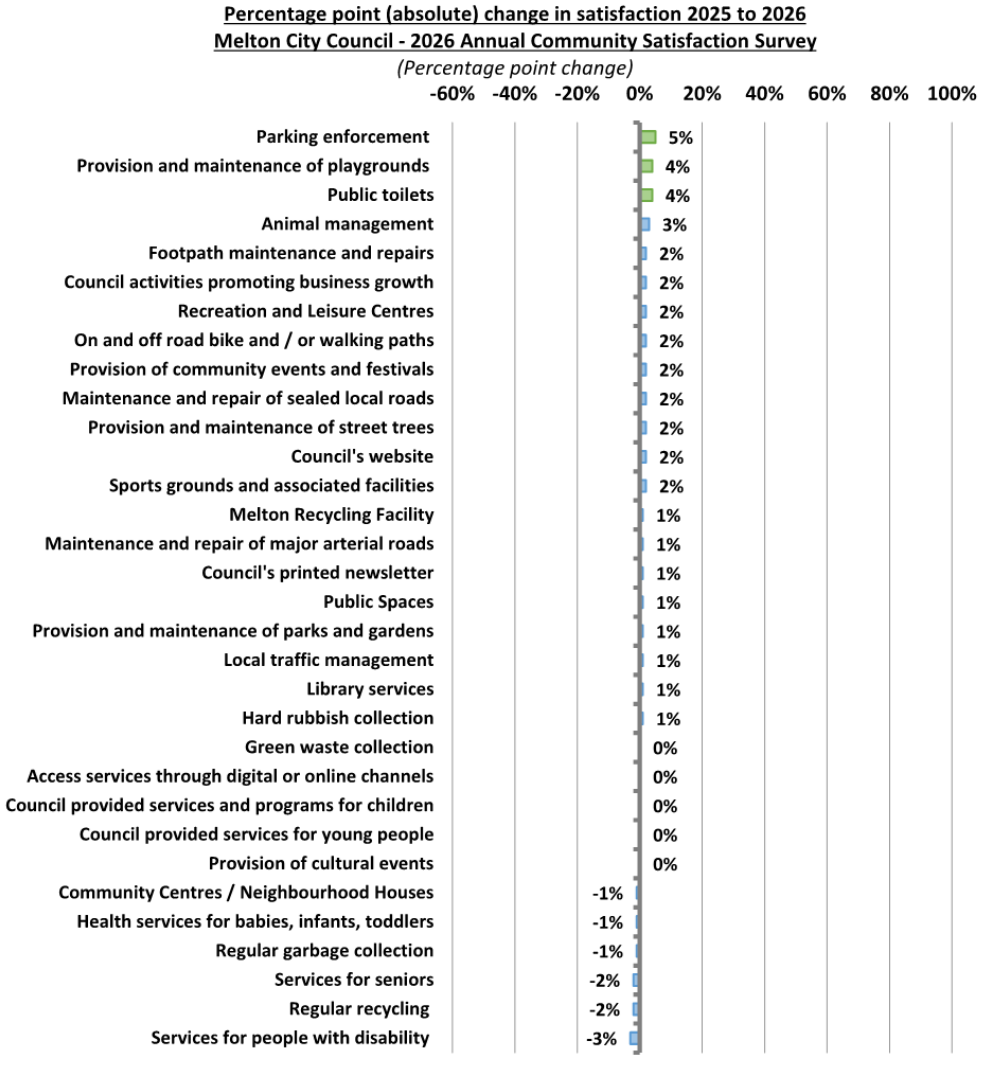
- ***Somewhat HIGHER satisfaction in Melton*** – included Council provided services for young people (3pts higher by 65 respondents), and Council's website (2pts).
- ***Notably LOWER satisfaction in Melton*** – included services for people with disability (6pts lower in Melton), local traffic management (6pts), the maintenance and repair of major arterial roads and highways (managed by VicRoads) (5pts), and Council provided services and programs for children (4pts).



Change in satisfaction between 2025 and 2026

The average satisfaction with 21 of the 32 services and facilities which were included in the 2025 survey increased at least marginally this year, while satisfaction with five remained stable, and satisfaction with six declined at least marginally, with attention drawn to the following:

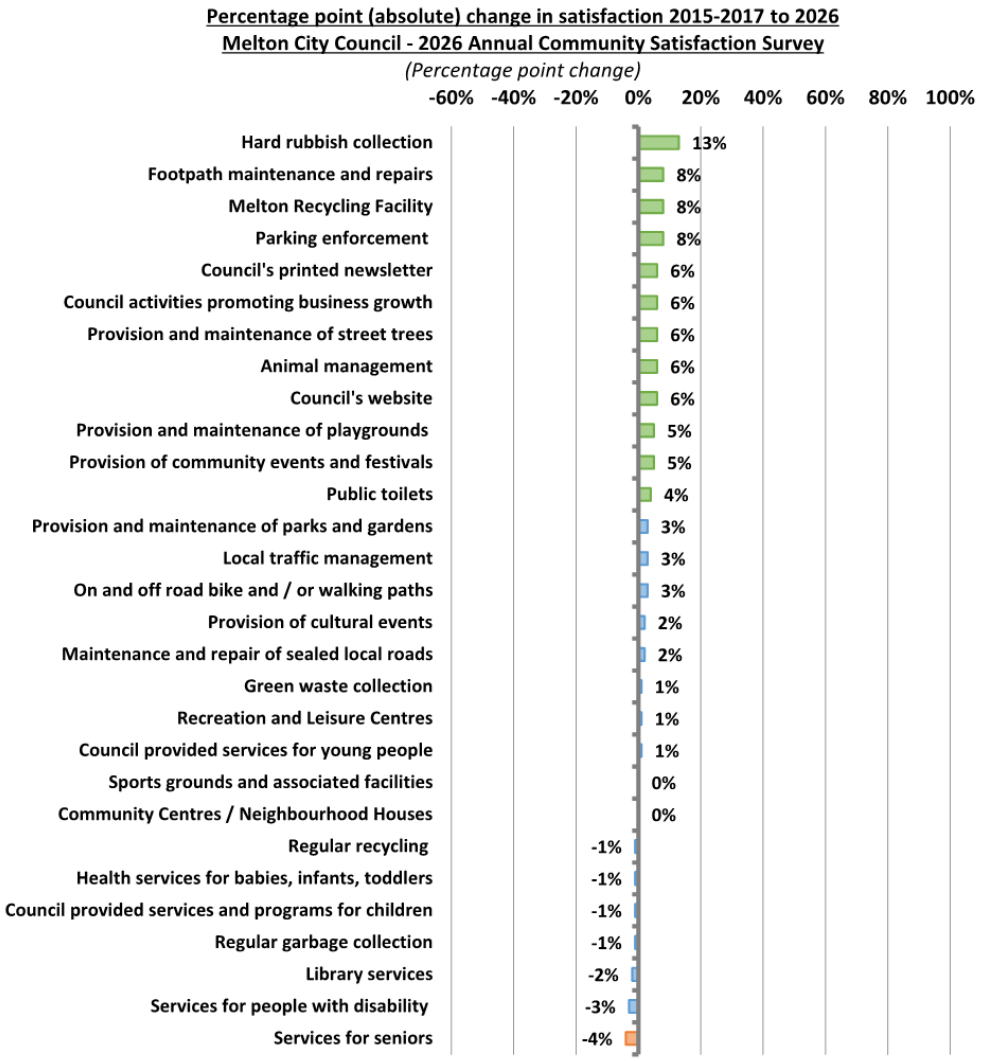
- ***Notably HIGHER satisfaction this year*** – included parking enforcement (5pts higher), the provision and maintenance of playgrounds (4pts), and public toilets (4pts).
- ***Somewhat LOWER satisfaction this year –*** included services for people with disability (3pts lower by 57 respondents), regular recycling (2pts lower), and services for seniors (2pts lower by 68 respondents).



Change in satisfaction between 2015/17 and 2026

The average satisfaction with 20 of the 29 services and facilities for which comparable data exists for 2015/17 increased at least marginally this year, two remained stable, and seven declined at least marginally, with attention drawn to the following:

- ***Notably HIGHER satisfaction in 2026 than in 2015/17*** – included hard rubbish collection (13pts higher), footpath maintenance and repairs (8pts), Melton Recycling Facility (8pts), parking enforcement (8pts), *Moving Ahead* (6pts), Council activities promoting business growth (6pts), the provision and maintenance of street trees (6pts), animal management (6pts), Council's website (6pts), the provision and maintenance of playgrounds (5pts), the provision and maintenance of community events and festivals (5pts), and public toilets (4pts).
- ***Notably LOWER satisfaction in 2026 than in 2015/17*** – included services for seniors (4pts lower).



Percentage satisfaction results

The following table provides a breakdown of satisfaction into the proportion of respondents (providing a score) who were "very satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at eight or more), those who were "neutral to somewhat satisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at five to seven), and those who were "dissatisfied" (i.e., rated satisfaction at less than five).

Consistent with the "excellent" average satisfaction with services and facilities this year, more than half of the respondents providing a score were "very satisfied" with 30 of the 32 services and facilities, and approximately three-quarters or more were "very satisfied" with 10.

There were just two services and facilities with which more than 10% of respondents providing a score were "dissatisfied". These were the maintenance and repair of major arterial roads and highways managed by VicRoads (14%) and local traffic management (12%).

Satisfaction with selected Council services and facilities
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Service/facility	*Dissatisfied*	*Neutral to somewhat satisfied*	*Very satisfied*	*Can't say*	***Total***
Green waste collection	1%	12%	87%	21	**800**
Hard rubbish collection	3%	11%	86%	3	**340**
Regular garbage collection	1%	15%	84%	5	**800**
Regular recycling	1%	15%	84%	15	**800**
Library services	1%	17%	83%	7	**353**
Melton Recycling Facility	3%	16%	81%	5	**303**
Sports grounds and associated facilities	3%	19%	78%	7	**282**
Council's website	2%	22%	76%	3	**388**
Provision and maintenance of playgrounds	4%	22%	74%	5	**346**
Council provided services for young people	4%	22%	74%	6	**72**
Health services for babies, infants and toddlers	5%	22%	73%	5	**128**
Animal management	3%	24%	73%	119	**800**
Recreation and Leisure Centres	5%	22%	73%	3	**219**
Council provided services and programs for children	4%	24%	73%	6	**93**
Access services through digital or online channels	3%	25%	72%	5	**257**
Provision of community events and festivals	2%	26%	72%	5	**203**
Community centres / Neighbourhood houses	4%	28%	68%	8	**151**
Services for seniors	5%	27%	68%	3	**70**
On- and off-road bike and / or walking paths	6%	27%	68%	3	**254**
Provision of cultural events	3%	31%	66%	1	**148**
Moving Ahead (Council's printed newsletter)	5%	31%	65%	255	**800**
Provision and maintenance of parks and gardens	5%	31%	64%	22	**800**
Council activities promoting local business growth	5%	32%	63%	174	**800**
Services for people with disability	10%	27%	63%	2	**59**
Parking enforcement	7%	30%	63%	79	**800**
Provision and maintenance of street trees	8%	30%	62%	17	**800**
Public Spaces	4%	36%	60%	91	**800**
Footpath maintenance and repairs	7%	36%	57%	14	**800**
Local traffic management	12%	38%	50%	39	**800**
Public toilets	9%	42%	50%	3	**283**

Maintenance and repair of sealed local roads	9%	45%	46%	10	**800**
Maintenance and repair of major arterial roads	14%	51%	36%	11	**800**

Satisfaction by respondent profile

The following table provides a comparison of satisfaction with all 32 services and facilities by respondent profile, including age structure, gender, and language spoken at home.

A more detailed discussion of these results is included in the individual services section of this report following, however, in general terms, the following pattern of satisfaction was observed:

- ***Generally, MORE satisfied than average*** – included young adults (aged 18 to 34 years).
- ***Generally, LESS satisfied than average*** – included adults (aged 35 to 44 years), middle-aged adults (aged 45 to 59 years), and older adults (aged 60 to 74 years).

Average satisfaction with selected Council services and facilities
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and index score scale 0 - 10)

Service/facility	*Young adults*	*Adults*	*Middle-aged*	*Older adults*	*Senior citizens*	*Male*	*Female*	*English speaking*	*Multi-lingual*
Maintenance / repair of major arterial roads	6.8	6.4	6.6	6.9	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.7
Maintenance / repair of sealed local roads	7.1	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.0	7.0	7.2
Footpath maintenance and repairs	7.8	7.4	7.2	7.2	6.9	7.5	7.4	7.4	7.5
Regular garbage collection	8.5	8.8	8.8	8.6	8.4	8.6	8.7	8.6	8.7
Regular recycling	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.7	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.7	8.7
Green waste collection	8.6	8.7	8.7	8.6	8.6	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.7
Provision / maintenance of parks / gardens	7.9	7.6	7.8	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.8	7.8	7.7
Provision and maintenance of street trees	7.9	7.5	7.5	7.3	7.1	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.3
Parking enforcement	7.8	7.5	7.5	7.6	6.9	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6
Local traffic management	7.2	6.8	7.2	7.1	6.6	7.1	7.0	7.1	6.8
Animal management	8.3	8.0	8.1	8.1	8.0	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1
Moving Ahead (Council's printed newsletter)	8.0	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.7	7.6	7.8	7.7	7.7
Council activities promoting business growth	8.1	7.6	7.5	7.3	7.7	7.8	7.7	7.9	7.5
Public Spaces	7.9	7.7	7.6	7.4	7.7	7.8	7.6	7.7	7.7
Council's website	8.4	8.0	8.2	8.2	7.8	8.1	8.3	8.2	8.1
Access services via digital / online channels	8.2	7.9	7.9	8.1	7.1	7.8	8.1	8.1	7.8
Library services	8.6	8.5	8.5	8.2	8.5	8.3	8.7	8.3	8.7
Melton Recycling Facility	8.5	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.2	8.5
Hard rubbish collection	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.3	8.6	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.5
Public toilets	7.4	6.7	7.8	7.3	7.5	7.1	7.2	7.3	6.9
Recreation and Leisure Centres	8.0	7.7	8.3	8.6	7.8	7.9	8.0	7.9	8.1

Sports grounds and associated facilities	8.3	8.1	8.3	7.9	8.6	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2
Provision and maintenance of playgrounds	8.3	7.7	7.5	8.3	8.4	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Community centres / Neighbourhood houses	7.8	7.6	8.4	8.2	8.5	7.7	8.1	7.9	7.9
Health services for babies, infants, toddlers	8.1	8.2	7.7	7.7	9.0	8.2	8.0	8.1	8.1
Council provided services for children	8.0	8.1	7.7	8.0	8.5	8.1	7.9	8.1	8.0
Council provided services for young people	8.7	7.5	7.6	8.0	n.a.	8.1	7.9	8.1	8.0
Services for seniors	8.4	7.1	5.1	8.2	8.2	7.9	7.7	7.7	7.9
Services for people with disability	8.2	6.8	6.7	7.5	7.8	7.8	7.2	7.3	7.3
On and off road bike and / or walking paths	8.1	7.6	7.4	7.3	8.4	7.8	7.8	7.9	7.7
Provision of cultural events	8.0	7.7	7.7	7.7	8.5	7.9	7.8	7.8	7.9
Provision of community events and festivals	8.3	7.9	7.9	8.1	8.3	8.0	8.1	7.9	8.2
Average satisfaction	*8.1*	*7.7*	*7.7*	*7.8*	*7.9*	*7.9*	*7.9*	*7.9*	*7.9*
Total respondents	**272**	**266**	**117**	**88**	**54**	**389**	**407**	**505**	**290**

Importance and satisfaction cross tabulation

The following graph provides a cross-tabulation of the average importance of each of the 32 included Council services and facilities against the average satisfaction with each service.

Services and facilities located in the top right-hand quadrant were therefore more important than average, and of higher-than-average satisfaction. Conversely services in the bottom right-hand quadrant are those of most concern as they are of higher-than-average importance but received lower than average satisfaction scores.

Key results to note include the following:

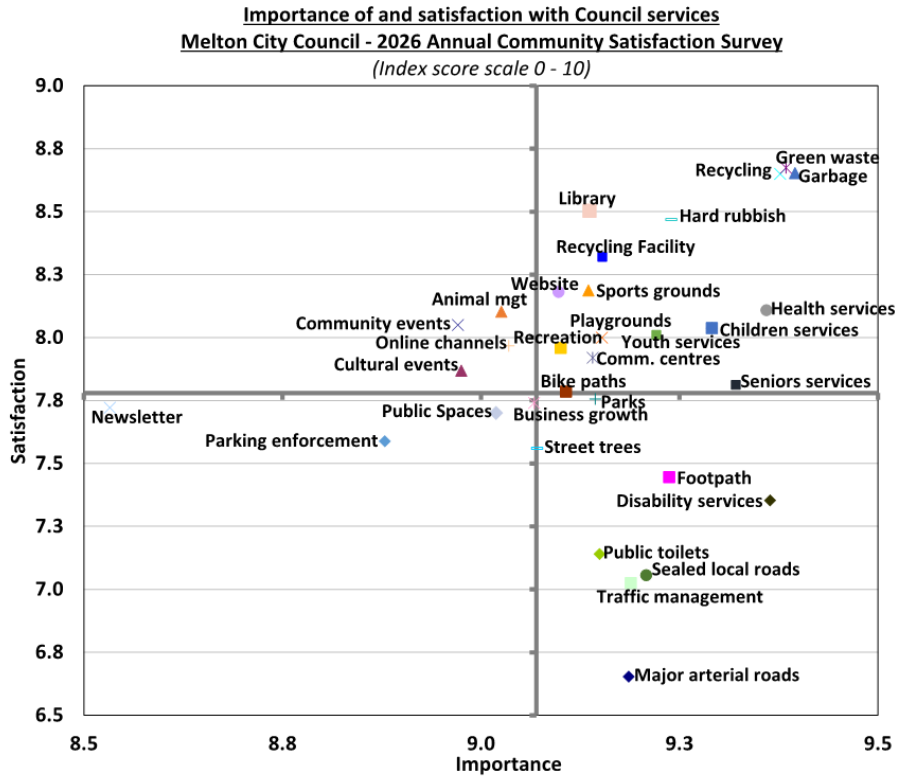
- ***Kerbside collection services*** – all four kerbside collection services remained higher than average in terms of both importance and satisfaction, a result that has been consistent in the City of Melton and other metropolitan municipalities over several years. The Melton Recycling Facility was also among the facilities which respondents considered most important, and with which they were most satisfied.
- ***Community services*** – all five community services (services for children, youth, seniors, persons with disability, and health services for babies, infants, and toddlers) remained more important than average. While health services, services for children, youth, and seniors recorded satisfaction scores which were higher than the average of all 31 services and facilities, services for people with disability fell into the quadrant of most concern, recording lower-than-average satisfaction.
- ***Recreation and leisure*** – satisfaction with services related to recreation and leisure (including sports grounds and associated facilities, on- and off-road bike and / or walking paths, recreation and leisure centres, playgrounds, and parks and gardens) was consistent with or higher than the average of all 31 services and facilities. They were also more important than average.

- ***Infrastructure*** – services related to infrastructure (including street trees, the maintenance and cleaning of public spaces, public toilets, and footpaths) were all lower-than-average satisfaction. While the maintenance and cleaning of public spaces was less important than average, footpaths, public toilets, and street trees fell into the quadrant of most concern, being more important than average but recording lower-than-average satisfaction scores.

- ***Communication services*** – While *Moving Ahead* was the least important of the 31 services and facilities this year and recorded a satisfaction score which was lower than the average of all 31 services and facilities, the website was among the services and facilities which respondents considered most important, and with which they were most satisfied. Access to Council services through online or digital channels also recorded a satisfaction score which was higher than average, however it was less important.

- ***Transport related services*** – Traffic management and roads (sealed local roads, and major arterial roads managed by VicRoads) fell into the quadrant of most concern, being more important than average, but recording satisfaction scores which were lower than the average of all 31 services and facilities. Roads and traffic management were the top two most important issues nominated by respondents to address in the City of Melton 'at the moment', a result which was consistent with previous years.

- ***Services and facilities of most concern*** – the services and facilities of most concern in 2026 were the maintenance and repair of major arterial roads and highways (managed by VicRoads), local traffic management, the maintenance and repair of sealed local roads (managed by Council), public toilets, services for people with disability, and footpaths.



Satisfaction by broad service areas

The breakdown of services and facilities into broad service areas is as follows:

- ***Infrastructure*** – includes provision and maintenance of street trees, and public toilets.
- ***Waste and recycling services*** – includes regular garbage collection, regular recycling, green waste collection, Melton Recycling Facility, and hard rubbish collection.
- ***Recreation and culture services*** – includes public spaces, library services, recreation and leisure centres, sports grounds and associated facilities, provision and maintenance of playgrounds, community centres / neighbourhood houses, provision of cultural events, and provision of community events and festivals.
- ***Community services*** – includes health services for babies, infants and toddlers, services and programs for children, services for young people, services for seniors, and services for people with disability.
- ***Enforcement*** – includes parking enforcement, and animal management.
- ***Communication*** – includes *Moving Ahead* (Council's printed newsletter), Council's website, and access services through digital or online channels.
- ***Transport infrastructure*** – includes the maintenance and repair of sealed local roads, footpath maintenance and repairs, local traffic management, and on and off-road bike and / or walking paths.
- ***Parks and gardens*** – include the provision and maintenance of parks and gardens.
- ***Business growth*** – includes Council activities promoting local business growth.

Of the nine broad service areas, satisfaction with seven increased at least marginally, while satisfaction with one area declined, and one remained the same.

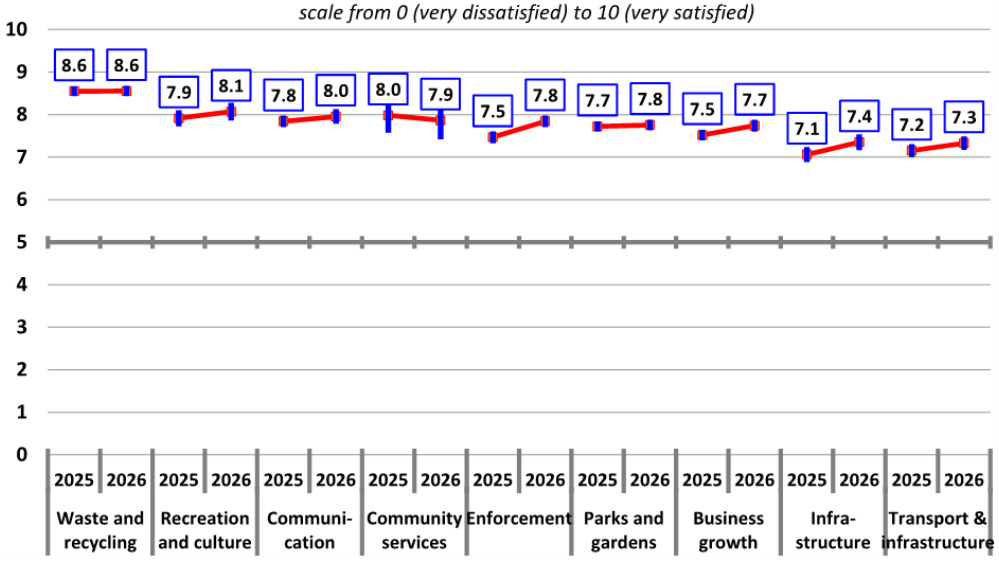
Increases were recorded for enforcement (4pts higher in 2026), infrastructure (3pts), recreation and culture (2pts), business growth (2pts), transport infrastructure (2pts), and communication (one point). Of these increases, enforcement, infrastructure, and business growth were measurable.

The decline was recorded for community services (down 1pt) and was not statistically significant.

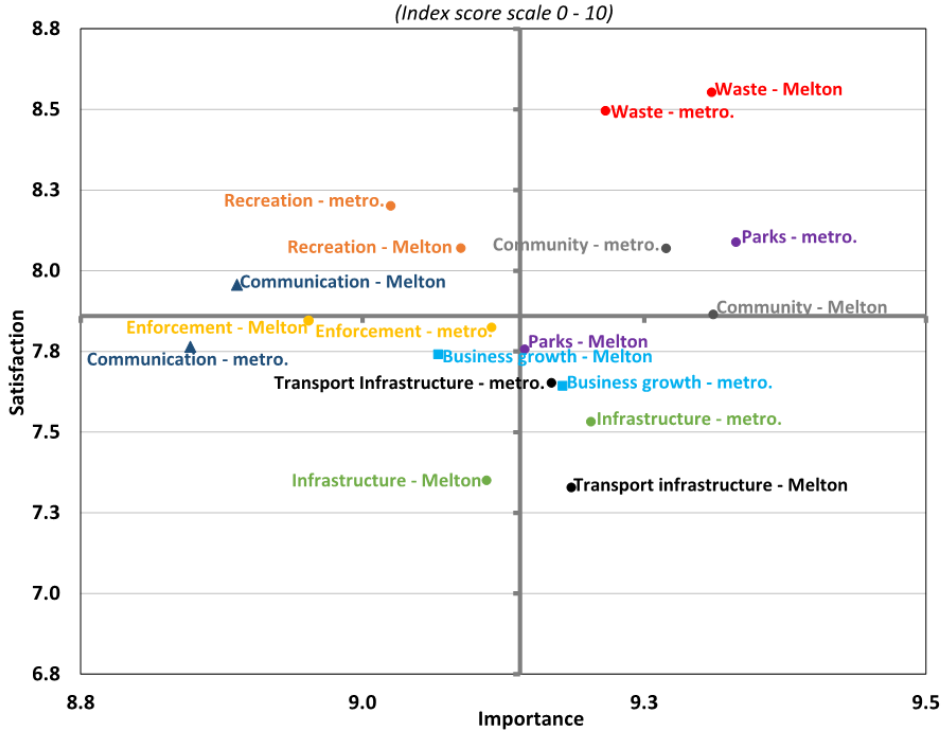
Satisfaction with the broad service areas can best be summarised as follows:

- ***Excellent*** – for waste and recycling, recreation and culture, communication, community services, enforcement (up from "very good"), and parks and gardens (up from "very good").
- ***Very good*** – for business growth, infrastructure (up from "good"), and transport infrastructure (up from "good").

Satisfaction by broad service areas
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
scale from 0 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied)

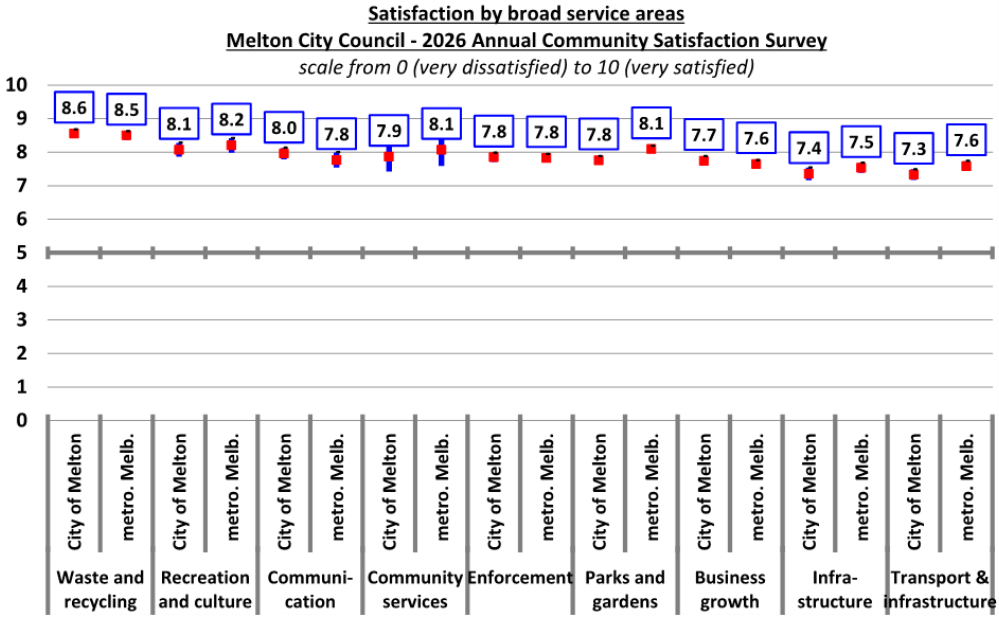


Importance of and satisfaction with Council services
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Index score scale 0 - 10)



When compared to the metropolitan average satisfaction with these broad service areas, satisfaction with three of the broad service areas was higher in Melton City than the metropolitan average, including communication (2pts higher), waste and recycling (1pt), and business growth (1pt). None of these variations was statistically significant.

Satisfaction with parks and gardens (3pts lower), transport infrastructure (3pts), infrastructure (2pts), community services (2pts), and recreation and culture (1pt) recorded lower satisfaction than the metropolitan average. Of these, satisfaction with parks and gardens was measurably (3pts) lower.



Current issues for the City of Melton

Respondents were asked:

"Can you please list what you consider to be the top three issues for the City of Melton at the moment?"

Respondents were again in 2026, asked to nominate what they considered to be the top three issues for the City of Melton 'at the moment'.

A little less than two-thirds (60% down from 67%) of respondents nominated an average of 1.7 issues each.

It is important to bear in mind that these responses are not to be read as a list of complaints about the performance of Melton City Council, nor do they reflect only services, facilities, and issues that are principally the responsibility of Council.

Many of the issues nominated by respondents were suggestions or preferences for future actions rather than solely complaints about prior actions, and many were issues that were principally the responsibility of the State Government.

These results are important as they highlight areas for potential increased advocacy efforts on behalf of the community.



Metropolis Research notes that the most common issues to address for the City of Melton this year again include traffic management (17% down from 23%) and roads (13% down from 15%), although both remain at levels higher than the metropolitan average.

Safety, policing, and crime issues remained prominent in the results again this year, despite declining from an unusually high peak of 19% last year to 12%. This result remained above the metropolitan average, but lower than for a range of other municipalities, as discussed in the following section of this report.

The following variations of note were observed this year:

- ***Notable INCREASE in 2026*** – there were no issues to record a substantial increase this year.
- ***Notable DECREASE in 2026*** – included traffic management (down 6pts to 17%), safety, policing, and crime (down 7pts to 12%), street trees (down 3pts to 3%), and Council rates, fees, and charges (down 3pts to 1%).

Metropolis Research notes the prominence of traffic management issues in the City of Melton. This includes issues around traffic congestion and commuting times and similar issues. These issues have increased somewhat in recent years elsewhere across metropolitan Melbourne; however, they remain most prominent in the western region, particularly the cities of Wyndham (21%) and Melton (17%).

The decline in safety, policing, and crime issues this year (12% down from an unusually high 19% last year), was consistent with the increase in the perception of safety in public areas of the City of Melton.

Comparison to the metropolitan average

When compared to the results from the 2026 *Governing Melbourne* research, which was conducted independently by Metropolis Research in January 2026 using the same methodology, the following variations of note were observed:

- ***Notably MORE prominent in City of Melton*** – included traffic management (17% compared to 11%), roads (13% compared to 10%), safety, policing, and crime (12% compared to 10%), and general infrastructure e.g., internet (4% compared to 1%).
- ***Notably LESS prominent in City of Melton*** – included parking (4% compared to 12%), street lighting (3% compared to 7%) building, housing, planning and development (1% compared to 5%), and lighting issues (1% compared to 10%).

These results reinforce the importance of traffic, roads, and safety, policing, and crime issues to the City of Melton community. These issues have consistently been more commonly raised in the City of Melton than the metropolitan average, and this continued this year.

Relationship between issues and overall satisfaction with Council

The issues that appear to be negatively associated with satisfaction with Council's overall performance for the respondents who raise the issues include:

- Council customer service (12 respondents, 8pts less satisfied)
- General infrastructure (28 respondents, 7pts less)
- Street trees (25 respondents, 6pts less)
- Parks, gardens, and open spaces (51 respondents, 6pts less)
- Communication (15 respondents, 4pts less)
- **Road maintenance and repairs (101 respondents, 4pts less)**
- **Safety, policing, and crime related issues (93 respondents, 2pts less)**
- **Traffic management (135 respondents, 2pts less)**

This is discussed in more detail in the Issues and overall satisfaction section.

Top three issues for the City of Melton at the moment
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of total respondents)

Issue	*2026 Number*	*2026 Percent*	*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2026 Metro.**
Traffic management	135	17%	23%	18%	25%	26%	11%
Roads *(including roadworks)*	101	13%	15%	8%	13%	13%	10%
Safety, policing and crime	93	12%	19%	6%	8%	9%	9%
Parks, gardens and open space	51	6%	5%	7%	12%	9%	3%
Footpath maintenance and repairs	33	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	3%
Parking	33	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	12%
Public transport	31	4%	6%	5%	3%	1%	2%
General infrastructure *(e.g. internet, electricity)*	28	4%	2%	2%	2%	4%	1%
Street trees	25	3%	6%	9%	5%	4%	7%
Cleanliness and maintenance of area	17	2%	3%	2%	3%	6%	3%
Communication and consultation	15	2%	2%	2%	2%	4%	1%
Council customer service / responsiveness	12	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Council governance and performance	12	2%	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Building, planning, housing and development	10	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	5%
Council rates	10	1%	4%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Street cleaning and maintenance	10	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%
Children's activities and facilities	9	1%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%
Health and medical services	9	1%	2%	4%	6%	7%	0%
Rubbish and waste issues incl. garbage	9	1%	2%	5%	4%	2%	3%
Animal management	8	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Dog, dog-off leash issues	8	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Illegal rubbish dumping	8	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Lighting	8	1%	3%	2%	4%	3%	10%
Sports, recreation facilities	8	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Nature strip issues	7	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Cycling and walking paths and tracks	5	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%	1%
Education and schools	5	1%	2%	2%	4%	3%	0%
Employment and job creation	5	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Noise	5	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
People with disability services and, facilities	5	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Community facilities provision and maintenance	4	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Hard rubbish collection	4	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Older people services and facilities	4	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%
Public toilets	4	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Retail and hospitality	4	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
All other issues *(31 separately identified issues)*	62	8%	6%	5%	8%	10%	16%
Total responses	**797**		**1,008**	**856**	**1,042**	**1,158**	**924**
Respondents identifying at least one issue	*478*	*(60%)*	*532 (67%)*	*479 (60%)*	*521 (65%)*	*556 (70%)*	*496 (62%)*

(*) 2026 metropolitan Melbourne average from Governing Melbourne

Community engagement consultation activities

Respondents were asked:

"Have you participated in any community engagement consultation activities in the past 12 months?"

Respondents were again in 2026, asked if they had participated in any community engagement consultation activities in the past 12 months.

The proportion of respondents who had participated in at least one activity in the last 12 months increased somewhat this year, up two percentage points to 13% of respondents this year.

The most common consultation engagement activities undertaken by respondents in the past 12 months remained completing a Council survey (6% up from 5%).

Participated in community engagement consultation activities
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of total respondents)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*
	Number	*Percent*				
Completed a Council survey	51	6%	5%	10%	11%	6%
Attended a consultation workshop	29	4%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Accessed Melton conversations	20	3%	5%	3%	1%	1%
Other	4	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Do not participate	699	87%	89%	84%	85%	91%
Total responses	**104**		**92**	**129**	**117**	**73**
Respondents identifying at least one activity	*101 (13%)*		*84 (11%)*	*120 (15%)*	*111 (14%)*	*73 (9%)*

Importance of and satisfaction with local job opportunities and accessibility of local education

Respondents were asked:

"On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), please rate the importance to the community, and your personal level of satisfaction with each of the following."

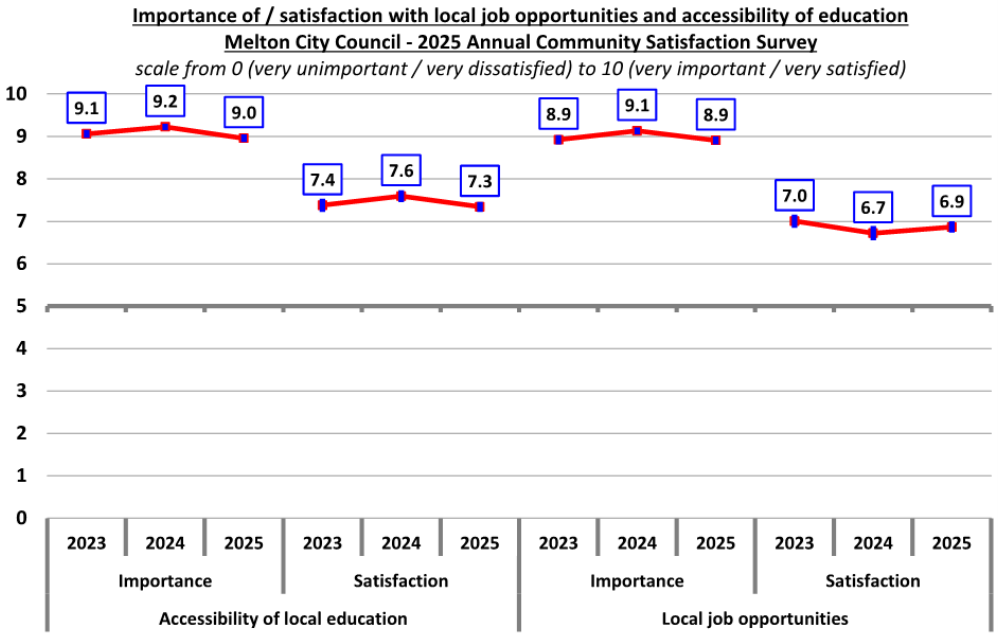
Respondents were again in 2026, asked to rate both the importance of and their personal level of satisfaction with the accessibility of local education and local job opportunities.

The importance of both local job opportunities (up 2pts to 9.1) and the importance of the accessibility of local education (stable at 9.0) remained very high at around nine out of 10, reinforcing the importance of both local job opportunities and accessibility of local education.

These average importance results were consistent with the average importance of Council services and facilities, but somewhat less important than some of the key Council services of the kerbside collection services, local roads, parks and gardens, traffic management, and community services (for children, youth, seniors, and people with disability).

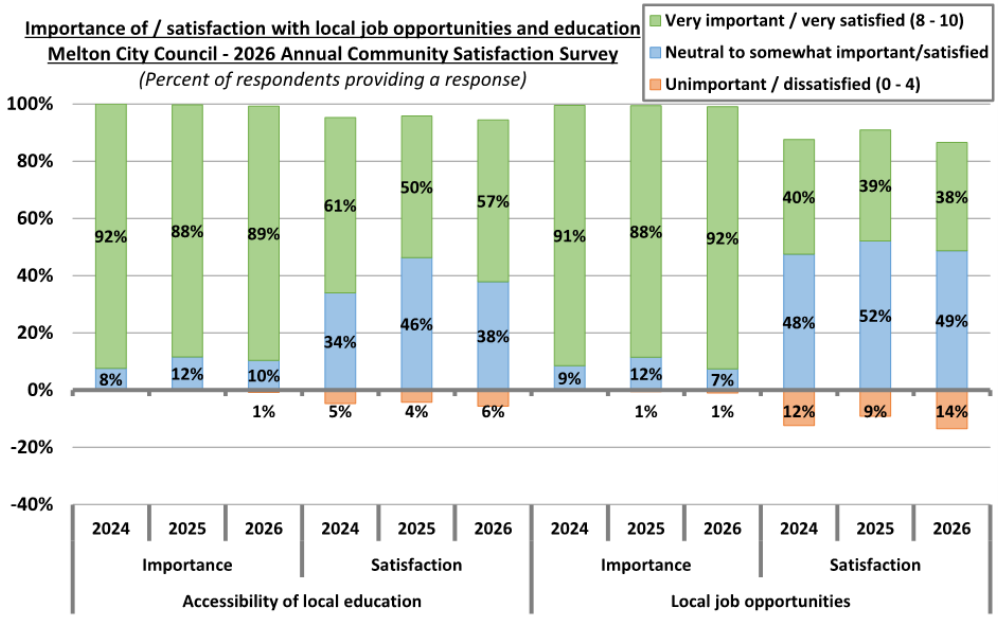
Satisfaction with the accessibility of local education remained at a "very good" level, up two percentage points to 7.5 out of 10.

Satisfaction with accessibility of local job opportunities declined somewhat this year, down three percentage points to 6.6 out of 10, although it remains at a "good" level of satisfaction.



There was a notable (7pt) increase in the proportion of respondents "very satisfied" with accessibility of local education, reversing the decrease recorded last year.

Consistent with the decline in average satisfaction, there was a small increase in the proportion of respondents who were "dissatisfied" with local job opportunities this year.



Perception of safety in the public areas of the City of Melton

Respondents were asked:

"On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), how safe do you feel?"

Respondents were again in 2026, asked to rate how safe they felt in 10 situations and locations across the City of Melton.

The average perception of safety in all situations and locations increased somewhat this year, up two percentage points to 7.1 out of 10. This reverses the two-percentage point decline recorded last year.

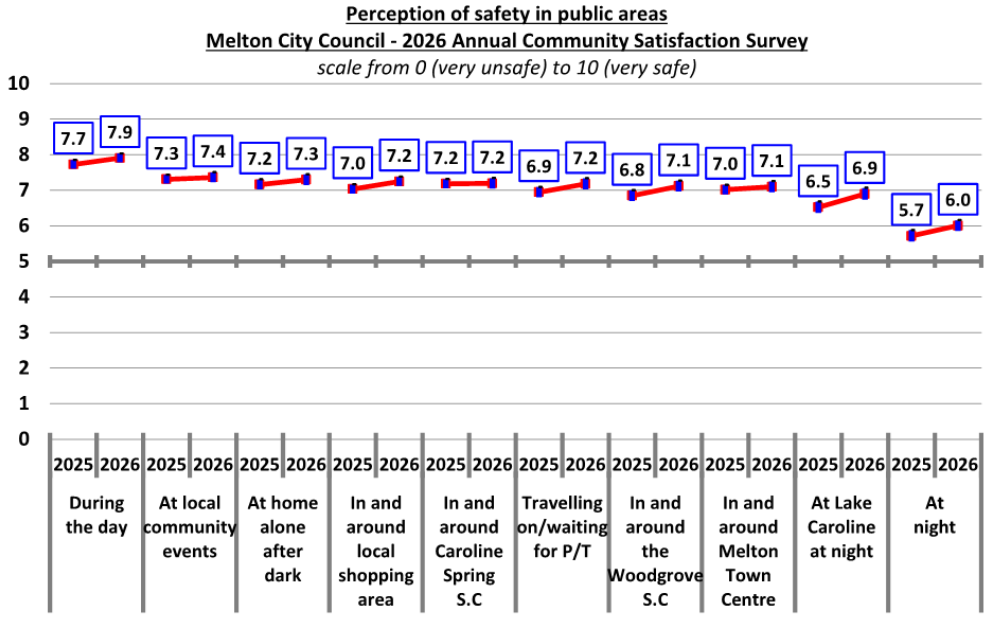
The perception of safety increased in nine of the 10 situations, with the stand-out result this year the measurable (4pt or 6%) increase in the perception of safety at Lake Caroline at night (6.9 up from 6.5 out of 10).

The perception of safety in these 10 situations and locations varied from a high of 7.9 (up from 7.7) for the perception of safety in public areas during the day, to a low of 6.0 (up from 5.7) for the perception of safety in the public areas of the municipality at night.

These results reflect a small but measurable increase in the perception of safety in the public areas of the City of Melton this year across most of the listed situations and locations.

This increase in the perception of safety in public areas of the City of Melton this year was consistent with the decline in the proportion of respondents raising safety, policing, and crime related issues as one of the top issues to address this year (12% down from 19%).

Despite the increase in the perception of safety in public areas of the City of Melton, the City of Melton did record the lowest average perception of safety in public areas at night score recorded by Metropolis Research across metropolitan Melbourne in 2026.

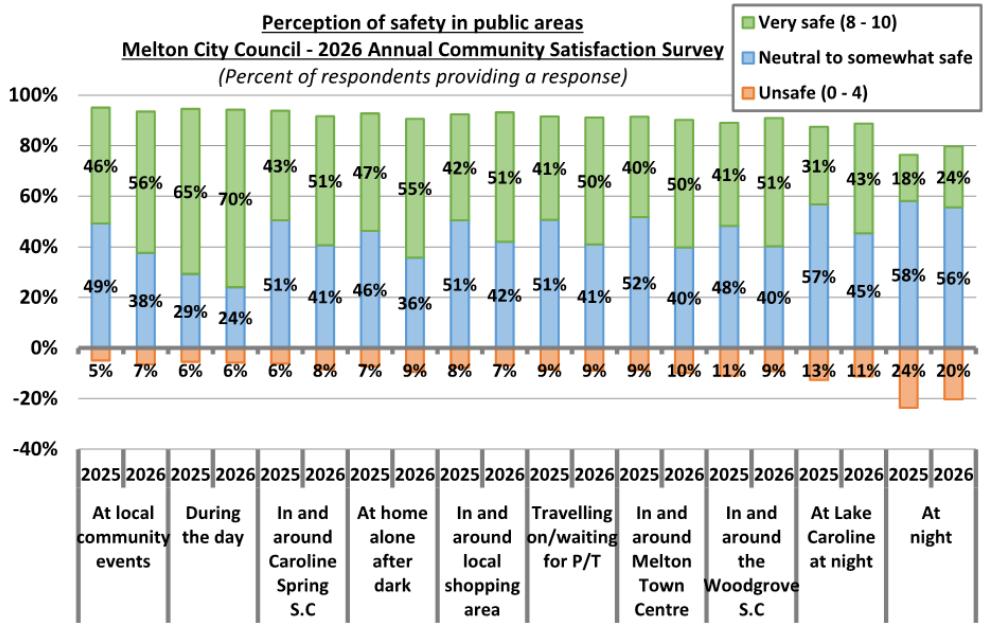


The following graph provides a breakdown into the proportion of respondents who felt "very safe" (i.e., rated safety at eight or more), those who felt "neutral to somewhat safe" (i.e., rated safety at five to seven), and those who felt "unsafe" (i.e., rated safety at less than five).

Consistent with the increase in average satisfaction, there was an increase in the proportion of respondents who felt "very safe" in each of the 10 situations included in the survey this year.

The standout increase was recorded for safety at Lake Caroline at night (up 12pts to 43%).

There was no substantial decline in the proportion of respondents who felt "unsafe" in nine of these 10 situations, apart from the notable (4pt) decline in the proportion of respondents who felt "unsafe" in the public areas of the municipality at night.



The following graph provides a comparison of the perception of safety in public areas of the municipality during the day, at night, in and around local shopping area, and travelling on / waiting for public transport against the metropolitan Melbourne average, as recorded in *Governing Melbourne*.

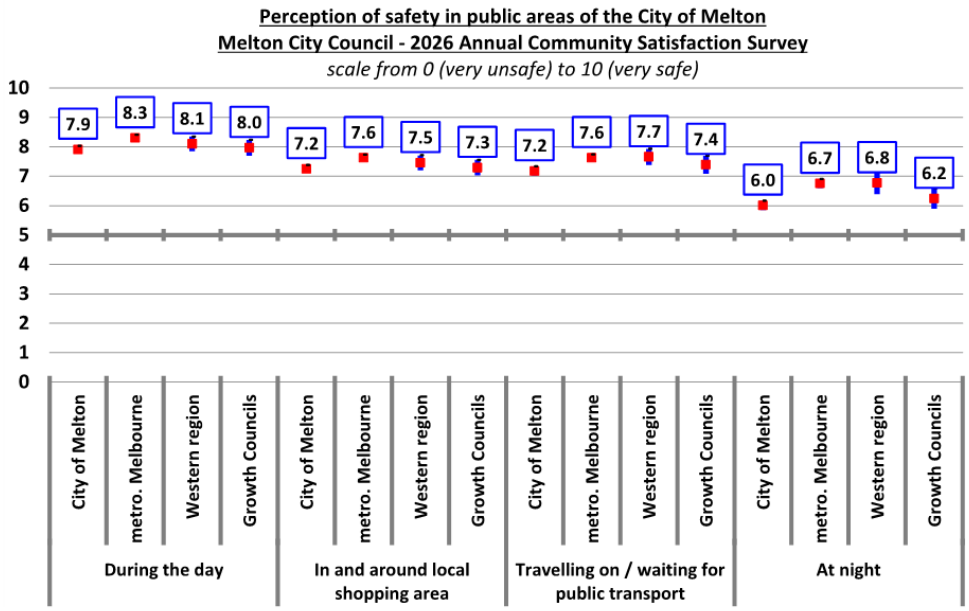
Governing Melbourne was conducted independently by Metropolis Research using the same door-to-door, in-person methodology in January 2026.

Metropolis Research notes that the perception of safety in all four of these situations was measurably lower in the City of Melton than the metropolitan average, and somewhat to notably lower than the western region and growth area councils' averages.

Consistent with the result recorded last year, the largest difference was for the perception of safety in public areas at night, which was seven percentage points (down from 16pts) lower than the metropolitan average.

The perception of safety during the day (4pts down from 8pts), in and around the local shopping area (4pts down from 9pts), and travelling on / waiting for public transport (4pts down from 8pt) were also all measurably lower than the metropolitan average.

The decline in the gap between the City of Melton and metropolitan results reflects the increase in the perception of safety in the City of Melton and the decline in the metropolitan average perception of safety this year.



Reasons for feeling less safe:

The following table outlines the 229 (up from 158) responses received from respondents as to the reasons why they felt unsafe in the public areas of the City of Melton.

These responses have been broadly categorised, as outlined in the following table.

The most common reasons why respondents felt unsafe in the public areas of the City of Melton were related to concerns around or incidents of crime (such as theft, robbery, violence, and others), with 27% of responses related to these reasons.

Concerns around young people and youth crime (13%, new category this year), and a perceived lack of police and / or a perceived lack of consequences for crime (12%) also prominent reasons.

There were also some concerns around drugs and alcohol, the image of the local area, lighting, vandalism and anti-social behaviour, and concerns around various types of people.

Reasons for feeling unsafe in public areas of the City of Melton
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of responses from respondents rating safety less than five)

Reason	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*
	Number	*Percent*				
Crime (theft, robbery, violence, etc) / incidents	62	27%	54%	60%	48%	18%
Youth / youth crime	30	13%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Police presence / lack of consequences	27	12%	12%	2%	4%	21%
Drug and alcohol issues	21	9%	1%	8%	7%	3%
Image / feel of place and news reports	18	8%	3%	4%	2%	6%
Lighting	17	7%	5%	7%	10%	8%
General safety	15	7%	10%	1%	8%	8%
Vandalism and anti-social behaviour	15	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Concerns about various types of people	10	4%	8%	13%	13%	29%
Traffic related	4	2%	2%	2%	5%	2%
Public transport safety	3	1%	3%	2%	3%	3%
Other	7	3%	3%	0%	0%	2%
Total	**229**	**100%**	**158**	**164**	**125**	**227**

Sense of community

Respondents were asked:

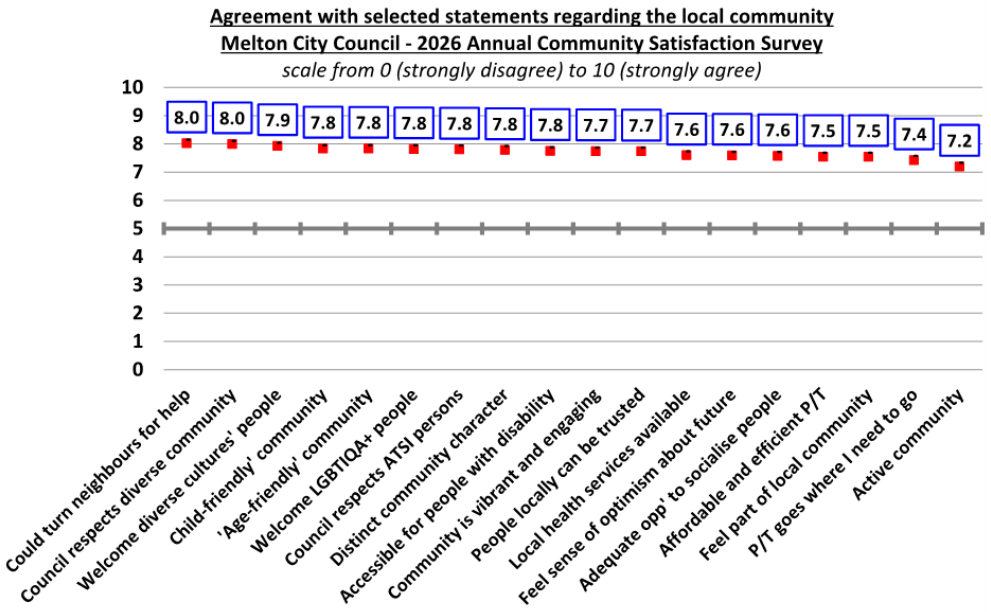
"On a scale of 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree) where 5 is neutral, please rate your agreement with the following statements regarding the local community."

Respondents were again in 2026, asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with 18 statements about the local sense of community, Council engagement with the community, and some aspects relating to public transport.

The average agreement with these statements varied from a low of 7.2 out of 10 it's an active community, people do things and get involved in local issues, to a high of 8.0 that the respondent could turn to the neighbours for help.

The average agreement with the 18 statements increased somewhat this year, up three percentage points to 7.8 out of 10, with an increase in average agreement recorded for all 18 statements.

The increase in average agreement was statistically significant for 15 of the 18 statements, excluding that it's an active community, people do things and get involved in local issues (up 1pt), that Melton is an 'age-friendly' community (up 1pt), and that there are adequate opportunities to socialise and meet people in the local area (up 2pts).



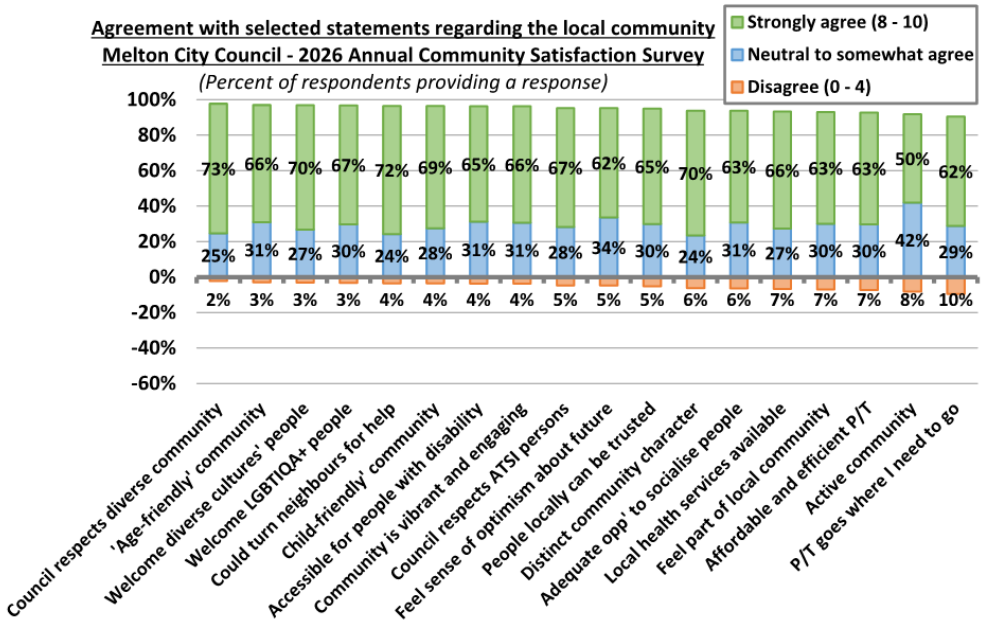
The standout results this year were the five percentage point increases recorded for agreement that there is public transport that goes where the respondent needs to go (up 5pts to 7.4 out of 10) and that there is access to affordable and efficient public transport (up 5pts to 7.5).

There were also four percentage point increases recorded for agreement that Melton City respects, reflects and is inclusive of our diverse community (up 4pts to 8.0), and that Melton is accessible and inclusive for people with disability (up 4pts to 7.8).

The following graph provides a breakdown of these results into the proportion of respondents who “strongly agreed” (i.e., rated agreement at eight or more), those who were “neutral to somewhat agreed” (i.e., rated agreement at five to seven), and those who “disagreed” (i.e., rated agreement at less than five).

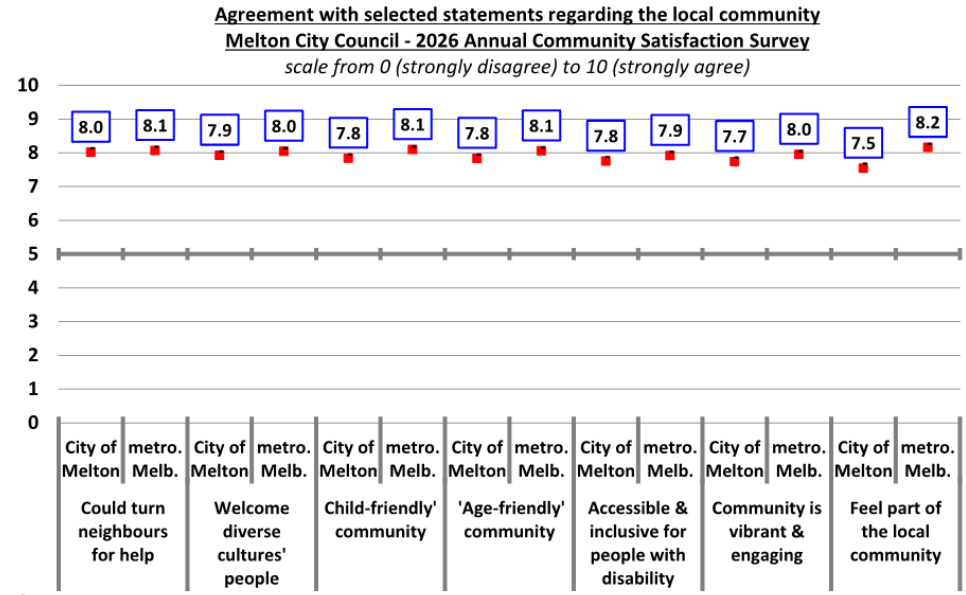
At least half of the respondents providing a score “strongly agreed” with all 18 statements this year.

It is noted that eight percent of respondents “disagreed” that it was an active community, people do things and get involved in local issues, and 10% of respondents “disagreed” that public transport goes where they need to go, which was the only statement again this year with which at least 10% of respondents were “dissatisfied”.



The following graph provides a comparison against the metropolitan average with the seven statements that were also included in the *Governing Melbourne* research.

Respondents in the City of Melton were less in agreement with all seven statements, and measurably less in agreement that respondents feel part of the local community (7pts lower at 8.2), that it is a 'child-friendly' community (3pts lower at 7.8), an 'age-friendly' community (3pts lower at 7.8), the community is vibrant and engaging (3pts lower at 8.0), welcoming and supportive of people from diverse cultures and backgrounds (1pt lower at 7.9).



Average commuting time

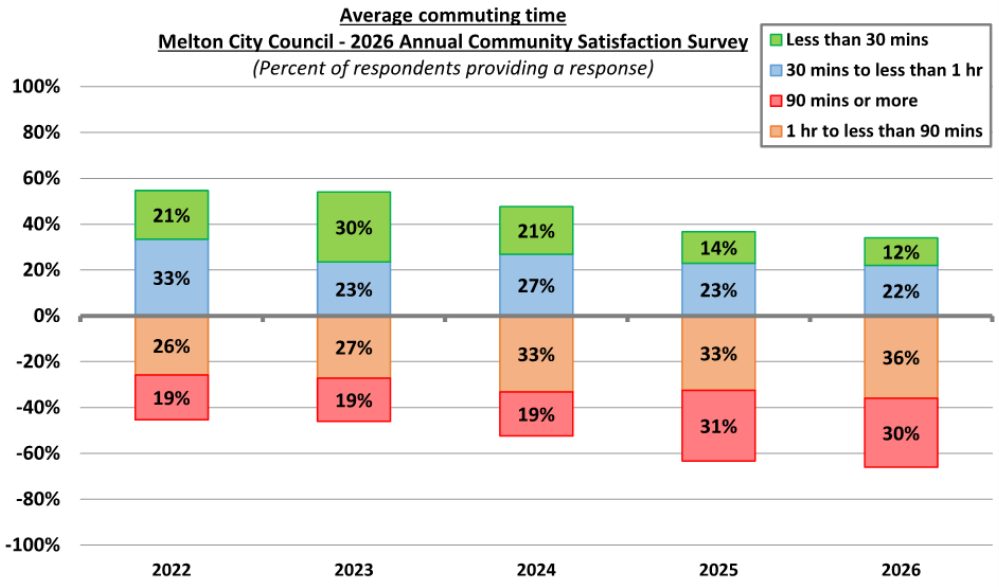
Respondents were asked:

"If you are employed, on average how long does it take in total to travel both to and from work each day (combined total two-way)?"

Respondents were again in 2026, asked how long their two-way commute time was to and from work each day.

There was a marginal increase in the average commute times recorded this year, with approximately one-third (34% down from 37%) reporting a commute time of less than one hour, and two-thirds (66% up from 64%) reporting a commute time of one hour or more.

This result maintains the trend of increasing commuting times reported over the five years that this question has been included in the survey program, with the proportion reporting a two-way commute time of one hour or more increasing from 45% in 2022 to 66% this year.



While the majority (62%) of City of Melton residents recorded in the 2021 *Census* travelled to work by car, the commuting time results published here do not only reflect the commuting times of motorists.

These results reflect the commuting time of all in the community, including those who travel to work by public transport, and active or sustainable transport modes (i.e., walking, cycling, and other methods).

Average commuting time
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*
	Number	*Percent*				
Less than 30 minutes	76	12%	14%	21%	30%	21%
30 minutes to less than one hour	140	22%	23%	27%	23%	33%
One hour to less than 90 minutes	228	36%	33%	33%	27%	26%
90 minutes or more	189	30%	31%	19%	19%	19%
Not stated	167		173	213	163	220
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**

It is noted that traffic management related issues as a top three issue to address remained the most common issue to address, despite declining somewhat this year (17% down from 23%). The 2025 metropolitan average for traffic management related issues was 11 percent.

This does highlight that issues such as commuting times including issues around traffic congestion remain significant issues in the City of Melton community.

Food security

Respondents were asked:

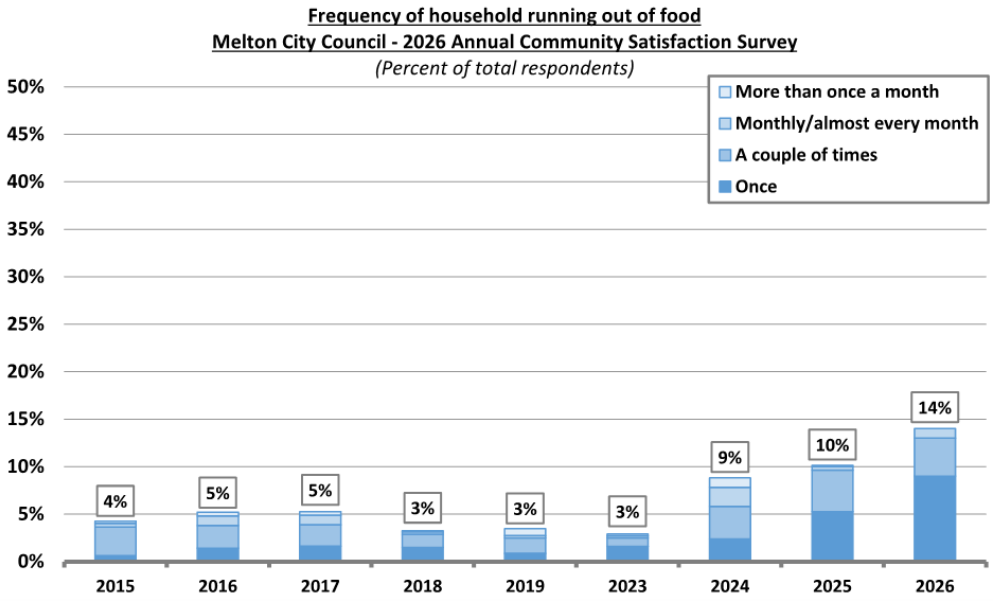
"In the past 12 months, were there any times that your household ran out of food and couldn't afford to buy more?"

Respondents were again in 2026, asked whether there were any times in the last 12 months that their household had run out of food and been unable to afford to buy more.

It is acknowledged that this question may be potentially subject to an under-reporting of the likely true level of food insecurity in the City of Melton community, given that there may be some respondents who felt unwilling or unable to answer the question.

The proportion of respondents who reported that their household had run out of food and couldn't afford to buy more at least once in the last 12 months increased notably this year, up from nine percent in 2024 and 10% in 2025, to 14% this year.

This was the highest proportion of respondent households who had run out of food at least once in the last 12 months recorded over the seven times that this question has been included in the survey.



In the post-pandemic period (2023 to 2026), the average proportion of respondent households who reported that they had **never** run out of food at least once in the past year and not been able to buy more has averaged 82%, notably (7pts or 9%) higher than the pre-pandemic (2015 to 2019) average of 89%.

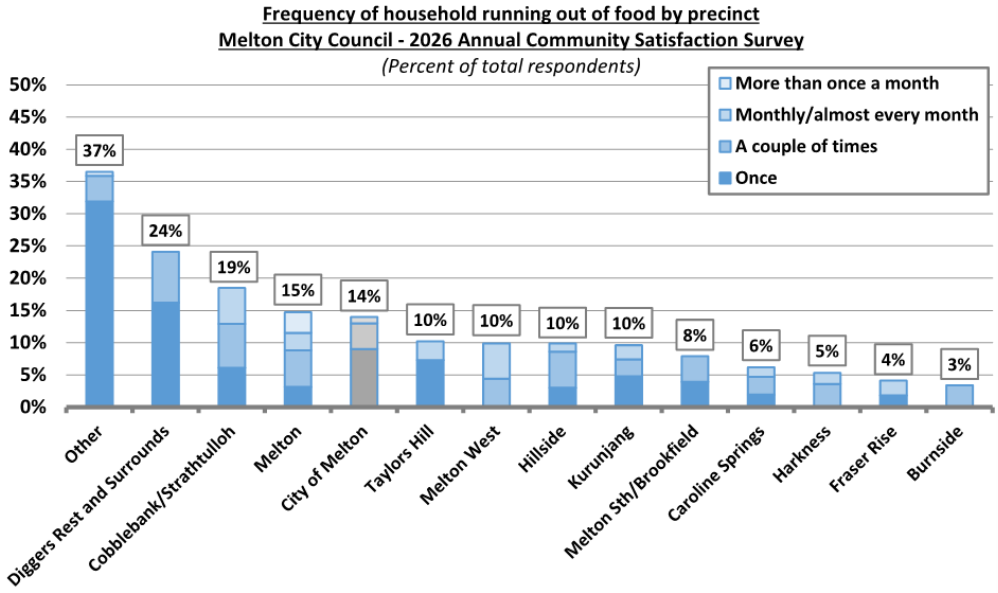
Frequency of household running out of food
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of total respondents)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2019*	*2018*
	Number	*Percent*					
Never	610	76%	83%	85%	83%	92%	87%
Once	74	9%	5%	2%	2%	1%	2%
A couple of times	29	4%	4%	3%	1%	2%	1%
Monthly or almost every month	11	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
More than once a month	3	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Can't say	73	9%	7%	6%	15%	4%	10%
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**804**	**800**

While conscious of the sample size for some of the precinct results, there was notable variation in the food security results observed across the municipality.

Respondents from the other precinct (23pts) and Diggers Rest and surrounds (10pts) were notably more likely to have run out of food at least once in the last 12 months than the municipal average.

By contrast, respondents from Melton South / Brookfield (6pts), Caroline Springs (8pts), Harkness (9pts), Fraser Rise (10pts), and Burnside (11pts) were notably less likely than average to have run out of food at least once in the last 12 months.



Family violence

The family violence component of the survey includes a preliminary question asking respondents if they believe that family violence is common in the community, and then a follow up set of questions asking respondents if they agree or disagree with five statements relating to some of the drivers of, or myths that can justify or excuse family violence in the community.

The family violence related questions are in line with the national community attitudes survey delivered by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS).

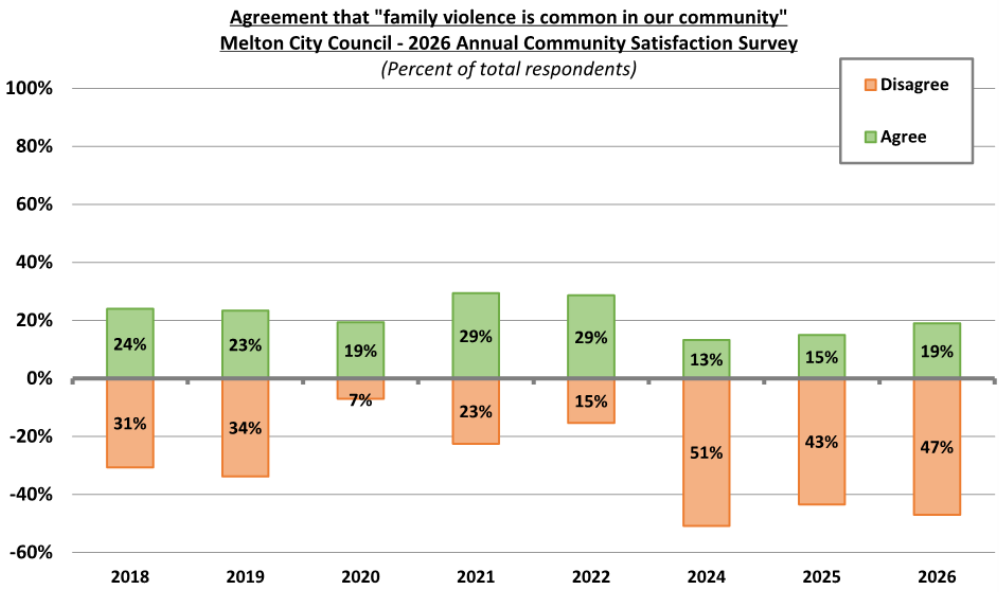
Metropolis Research acknowledges that the results to this set of questions may be subject to a subjective response bias, given the nature of the questions and that they were asked in person, face-to-face.

Family violence is common in our community

There was a notable (4pt) increase this year in the proportion of respondents who agreed that family violence was common in their community, but also a notable increase (4pt) increase in the proportion who disagreed.

There was also a notable (7pt) increase in the proportion of respondents who were neutral regarding this question.

These variations were largely the result of significantly (14pt) decrease in the proportion of respondents who were not able or willing to provide a response to this question.



Over the course of the eight surveys that this question has been included in the survey program, the long-term average agreement that family violence is common in the community was 22%, while an average of 31% disagreed.

Agreement with "family violence is common in our community"
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of total respondents)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2022*	*2021*	*2020*
	Number	*Percent*					
Agree	148	19%	15%	13%	29%	29%	19%
Neutral	140	18%	11%	13%	15%	14%	9%
Disagree	374	47%	43%	51%	15%	23%	7%
Can't say	138	17%	31%	23%	41%	34%	64%
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**800**	**800**	**804**

Statements about family violence

Respondents were asked:

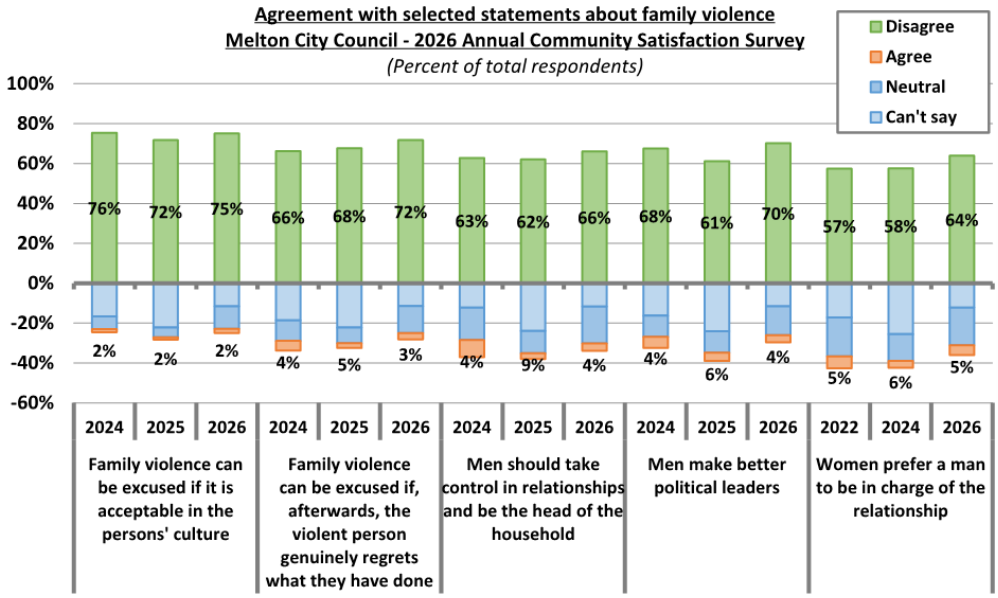
"On a scale from 1 (disagree) to 3 (agree), please rate your agreement with the following statements."

Respondents were again in 2026, asked to rate their agreement with five statements about family violence.

There was a small increase in the proportion of respondents who disagreed with each of these five statements this year, with the standout increase recorded for disagreement that men make better political leaders than women (up 9pts to 71%), and that women prefer a man to be in charge of the relationship (up 6pts to 64%).

These results continue to show that the majority of the City of Melton community disagreed with these five statements, which is a positive result that reflects general agreement in line with contemporary standards (as defined by the Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety).

Attention is drawn again this year to the fact that less than six percent of respondents agreed with any of these five statements about family violence.



Volunteering

Respondents were asked:

"Do you or member of your household volunteer regularly?"

Respondents were again in 2026, asked if they or a member of their household regularly volunteer.

The proportion of respondents from households with a member who regularly volunteers locally increased somewhat this year, up three percentage points to 11%, reversing the declined recorded last year.

This result was consistent with the 2022 *Victorian Population Health Survey* results for the Brimbank-Melton region, which estimated that 12% definitely "help out a local group as a volunteer".

Given the distance now from the pandemic, this was a somewhat surprising result, as there was some expectation that the level of volunteering was likely to start to return to pre-pandemic levels.

The proportion of respondents from households with a member that volunteers non-locally, increased marginally this year, up one percentage point to seven percent.

Combined, these results record 18% of respondents from across the City of Melton were from households with a member who volunteers.

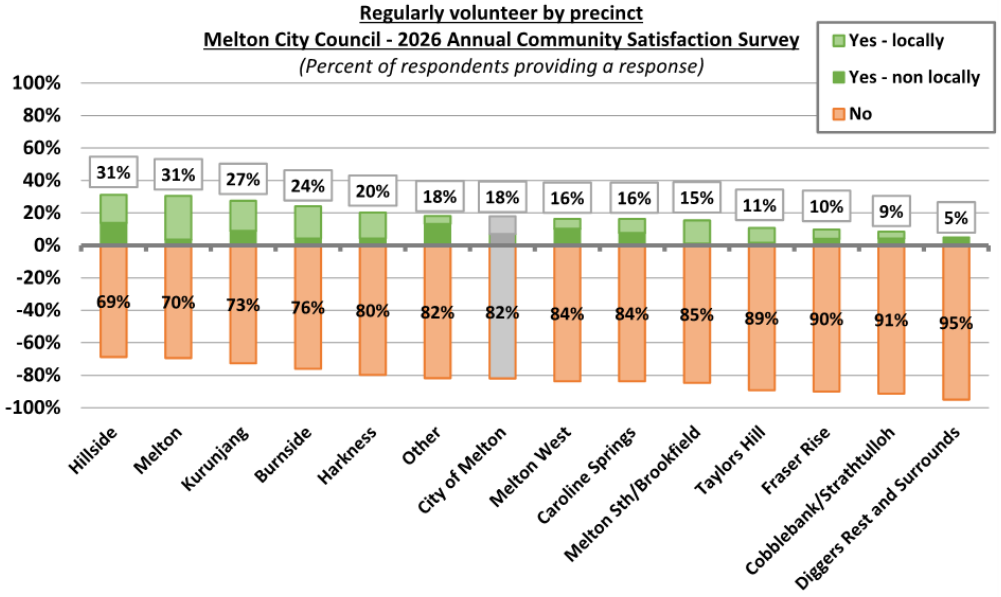
This was a very modest result, and lower than Metropolis Research has typically observed in other municipalities across metropolitan Melbourne. In other municipalities surveyed post-pandemic, the extent of volunteering in the community appears to be returning slowly to pre-pandemic levels.

Regularly volunteer
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

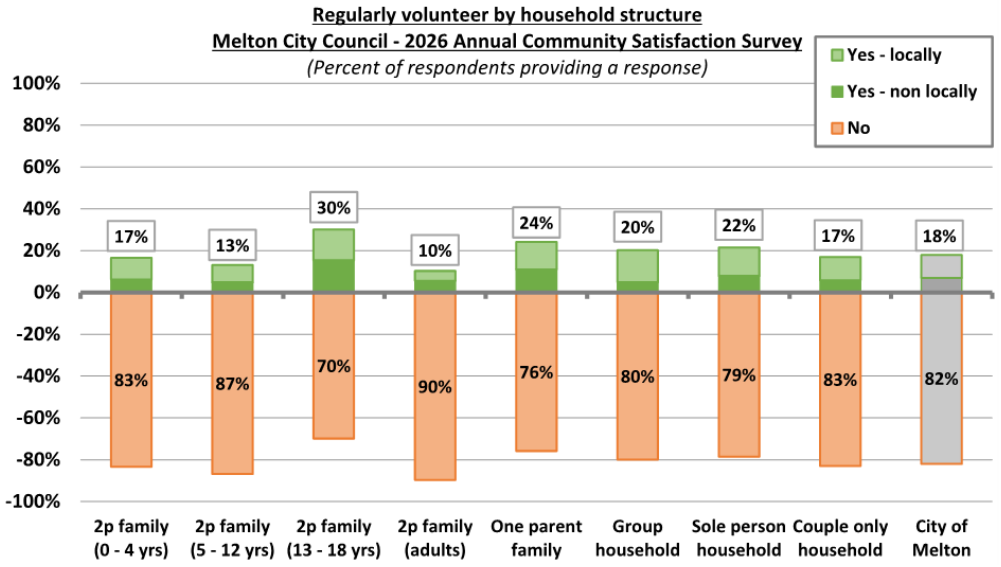
Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
Yes - locally	77	11%	8%	11%	11%	14%	22%
Yes - non-local	51	7%	6%	6%	3%	3%	5%
No	590	82%	86%	83%	86%	82%	72%
Can't say	82		64	68	96	135	103
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

There was some variation in the extent of volunteering observed across the municipality, with respondents from Hillside (13pts), Melton precinct (13pts), Kurunjang (9pts), and Burnside (6pts) notably more likely than average to have household members who volunteer.

By contrast, respondents from Fraser Rise (8pts), Cobblebank / Strathtulloh (9pts), and Diggers Rest and surrounds (13pts) were notably less likely than average to volunteer.



There was some variation in this result observed by household structure, with two-parent families (youngest child aged 13 to 18 years) notably (12pts) more likely than average to have household members who volunteer.



Respondent profile

The following section of this report provides details as to the demographic profile of the respondents to the survey. These results show that the survey methodology has obtained a sample of residents that is both highly consistent over time, as well as being reflective of the underlying population of the City of Melton.

Age structure

The sample of respondents was weighted by age and gender to reflect the 2021 *Census* results. Metropolis Research notes that the unweighted sample obtained via the door-to-door methodology very closely reflected the underlying population, reinforcing the strength of the door-to-door methodology in representing the views of the Melton community.

Age group
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Age	*2026 (unweighted)*		*2026*	*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*	*(weighted)*					
Young adults *(18 - 34 years)*	213	27%	34%	34%	34%	34%	34%	34%
Adults *(35 - 49 years)*	289	36%	33%	33%	33%	33%	33%	24%
Middle-aged adults *(50 - 59 yrs)*	133	17%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	24%
Older adults *(60 - 69 years)*	90	11%	11%	11%	11%	11%	11%	14%
Senior citizens *(70 yrs and over)*	72	9%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	4%
Not stated	3		3	3	0	0	0	0
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

Gender

The sample of respondents was weighted by age and gender to reflect the 2021 *Census* results.

Gender
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Gender	*2026 (unweighted)*		*2026*	*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*	*(weighted)*					
Man	421	53%	49%	49%	49%	49%	49%	49%
Woman	375	47%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%
Non-binary	1	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Prefer to self-describe	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say	3		3	2	0	1	1	0
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

In 2026, 38 respondents (5% of those who provided a response) identified as Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander. This was a record high over the 12 years of the survey program.

Household member identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
Yes	38	5%	3%	2%	1%	3%	1%
No	721	95%	97%	98%	99%	97%	99%
Not stated	41		55	49	12	16	14
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

Household member with disability

Consistent with recent results, in 2026, eight percent of respondents were from households with a member with disability.

Household member with disability
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
Yes	59	8%	6%	9%	8%	16%	12%
No	706	92%	94%	91%	92%	84%	88%
Not stated	35		30	13	9	29	15
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

Household member identifying as LGBTIQA+

Consistent with historical results, just two percent of respondents identified as LGBTIQA+.

Household member identifying as LGBTIQA+
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
Yes	13	2%	1%	2%	2%	4%	3%
No	748	98%	99%	98%	98%	96%	97%
Not stated	39		40	23	11	35	21
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

Language spoken at home

In 2026, more than one-third (37% down from 45%) of the respondents (who provided a response) were from households that spoke a language other than English at home.

This was almost identical to the long-term average since 2015 of 38%, and the 2021 Census result of 39% of residents speaking a language other than English at home.

This consistent result reflects extremely well on the effectiveness of the methodology of engaging with the diverse Melton community.

Language spoken at home
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
English	505	63%	55%	50%	60%	64%	66%
Hindi	57	7%	9%	8%	5%	3%	3%
Punjabi	33	4%	7%	9%	7%	3%	3%
Mandarin	16	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Tagalog (Filipino)	15	2%	3%	2%	3%	5%	3%
Tamil	14	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Urdu	12	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Arabic	11	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Spanish	11	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Maltese	9	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	3%
Teluga	8	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Italian	7	1%	1%	3%	1%	3%	4%
Chinese, n.f.d	6	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Macedonian	6	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Sinhalese	6	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Vietnamese	6	1%	3%	2%	3%	1%	1%
Greek	5	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Gujarati	5	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Malayalam	5	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Marathi	5	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Albanian	4	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
French	4	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Nepali	4	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Persian	4	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
German	3	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%
All other languages *(28 separately identified)*	35	4%	5%	6%	7%	7%	5%
Not stated	4		6	5	5	13	13
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

Household structure

Consistent with the results recorded in previous years, a little more than half of the respondents were from two-parent family households, including a mix of families with children of all ages. The sample also includes 29% couple households without children, five percent one-parent families, seven percent sole person households, and seven percent group households.

Household structure
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Structure	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
Two parent family total	**410**	**52%**	**55%**	**57%**	**56%**	**57%**	**56%**
youngest child 0 - 4 years	*104*	*13%*	*14%*	*15%*	*18%*	*12%*	*16%*
youngest child 5 - 12 years	*122*	*15%*	*18%*	*20%*	*16%*	*19%*	*18%*
youngest child 13 - 18 years	*86*	*11%*	*11%*	*11%*	*10%*	*9%*	*12%*
adult children only	*98*	*12%*	*13%*	*12%*	*11%*	*17%*	*11%*
One parent family total	**40**	**5%**	**6%**	**9%**	**10%**	**9%**	**6%**
youngest child 0 - 4 years	*5*	*1%*	*1%*	*1%*	*2%*	*1%*	*2%*
youngest child 5 - 12 years	*6*	*1%*	*1%*	*1%*	*3%*	*1%*	*2%*
youngest child 13 - 18 years	*6*	*1%*	*1%*	*3%*	*2%*	*1%*	*1%*
adult children only	*23*	*3%*	*3%*	*4%*	*4%*	*5%*	*2%*
Group household	54	7%	6%	6%	7%	7%	6%
Sole person household	59	7%	8%	7%	7%	6%	9%
Couple only household	226	29%	25%	20%	19%	19%	21%
Other	2	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Not stated	9		10	11	23	31	29
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

Business owner

Consistent with results in recent years, six percent (down from 7%) of respondents who provided an answer to the question identified as owners or managers of businesses located within the City of Melton.

Household member own / manage a business in the City of Melton
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Response	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
Yes	41	6%	7%	7%	7%	13%	13%
No	699	94%	93%	93%	93%	87%	87%
Not stated	60		63	23	16	42	30
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

Housing situation

Consistent with the long-term average since 2015 of 48%, approximately half (53% up from 46%) of respondent households owned their home outright, and a further 23% (down from 28%) identified as mortgagor households, and there were 23% were from rental households.

Housing situation
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Situation	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
Own this home	420	53%	46%	50%	54%	45%	48%
Mortgagor *(paying-off this home)*	182	23%	28%	23%	26%	41%	39%
Renting this home	182	23%	25%	25%	19%	14%	11%
Insecure housing	3	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	2%
Not stated	13		11	21	13	46	37
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

Period of residence

Consistent with the results recorded in previous years, the survey included a good mix of period of residence, with approximately one-quarter (26% down from 38%) newer residents (less than five years in the City of Melton), approximately one-third (31% up from 29%) medium term residents (five to less than 10 years), and a little less than half (43% up from 34%) were long-term residents (10 years or more in the City of Melton).

Period of residence can be a factor in overall satisfaction, as new residents tend to report higher levels of overall satisfaction with Council than long-term residents of 10 years or more.

Period of residence in the City of Melton
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of respondents providing a response)

Period	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*	*2021*
	Number	*Percent*					
Less than 1 year	38	5%	9%	12%	9%	2%	1%
1 to less than 5 years	167	21%	29%	25%	30%	7%	9%
5 to less than ten years	246	31%	29%	24%	26%	23%	21%
Ten years or more	344	43%	34%	40%	35%	68%	69%
Not stated	5		0	6	4	26	24
Total	**800**	**100%**	**800**	**801**	**806**	**800**	**800**

General comments

Respondents were asked:

"Do you have any further comments you would like to make?"

There was a total of 88 (up from 84) general comments received from respondents to the survey this year.

These comments have been broadly categorised, as outlined in the following table.

The most common issues remain roads and traffic (16 comments), and various Council services and facilities (15 comments).

Summary of general comments
Melton City Council - 2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey
(Number and percent of total responses)

Comment	*2026*		*2025*	*2024*	*2023*	*2022*
	Number	*Percent*				
Traffic and roads	16	18%	17%	18%	26%	14%
Council services and facilities	15	17%	15%	15%	11%	11%
Parks, gardens and open spaces	8	9%	4%	6%	9%	9%
Safety, policing and crime	8	9%	10%	7%	13%	7%
Parking	6	7%	8%	2%	0%	6%
Council governance and performance	6	7%	2%	4%	1%	3%
General positive	5	6%	1%	4%	5%	3%
Waste management and cleanliness	4	5%	4%	7%	5%	10%
General negative	3	3%	4%	1%	3%	0%
Public transport	3	3%	8%	6%	3%	6%
Communication, consultation, responsiveness	2	2%	7%	3%	4%	7%
Street lighting	2	2%	0%	1%	0%	2%
Tree maintenance	2	2%	4%	3%	4%	2%
Comments on the survey	1	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Rates and financial management	1	1%	7%	4%	3%	3%
Planning, building and development	1	1%	2%	0%	3%	6%
Cost of living	1	1%	0%	1%	3%	0%
Footpaths	1	1%	4%	4%	1%	3%
Schools / education	0	0%	1%	5%	0%	1%
Animal management	0	0%	0%	3%	0%	1%
Support for local business	0	0%	0%	4%	0%	2%
Other	3	3%	0%	1%	2%	2%
Total	**88**	**100%**	**84**	**165**	**93**	**126**

Appendix One: survey form

Melton City Council
2026 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey

Hi my name is _____ from Metropolis Research and I am here on behalf of Melton City Council.

Council is required, under government regulations to conduct a community satisfaction survey every year, and we would welcome your feedback on the performance of Council.

We are wondering if there is someone in your household who can participate in the survey.

The survey will take approximately 15 mins to complete, is completely confidential and voluntary.

1 **Have you contacted Melton City Council in the last 12 months?**

Yes (*continue*)	**1**	No (*go to Q.4*)	**2**

2 **When you last contacted the Council, was it?** *(Please circle one only)*

Visit in person	**1**	Website	**6**
Telephone *(during office hours)*	**2**	Social media	**7**
Telephone *(after hours service)*	**3**	Visitor Information Centre / Pop-Up	**8**
Mail	**4**	Community Portal	**9**
Email	**5**		

3 **On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), how satisfied were you with the following aspects of service when you last contacted the Melton City Council.**

1. Provision of information on the Council and its services	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
2. Speed and efficiency of service	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
3. Courtesy and professionalism of staff	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
4. Access to relevant officer / area	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
5. Satisfaction with the final outcome	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
6. Overall satisfaction with the customer service experience	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*

4

On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), please rate the importance to the community, and your personal level of satisfaction with each of the following.

1. Maintenance and repair of major arterial roads and highways *(managed by VicRoads)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
If rated less than 6, please name any roads of concern:													
2. Maintenance and repair of sealed local roads *(managed by Council)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
If rated less than 6, please name any roads of concern:													
3. Footpath maintenance and repairs	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
4. Regular garbage collection	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
5. Regular recycling	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
6. Green waste collection	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
7. Provision and maintenance of parks and gardens	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
8. Provision and maintenance of street trees	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
9. Parking enforcement	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
10. Local traffic management	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
11. Animal management	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
12. Moving Ahead *(Council's printed newsletter)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
13. Council activities promoting local business growth and development	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
14. Public Spaces *(i.e. Melton amphitheatre, town centre, outdoor built public spaces)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*

5 **On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), please rate the importance of the following services to the community, followed by your personal level of satisfaction with only the services you or a family member has used in the past 12 months?**

(Survey note: Ask importance, then use, then satisfaction only if service has been used in last 12 months)

1. Council's website	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
2. The ability to access Council services through digital or online channels	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
3. Library services	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
4. Melton Recycling Facility	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
5. Hard rubbish collection	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
6. Public toilets	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
7. Recreation and Leisure Centres *(including Melton Waves)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
8. Sports grounds and associated facilities	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
9. Provision and maintenance of playgrounds	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
10. Community Centres / Neighbourhood Houses	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
11. Health services for babies, infants and toddlers	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
12. Council provided services and programs for children *(e.g. Playgroups, Family Day Care, Vacation Care)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*

5

13. Council provided services for young people *(e.g. school holiday programs, music & dance events, youth sport)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
14. Services for seniors *(e.g. Planned Activity Group programs, Seniors Clubs/ activities, personal care or domestic assistance, property maintenance, Men's shed)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
15. Services for people with disability *(e.g. respite care, holiday programs, support services)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
16. On and off road bike and / or walking paths *(including shared pathways)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
17. Provision of cultural events *(e.g. NAIDOC, Harmony Day, IDAHOBIT)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
18. Provision of community events and festivals *(e.g. Djerriwarrh Festival, Pop Culture)*	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Used	Yes						No					
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
18a. How satisfied are you with the representation of culture and diversity in Council events		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*

6

On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), can you please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of Council's governance and leadership?

1. Council meeting its responsibilities towards the environment	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
2. Council's performance in community consultation and engagement	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
3. The opportunities offered by Council to engage or be consulted with on Council decisions	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
4. Council's representation, lobbying and advocacy on behalf of the community with other levels of government and private organisations on key issues	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
5. Advocacy on behalf of the community for local educational opportunities *(e.g. local schools, TAFES, universities)*	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
6. The responsiveness of Council to local community needs	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
7. Council's performance in maintaining the trust and confidence of the local community	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
8. Council making and implementing decisions in the interests of the community	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*

7 **Can you please rate your satisfaction with the performance of Council across all areas of responsibility?**

1. Performance of Council across all areas of responsibility	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
If overall satisfaction less than 5, why do you say that?												

8 **Can you please list what you consider to be the top three issues for the City of Melton at the moment?**

Issue One:	
Issue Two:	
Issue Three:	

9 **On a scale of 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree), please rate your agreement with the following statements about the Melton City Council.**

Statement	*Strongly disagree*				*Neutral*						*Strongly agree*	*Can't say*
1. Council infrastructure is equitable, inclusive and accessible	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	*99*
If rated less than 5, why do you say that?												
2. Melton is a City that encourages and enables people to work, shop and spend time locally	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	*99*
If rated less than 5, why do you say that?												
3. Council is efficient and well run	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	*99*
If rated less than 5, why do you say that?												

10 **Have you participated in any community engagement consultation activities in the past 12 months?** *(please select as many as appropriate)*

Accessed Melton conversations	**1**	Completed a Council survey	**3**
Attended a consultation workshop	**2**	Other : _____	**4**

The State Government has planned for the population of the City of Melton to double in size to more than 300,000 over the next 20 years.

The responsibility for providing services, transport infrastructure, and facilities rests with both Council and the State Government.

11 **On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), can you please rate your satisfaction with?**

1. Planning for population growth	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
If you rated satisfaction less than 5, what concerns you most about population growth?												

12 **On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of planning and development in the City of Melton.**

1. The appearance and quality of new developments in your area	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
If rated less than 5, please identify the developments OR reasons for concern:												
2. Council's performance maintaining local heritage and sites of significance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*

13 **On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), please rate the importance to the community, and your personal level of satisfaction with each of the following.**

1. Local job opportunities	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
2. Accessibility of local education	Importance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
	Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*

14 **On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest), how safe do you feel?**

1. In public areas of the City of Melton during the day	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
2. In the public areas of the City of Melton at night	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
3. Travelling on / waiting for P/T	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
4. In and around local shopping area	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
5. In and around WoodGrove S.C	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
6. In and around Melton Town Centre	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
7. In and around Caroline Springs SC	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
8. At local community events	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
9. At home alone after dark	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
10. At Lake Caroline at night	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
If rated less than five, why do you say that?												

15 **If you are employed, on average how long does it take in total to travel both to and from work each day (combined total two-way)?**

Less than 30 minutes	**1**	One hour to less than 90 minutes	**3**
30 minutes to less than one hour	**2**	90 minutes or more	**4**

16 **On a scale of 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree) where 5 is neutral, please rate your agreement with the following statements regarding the local community.**

1. My / our neighbourhood has a distinct character, it's a special place	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
2. It's an active community, people do things and get involved in local issues	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
3. I / we feel part of the local community	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
4. In times of need, I/we could turn to the neighbours for help	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
5. Most people in my local community can be trusted	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
6. Melton is an "age-friendly" community	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
7. Melton is accessible and inclusive for people with disability	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
8. Melton is a "child-friendly" community	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
9. The Melton community is welcoming and supportive of people from diverse cultures and backgrounds	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
10. Melton City Council respects, reflects, and is inclusive of our diverse community	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
11. The Melton community is welcoming and supportive of LGBTIQA+ people	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
12. There are adequate opportunities to socialise and meet people in the local area	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
13. Melton City Council respects, reflects and is inclusive of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
14. The Melton community is vibrant, accessible and engaging	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
15. There is access to affordable and efficient public transport	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
16. There is public transport that goes where I need to go	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
17. The health services I / we need are available locally	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*
18. The statement "I feel a sense of optimism about the future"	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*99*

17 **In the past 12 months, were there any times that your household ran out of food and couldn't afford to buy more?**

Never	**1**	Monthly or almost every month	**4**
Once	**2**	More than once a month	**5**
A couple of times	**3**	Can't say	**9**

18 **On a scale of 1 (disagree) to 3 (agree), please rate your agreement with the following statements.**

Statement	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Can't say*
1. Family violence is common in our community	**1**	**2**	**3**	*9*
2. Family violence can be excused if, afterwards, the violent person genuinely regrets what they have done	**1**	**2**	**3**	*9*
3. Family violence can be excused if it is acceptable in the persons' culture	**1**	**2**	**3**	*9*
4. Men make better political leaders	**1**	**2**	**3**	*9*
5. Men should take control in relationships and be the head of the household	**1**	**2**	**3**	*9*
6. Women prefer a man to be in charge of the relationship	**1**	**2**	**3**	*9*

19 **Do you or a member of your household volunteer regularly?**

Yes - *locally*	**1**	No	**4**
Yes - *non-local*	**2**	Can't say	**9**

20 **Please indicate which of the following best describes you?**

15 - 24 years	**1**	50 - 59 years	**4**
25 - 34 years	**2**	60 - 69 years	**5**
35 - 49 years	**3**	70 years or over	**6**

21 **What is your gender identity?**

Man	**1**	Prefer to self-describe:	**4**
Woman	**2**	_____	
Non-binary	**3**	Prefer not to say	**9**

22 **Do any members of this household identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?**

Yes	**1**	No	**2**

23 **What are all the languages spoken in this household?**

English only	**1**	Other *(specify):*_____	**2**

24 **What is the structure of this household?**

Two parent family *(youngest 0 - 4 yrs)*	**1**	One parent family *(youngest 13-18 yrs)*	**7**
Two parent family *(youngest 5 - 12 yrs)*	**2**	One parent family *(adults child only)*	**8**
Two parent family *(youngest 13 - 18 yrs)*	**3**	Group household	**9**
Two parent family *(adult child only)*	**4**	Sole person household	**10**
One parent family *(youngest 0 - 4 yrs)*	**5**	Couple only family	**11**
One parent family *(youngest 5 - 12 yrs)*	**6**	Other *(specify):*_____	**12**

25 **Do any members of this household identify as having disability?**

Yes	**1**	No	**2**

26 **Do any members of this household identify as LGBTIQA+?**

Yes	**1**	No	**2**

27 **Which of the following best describes the current housing situation of this household?**

Own this home	**1**	Renting this home	**3**
Mortgage (paying-off this home)	**2**	Insecure housing *(e.g. couch surfing, homelessness)*	**4**

28 **Do you or members of this household own or manage a business operating in the City of Melton?**

Yes	**1**	No	**2**

29 **How long have you lived in the City of Melton?**

Less than 1 year	**1**	5 to less than 10 years	**3**
1 to less than 5 years	**2**	10 years or more	**4**

30 **Do you have any further comments you would like to make?**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION
A summary of these results will be published on Council's website at the conclusion of the project

31 **Council may invite some respondents to a session to provide additional feedback on any issues raised in the survey. Would you be interested in potentially being invited to attend a session?**

Yes	**1**	No	**2**

If Yes, please leave your email address and first name;

Email address:

First name:

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Cr Verdon departed the Chamber at 7.09pm and returned to the Chamber at 7:11pm.

12.2 DRAFT WESTERN FREEWAY COMMERCIAL AREA URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Author: Karl Sass - Senior Strategic Planner
Presenter: Sam Romaszko - Director City Futures

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present to Council the Draft Western Freeway Commercial Area Urban Design Framework for endorsement to proceed to community engagement.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Note the Draft Western Freeway Commercial Area Urban Design Framework (UDF) (**Appendix 1**).
2. Release the draft UDF to for community consultation for a period of four weeks.
3. Note that following the community consultation period, the draft UDF with proposed changes be presented to a future meeting of Council for endorsement.

Motion

Crs Zada/Turner.

That Council:

1. Note the Draft Western Freeway Commercial Area Urban Design Framework (UDF) (**Appendix 1**).
2. Release the draft UDF to for community consultation for a period of four weeks.
3. Note that following the community consultation period, the draft UDF with proposed changes be presented to a future meeting of Council for endorsement.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The Draft Western Freeway Commercial Area Urban Design Framework (UDF) has been prepared and is now ready for community consultation (**Appendix 1**). This process will inform the final changes to the document ahead of Council's consideration for approval at a future meeting.

The UDF outlines a framework for the future built form and public realm design on land known as the Draft Western Freeway Commercial Area. The precinct is principally identified for commercial employment land. It also contains a small portion of the future Mt Atkinson town centre which is identified as a Housing Choice and Activity Centre in Plan for Victoria and adjoins the proposed future Mt Atkinson Railway Station.

A UDF is required to be prepared by the Mt Atkinson and Tarneit Plains Precinct Structure Plan (PSP). Community engagement on strategic planning documents such as these is a legislative obligation under the Local Government Act 2020.

2. Background/Issues

The Mt Atkinson and Tarneit Plains Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) was gazetted in 2017. The PSP sets out high-level land uses and other infrastructure for the precinct. Schedule 9 to Clause 37.07 of the Urban Growth Zone in the Melton Planning Scheme "Specific provisions – Urban design framework" requires the development of three UDFs to be prepared in the PSP. The UDFs are to be prepared to the satisfaction of the response authority (Council) and the Department of Transport and Planning New Communities. Approval of the UDF is required prior to planning permits being issued by Council which would allow major development to commence.

The Western Freeway Commercial Area (WFCA) is in the north-eastern portion of the Mt Atkinson and Tarneit Plains Precinct Structure plan (PSP), bounded by the Western Freeway to the north, the Melbourne-Ararat railway line to the south, and Hopkins Road to the east. The UDF boundaries and underlying PSP land uses are shown below at **Figure 1**.

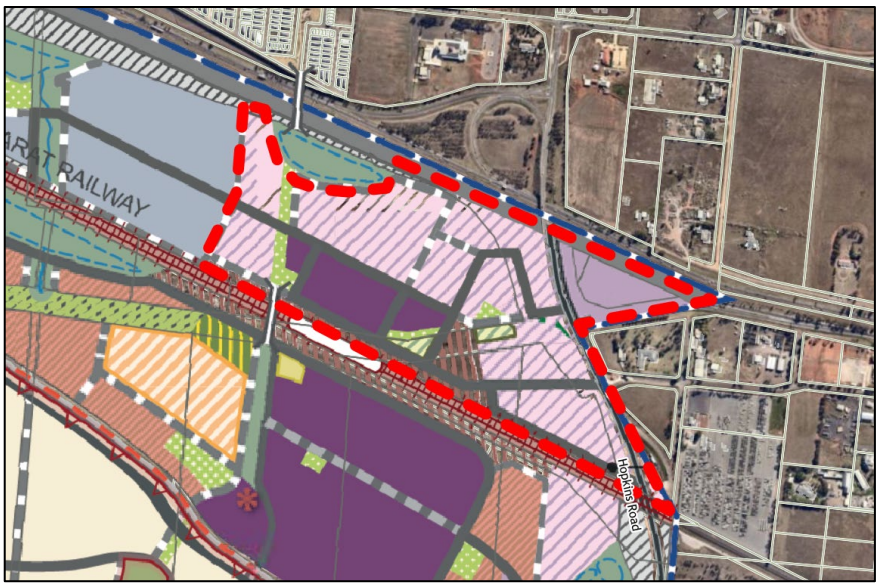


Figure 1: Mt Atkinson PSP with Western Freeway Commercial Area UDF boundary shown in red

The Western Freeway Commercial Area UDF adjoins the recently adopted Mt Atkinson Major Town Centre UDF to the south which contains most of the town centre.

The Western Freeway Commercial Area site is currently principally undeveloped with the exemption of a service station, a concrete batching plant, and other structures. The precinct has consolidated land ownership across four owners.

Council Officers signed an agreement with the primary landowner in the precinct to fund the development of the UDF. Consultancy Urban Design Management (UDM) were engaged to prepare the UDF to Council's satisfaction. UDM subsequently engaged sub-consultants for the preparation of technical reports as required.

A UDF is a planning and design document that sets out a vision for an area and guides its land use and development over time through urban design principles, objectives, and requirements and guidelines. The UDF provides guidance for Council to oversee the development, coordinating the activities of multiple of different landowners. UDFs provide guidance and direction in relation to land use, movement and access, public realm, landscape design, built form, interfaces, and sustainability

A UDF is generally prepared in four key stages:

- Stage 1 – Technical reports
- Stage 2 – Background Report
- Stage 3 – Draft Urban Design Framework
- Stage 4 – Final Urban Design Framework

This UDF is at Stage 3.

During development of the technical reports, issues arose relating to road access arrangements. These primarily relate to DTP's planning for road access for the precinct changing substantially since the PSP was developed. DTP also had concerns with the proposed intersections at Hopkins Road, and the uncertainty planning for multiple surrounding State road projects which has implications for this precinct. This led to the development of this UDF being put on hold, and Council subsequently paused development of the UDF in 2022. The project was formally recommenced by Council in April 2023, after receiving advice from DTP regarding a higher degree of certainty to work through potential access arrangements, as well as Council's need for employment land within the City.

Council Officers, DTP and UDM prepared and considered multiple potential access options over several years. DTP and associated agencies subsequently prepared high-level designs which maintain access to the precinct via two intersections. The two-intersection design proposed is supported by stakeholders.

The Background and technical reports were provided to relevant government agencies for feedback in early 2026, followed by an agency workshop on 16 June 2026.

Following revisions based on agency feedback, the draft UDF is now ready for consideration by Council to proceed to community consultation.

Draft Western Freeway Commercial Area UDF

A draft UDF for this precinct has been prepared. The concept design of the future urban structure is shown below **Figure 2**. The full draft UDF document is attached (**Appendix 1**).

The UDF primarily consists of the following land uses:

- Commercial land (shown in light and dark blue)
- A small town centre consisting of 2500m2 retail space which is the northern portion of the future adjoining Mt Atkinson major town centre to the south (light and dark pink)
- Future railway station and associated parking (purple)
- Open space, conservation reserves, and a retarding basin (green)
- A pedestrianised street/plaza (orange dashed)

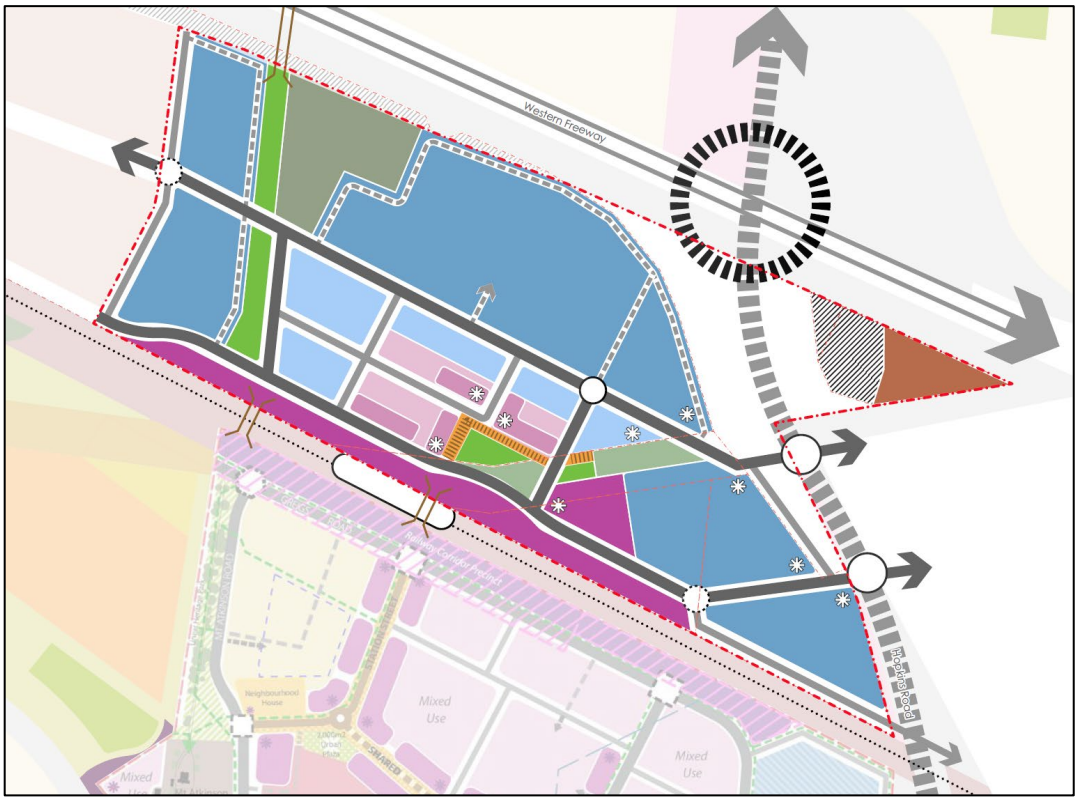


Figure 2: draft UDF Western Freeway Commercial Area UDF concept plan

The primary components of UDF include a 'fine-grained' town centre organised around the town centre park and pedestrianised plaza, with direct connections to the future railway station. The town centre will provide a range of retail options and services to both employees in the wider precinct as well as commuters utilising the proposed future railway station. The commercial area beyond the town centre includes substantial business, large format retail and commercial areas that capitalise on access and exposure to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road. The employment area along the western edge provides a transition and functional connection to future industrial land to the west of the precinct.

The draft UDF supports vehicle and active transport, a town centre and linear open green space, seeks to preserve a heritage cobblestone roadway and two natural conservation areas. The co-location of the town centre and enlarged town centre park will significantly improve the amenity of the precinct over the indicative design in the PSP.

The UDF identifies six Precincts, each with a distinct role, character, and function, which together establishes the urban structure of the precinct, while supporting a complementary land use framework. These precincts are as follows:

- Precinct 1 - Railway Corridor
- Precinct 2 - Core Town Centre
- Precinct 3 - Commercial Transition
- Precinct 4 - Transit
- Precinct 5 - Employment Transition
- Precinct 6 – Commercial Transport

The UDF also contains a staging plan linked to the precincts outlined above, as well as the development of intersections at Hopkins Road.

Road access arrangements

Access to the precinct is constrained by the Western Freeway, the interchange at the corner of the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road, the railway line, and future Outer Metropolitan Ring corridor (OMR) to the west. As a result, road access to the precinct is dependent on Hopkins Road. Access to the west of the precinct is likely over the long term as the OMR is developed, which has no commitment at this stage.

Planning for State level transport within the vicinity of the UDF has changed substantially since the PSP was developed. DTP have proposed alternative access arrangements to the Western Freeway since the PSP was developed (**Figure 3**). There are multiple State projects of influence on this UDF, which include:

- Outer Metropolitan Ring corridor (OMR)
- Hopkins Road corridor
- Western Fwy Upgrade Business Case
- Hopkins Road level crossing removal (complete)
- Proposed future Mt Atkison Railway Station precinct

During the development of the UDF, officers have collaborated with DTP to develop intersection designs for two access points, noting the precinct is likely to be serviced by heavy vehicular traffic in relatively proximity to the town centre. It is recognised the high-level designs will require further refinement at the planning permit stage.

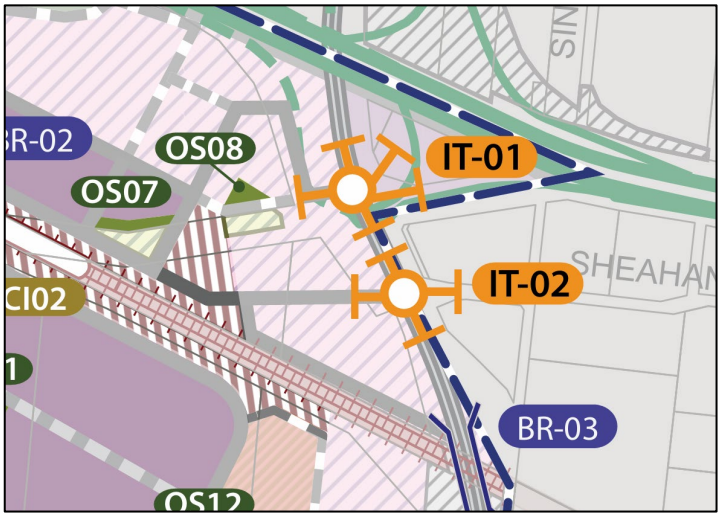


Figure 3 Mt Atkinson PSP intersection locations IT01 and IT02.

DTP's updated ultimate design for intersection IT-01 is a proposed large intersection which is interlinked with other State road projects such as upgrades of the Western Freeway.

Initial interim access is proposed at the smaller IT-02 intersection and will involve redundant works in its ultimate form covered at developer costs. As a result, full build-out of this precinct is likely to require the development of IT-01 along with DTP led interchange upgrades to Hopkins Road.

Western Freeway Pedestrian Bridge

The PSP shows a proposed pedestrian bridge (BR-01) to be delivered over the Western Freeway to the north of the precinct **Figure 4**.



Figure 4 Retarding basin and pedestrian bridge

This bridge would provide a connection to the emerging Kororoit PSP. It would also allow a large catchment of residents north of the Western Freeway convenient access to the future Mt Atkinson town centre and railway station. DTP have advised due to the OMR on and off ramps, the bridge design would need to be revised.

The draft UDF design has retained the associated land for the bridge as per the PSP in the design of the UDF to future-proof the connection. If this link wasn't provided, delivery of this bridge may require future Council advocacy and potentially a planning scheme amendment.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

2. A thriving and well-designed City

2.3 A City that has well-designed and maintained places and spaces accessible to all.

4. Financial Considerations

There are no financial considerations for the consultation stage of this project, as the consultation process will be carried out by Council's internal teams with costs incurred as part of the team's operational budget.

The development of the UDF has been landowner funded and as such costs to date have been incurred directly by the primary landowner.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

In line with Victoria's overarching planning framework and the public transparency principles of the Local Government Act 2020, Council seeks to engage with the community at all available opportunities to promote public transparency in decision making. The ultimate purpose of the precinct means the community will be directly and significantly impacted by the design of the UDF.

Previous agency consultation

The technical reports and Background report were provided to agencies for feedback in early 2026. A further workshop with relevant agencies was held in June 2026. This included the Department of Transport and Planning New Communities which also has an approval role in the UDF.

Proposed community consultation

To ensure Council is considering the views of stakeholders, Council proposes to run a comprehensive community engagement process. Consultation is proposed run for a period of four weeks from mid-October to mid-November 2026. Community consultation is consistent with recognised standard IAP2 Level 2 'Consult.'

Consultation is proposed to include the following methods:

- Physical copies of the UDF will be available at Council's Civic Centre at 232 High Street, Melton, Mt Atkinson Children's and Community Centre, Caroline Springs Library & Learning Hub, and;
- Online information and a survey via Melton Conversations webpage and Council's website;
- Notification to key stakeholders, landowners, local community, and Victorian government departments via a direct mailout;
- Two community Drop-in Sessions at Mt Atkinson Children's and Community Centre during the consultation period;
- Melton City Council social media channels;
- Newspaper advertisement;
- Publication of responses to Frequently Asked Questions.

Stakeholders will include the landowner of the precinct, landowners and occupiers within a 1-kilometre radius of the precinct boundary, relevant government agencies and authorities, and the wider community.

Council Officers will be available to discuss the UDF with residents and stakeholders.

A report outlining feedback received, and Officers response, will accompany the final report to be presented to Council for endorsement of the UDF.

6. Risk Analysis

By releasing the draft UDF and to proceed with community consultation activities, Council can risk some negative community feedback and media attention; however, this is managed within an acceptable level by normal community engagement planning. This is also a common practice for similar strategic planning projects.

If Council chooses not to release the draft UDF for community consultation period:

a. The project will be delayed, impacting the delivery of commercial and retail facilities, important for employment opportunities for the community.

b. Council may not receive important feedback from the community and miss the opportunity to shape the precinct based on feedback from local residents.

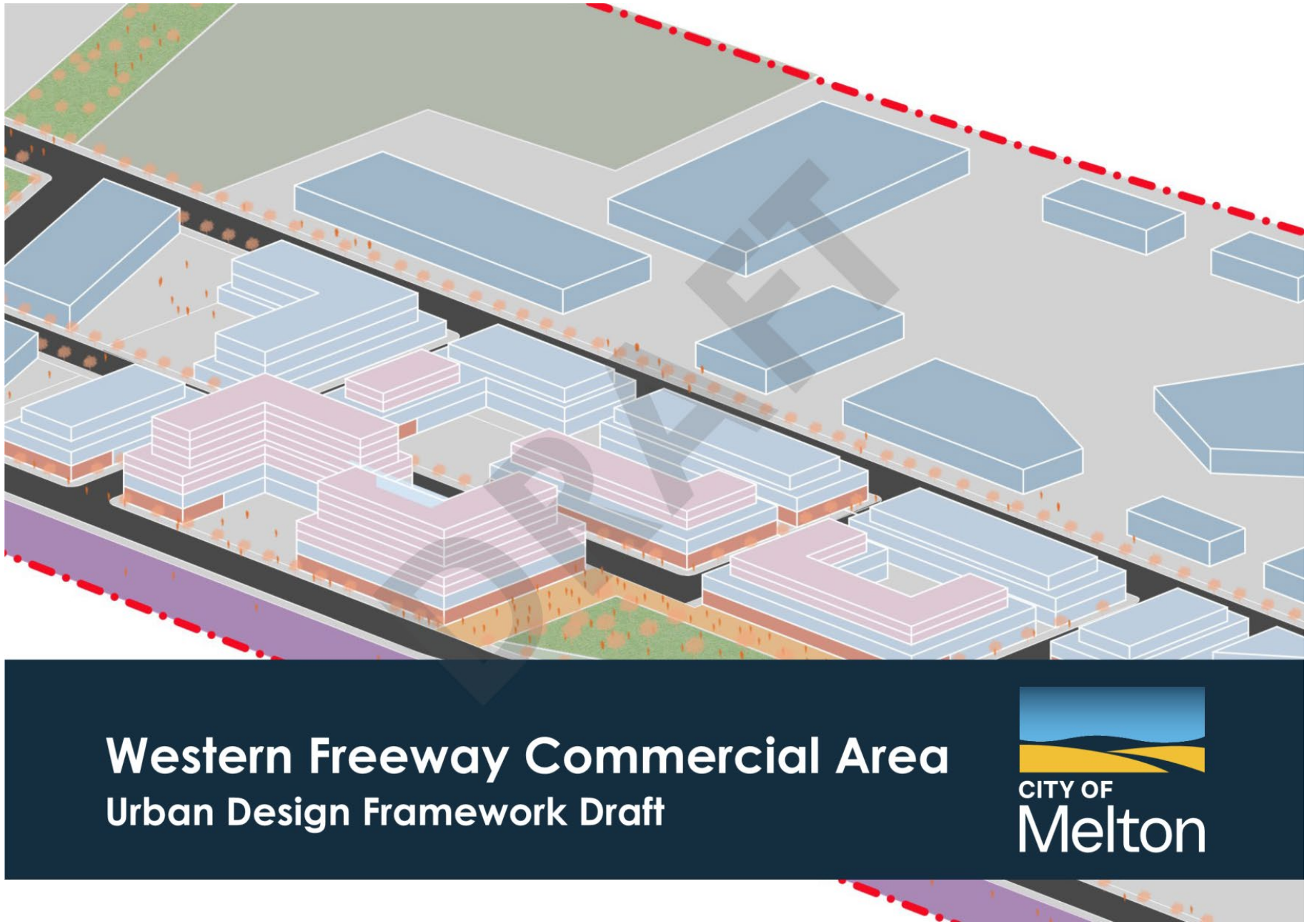
c. Council exposes itself to the inherent risk associated with a lack of public consultation and negative press coverage.

7. Options

1. Approve the Draft Western Freeway Commercial Area UDF for community consultation for a period of four weeks.
2. Not approve the Draft Western Freeway Commercial Area UDF for community consultation, and seek a further report to be presented to Council for consideration, deferring the release of the draft.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Draft Western Freeway Commercial Area Urban Design Framework


Western Freeway Commercial Area
Urban Design Framework Draft
CITY OF
Melton

Melton City Council acknowledges Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples living and working in Melton.

Council recognises the people of the Kulin Nation as the original custodians of the land now known as the City of Melton.

On behalf of the municipality, Council pays respect to their Elders, past, present, and future.

TABLE OF REVISION

Revision No.	Date of Issue	Version No.	Approved By
1.0 (DRAFT)	10/07/2026	1.0	MH/SH
2.0 (DRAFT)	25/08/2026	2.0	MH/SH

CITY OF Melton

UrbanDesign and management

Land Development | Project Management
Planning | Urban Design | Civil Engineering

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FUSION
HOMEWARE & GIFTS
Executive Summary
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Western Freeway Commercial Area - Urban Design Framework DRAFT

The Western Freeway Commercial Area Urban Design Framework (WFCA UDF) establishes the long term planning and design framework for the northern component of the Mount Atkinson Major Town Centre. It has been prepared as required by the Mount Atkinson and Tarneit Plains Precinct Structure Plan and will guide future subdivision, development and infrastructure delivery within the WFCA.

The WFCA will perform two complementary roles. Its southern area will form part of the broader Mount Atkinson Major Town Centre, providing mixed use development, local services and supporting retail and commercial activity focused around the Town Centre Park, Pedestrianised Street and Plaza and future Mount Atkinson Railway Station. Its northern and western areas will accommodate substantial business, large format retail, commercial and employment development that capitalises on access and exposure to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road and connects with adjoining industrial and employment land.

The UDF establishes:

- a finer grained Core Town Centre focused on the Town Centre Park, Pedestrianised Street and Plaza and direct connections to the future railway station.
- substantial areas for business, large format retail, commercial and employment generating uses, with an appropriate transition in land use, built form and character across the WFCA.
- a connected movement network accommodating walking, cycling, potential public transport, vehicles, freight, loading and servicing while protecting pedestrian priority environments.
- a future station precinct comprising land for the railway station, station forecourt, potential public transport interchange, commuter parking and associated pedestrian and cycling connections.
- a network of parks, landscaped streets and active transport corridors that provides shade, amenity, recreation and connectivity throughout the town centre, commercial and employment areas.
- protection and sensitive integration of the Entry and Central Conservation Reserves, which contain Forest Sun Orchid populations and associated habitat.
- retention and interpretation of heritage elements, including the historic cobbled roadway, together with opportunities to recognise Indigenous cultural heritage and the post-contact history of the site.
- built form, landscape and sustainability outcomes that respond to the WFCA's prominent regional location, large commercial sites, extensive roof and parking areas and Melton's changing climate.

Access to the WFCA will ultimately be provided through Intersections IT-01 and IT-02. IT-02 may support earlier development, subject to demonstrated network capacity and relevant approvals, while the timing and form of IT-01 will be coordinated with future upgrades to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road. The UDF protects the opportunity to deliver Bridge BR-01 and other important pedestrian and cycling connections across the Western Freeway and railway corridor.

Delivery of the WL3 wetland and RB3 retarding basin in the location identified by the Mount Atkinson and Tarneit Plains Precinct Structure Plan (MATPPSP) and Gardiner Lane Drainage Services Scheme remains the preferred drainage outcome. Any alternative drainage strategy will require demonstrated hydraulic, environmental, landscape and infrastructure outcomes and the support of Melbourne Water and Council.

The UDF recognises that development, infrastructure and transport investment will occur progressively. It therefore provides flexibility for detailed design and staging while protecting the ultimate land use, movement, public realm, conservation, drainage and infrastructure framework. Interim uses, access arrangements and works must support, or at least not prejudice, the long-term development of the WFCA.

Future proposals will be assessed through the combined application of the framework plans, requirements and guidelines. Requirements identify outcomes that must be achieved, while guidelines describe preferred design responses and allow alternative approaches where the relevant requirements and broader intent of the UDF are demonstrably achieved.


GRAY CT
TROUPS ROAD NORTH
SINCLAIRS ROAD
NEALE ROAD
WESTERN FREEWAY
SHEAHAN ROAD
MT ATKINSON
TROUPS ROAD SOUTH
ATKINSON ROAD
1.Introduction
6
Western Freeway Commercial Area - Urban Design Framework DRAFT

The Western Freeway Commercial Area Urban Design Framework (WFCA UDF) has been prepared to guide the use and development of the WFCA, as required by the Mount Atkinson and Tarneit Plains Precinct Structure Plan (MATP PSP). The PSP identifies the WFCA as the northern component of the Mount Atkinson Major Town Centre (MTC) and requires an approved UDF before planning permits can be issued for subdivision and development within the area.

1.1. Purpose of this Document

A UDF is a strategic planning and design document that establishes a coordinated vision and spatial framework for the long term development of an area. It integrates land use, built form, public realm, movement, landscape and infrastructure considerations to support coordinated and high quality development.

The purpose of the WFCA UDF is to guide the coordinated planning, design and staged development of the precinct. It establishes the preferred urban structure, development outcomes and implementation framework for the WFCA.

Specifically, the WFCA UDF:

- Establishes a long term vision and urban design principles for the precinct.
- Establishes a coordinated framework for land use, movement, public realm, built form, landscape and infrastructure.
- Provides requirements and guidelines to inform future subdivision and development.
- Identifies the important connections, public spaces and infrastructure that must be protected and integrated as development occurs.
- Supports coordinated development sequencing and infrastructure delivery.
- Establishes a framework for implementation, monitoring and review.

1.2. How to use this document

The UDF should be read in conjunction with the MATP PSP, the associated Infrastructure Contributions Plan, the Melton Planning Scheme and other relevant legislation, policies and technical requirements. It does not replace the need for planning permits, approvals or further technical investigations required under those documents.

The UDF is organised into four sections:

Section 1: Introduction explains the purpose of the UDF, how it should be used and the background to its preparation.

Section 2: Context summarises the site context, planning framework and key influences affecting the precinct.

Section 3: Urban Design Framework establishes the vision, urban design principles and preferred development outcomes for the precinct. It addresses:

- Urban Structure
- Land Use
- Movement & Access
- Public Realm, Conservation & Heritage
- Built Form & Interface
- Sustainability & Climate Resilience

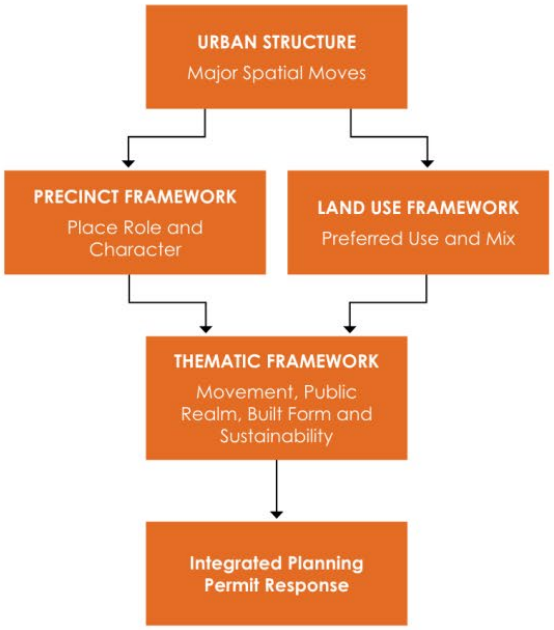
Section 4: Implementation and Review establishes the development sequencing considerations, infrastructure requirements, implementation actions and review process.

1.2.1. How the Framework works

The UDF operates through a coordinated hierarchy of spatial and thematic frameworks. The Urban Structure provides the overarching framework. Within that structure, the Precinct and Land Use Frameworks perform separate but complementary functions, while the thematic frameworks establish the more detailed expectations applying across both:

- the Urban Structure establishes the major spatial relationships and organising elements of the WFCA.
- the Precinct Framework divides the WFCA into place based areas and establishes their intended role, character, connections and development.
- the Land Use Framework overlays the precincts and provides more detailed guidance on the preferred distribution and mix of uses established by the MATP PSP and applied zoning pattern under the Urban Growth Zone.
- the Movement & Access, Public Realm, Conservation & Heritage, Built Form & Interface and Sustainability & Climate Resilience frameworks establish the detailed design and performance expectations applying across precinct and land use boundaries.

The Precinct Framework and Land Use Framework must be read together. A precinct may contain several land use categories, and the same land use category may require a different design response depending on the precinct in which it is located.



1.2.2. Principles, Requirements and Guidelines

The vision, urban design principles, framework plans, key framework elements, requirements and guidelines in Section 3 should be read together:

- **The vision and urban design principles** establish the overarching outcomes for the WFCA and guide interpretation of the framework plans, requirements and guidelines.
- **Framework plans** identify the spatial arrangement of the WFCA and the locations to which particular outcomes apply.
- **Key framework elements** describe the principal spatial components of each framework plan. They explain what the framework comprises and how its components relate but does not establish a separate assessment tier.
- **Requirements** identify outcomes that must be achieved through future subdivision and development.
- **Guidelines** identify preferred approaches for achieving the requirements and broader intent of the UDF. An alternative response may be supported where it demonstrably achieves the relevant requirement and the vision and principles of the UDF.

Supporting text and illustrations explain the intended operation and character of the framework and assist in applying the requirements and guidelines.

Elements expressly identified as indicative may be refined through more detailed planning and design, provided the proposed alternative maintains the intended connectivity, functionality and development outcome.

1.2.3. Planning Permit Applications

Planning permit applications should identify the applicable applied zone, PSP designation, UDF precinct and land use designation and, where relevant, the applicable frontage classification and interface type. Applications should demonstrate an integrated response to all relevant framework plans, requirements and guidelines.

Where an application proposes an alternative response to a guideline or indicative element, the design response should identify the proposed alternative and demonstrate how it achieves the relevant requirement and the vision and urban design principles of the UDF.

Where development is proposed to occur progressively, the design response should also demonstrate how interim arrangements will support, or at least not prejudice, the ultimate outcomes identified by the UDF.

1.3. Background to this document

The UDF builds on the incorporation of the MATP PSP into the Melton Planning Scheme in 2017 and the gazettal of the associated Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP) in 2020. Amendment C217melt subsequently made minor corrections to the PSP to maintain consistency with the ICP.

This UDF is supported by a Background Report that provides a more detailed assessment of:

- the Mount Atkinson and Tarneit Plains PSP and ICP.
- the site, regional and planning policy context.
- relevant infrastructure projects and strategic influences.
- the technical investigations that have informed the UDF.
- the key opportunities and constraints affecting the precinct.

1.4. Stakeholder Engagement

Preparation of the UDF has been informed by engagement with relevant Council departments and Government agencies including the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), Melbourne Water and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

A workshop involving Council departments and relevant agencies was held in June 2026 to consider the principal issues affecting the precinct and assist in developing the vision, urban design principles and framework directions. The draft UDF has also been informed by subsequent review and feedback from Council's strategic and statutory planning, transport, engineering, open space and natural environment teams.

Broader engagement will occur through consultation on the draft UDF, providing landowners, relevant agencies, recognised Traditional Owners, the community, and other interested stakeholders with an opportunity to contribute before the UDF is finalised.



Figure 1 – Workshop Session


2.Context

The WFCA occupies a strategically important location within Melbourne's western growth corridor. It will form the northern component of the Mount Atkinson MTC and accommodate a complementary mix of town centre, commercial, large format retail, employment and transport related uses.

The UDF responds to the strategic framework established by the MATP PSP and has been shaped by surrounding development, existing and future transport infrastructure, environmental values and the broader evolution of the MTC.

2.1. Site Context

The WFCA is located between Caroline Springs and Melton, approximately 24 kilometres west of the Melbourne CBD (Figure 2) within the City of Melton. It occupies a strategic location between the Western Freeway, Hopkins Road and the Ballarat railway corridor within one of Melbourne's principal growth corridors.

The precinct is positioned between existing and future residential communities, major employment areas and regional transport infrastructure. This provides an opportunity to establish a significant commercial and employment destination that forms an integrated part of the Mount Atkinson MTC while supporting a future railway station and the surrounding transport network.

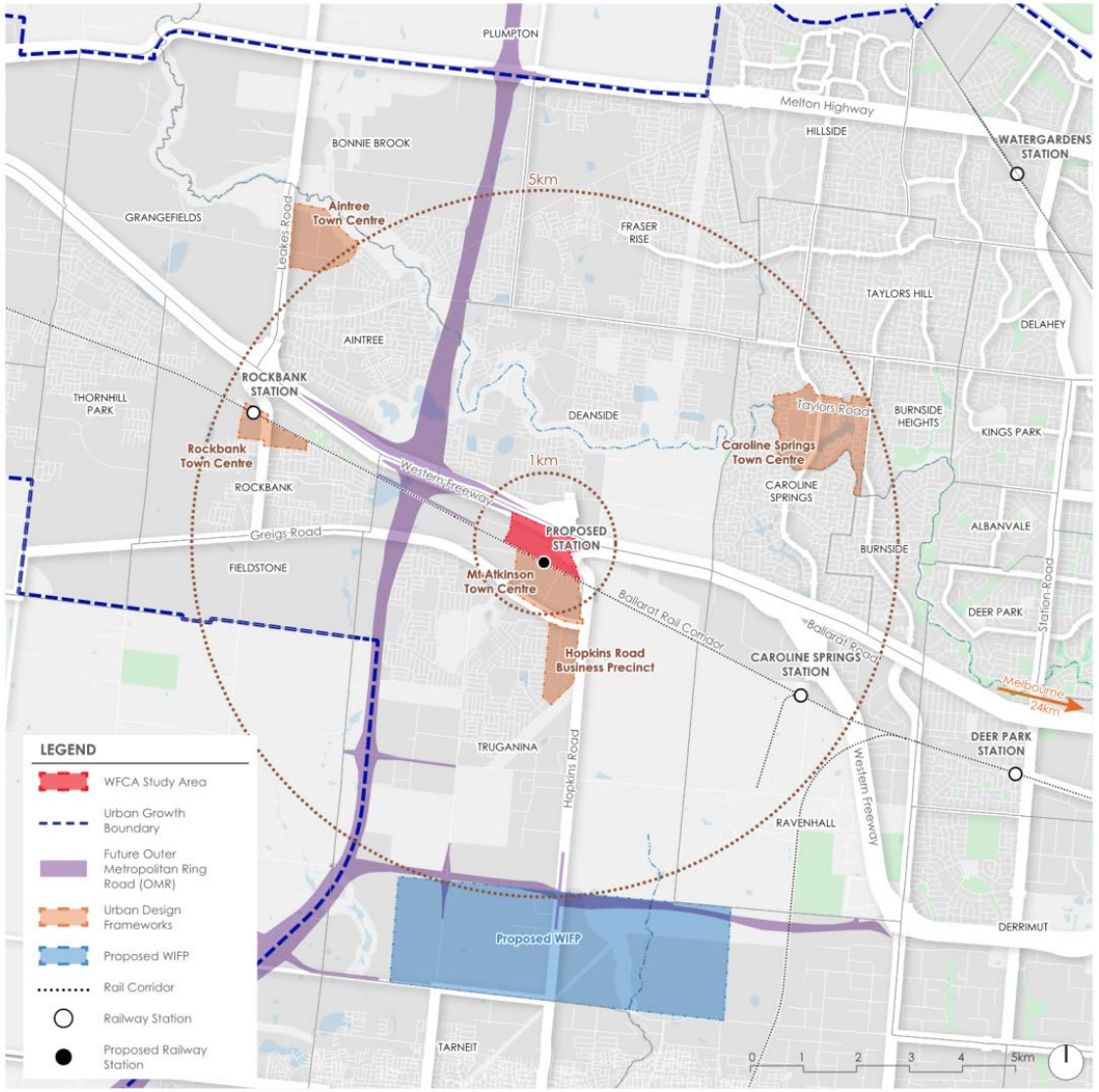


Figure 2 – Regional Context Map

The WFCA is bounded by:

- the Western Freeway to the north,
- Hopkins Road to the east,
- the Ballarat railway line to the south, and
- future employment land and the Outer Metropolitan Ring Road (OMR) to the west.

The Hopkins Road level crossing has been removed and replaced by a road bridge over the Ballarat railway corridor. The completed bridge and associated shared path establish an important existing connection between the WFCA and development south of the railway.

Surrounding planned growth areas include the Kororoit PSP to the north, the balance of the MATP PSP to the south and the Rockbank PSP to the west. The broader western growth corridor also contains extensive existing and planned industrial and employment land, reinforcing the strategic employment and commercial role of the WFCA.

2.2. Planning Framework

The MATP PSP and Urban Growth Zone establish the long term framework for urban development across the precinct. The MATP PSP identifies the WFCA as the northern component of the Mount Atkinson MTC and the Urban Growth Zone requires an approved UDF before permits can be issued for relevant subdivision, use and development.

The PSP identifies separate UDFs for the Mount Atkinson MTC, the WFCA and the Hopkins Road Business Precinct. The indicative boundary between the Mount Atkinson MTC UDF and the WFCA UDF has subsequently been adjusted to align with the Ballarat railway corridor. As a result, the northern component of the MTC is included within this UDF.

The WFCA UDF and the adopted Mount Atkinson MTC UDF south of the railway are intended to operate as coordinated parts of a single MTC. The relationship between the two UDF areas is particularly important for land use hierarchy, movement networks, the future railway station, public transport, pedestrian and cycling connections and the public realm.

The UDF translates the strategic directions of the PSP (refer to Figure 3) into a more detailed framework for land use, movement, built form, public realm and infrastructure delivery. It should be read in conjunction with the PSP, the associated Infrastructure Contributions Plan and the relevant provisions of the Melton Planning Scheme. The applied zones identified under the Urban Growth Zone establish the statutory controls governing use and development. The UDF provides more detailed spatial and design guidance within that framework and does not alter the permissibility of land uses.



Figure 3 –Mt Atkinson & Tarneit Plains PSP. *Source: VPA*

2.3. Key Influences

A number of strategic planning, infrastructure and environmental matters have influenced preparation of the UDF. Some are existing or approved, while others remain subject to further planning, funding and external approval. The UDF therefore responds to existing conditions while safeguarding opportunities for longer term infrastructure and development outcomes.

2.3.1. Mount Atkinson MTC

The WFCA forms the northern component of the Mount Atkinson MTC. The Mount Atkinson MTC UDF, approved by Council in February 2026, and shown in Figure 4, applies to land south of the Ballarat railway corridor and establishes the principal retail, civic and community focus of the MTC.

The two UDFs are intended to deliver a single, integrated MTC. Land uses, street alignment, pedestrian and cycling routes, public transport infrastructure, public spaces and built form should therefore support physical and functional connections across the railway corridor.

2.3.2. Future Mount Atkinson Railway Station

The MATP PSP identifies a potential future railway station on the Ballarat railway corridor adjoining the WFCA. The station will provide an important southern gateway to the WFCA and a long term public transport focus for the broader MTC.

The location, configuration, timing and delivery of the station remain subject to future State Government planning, funding and investment. The UDF therefore protects the land and connections required for a future station, station forecourt, potential public transport interchange and associated pedestrian, cycling and development connections. It also enables the precinct to function and develop progressively before the station is delivered.



Figure 4 –Mt Atkinson MTC Urban Design Framework. *Source: Mesh*

2.3.3. Western Freeway Upgrade

The Western Freeway Upgrade is a major State and Commonwealth infrastructure project intended to improve safety, capacity and access between Melton and Caroline Springs. Planning and pre-construction activities are underway, while the detailed scope and staging of the upgrade continue to be refined. The project will directly influence the future development of the WFCA, particularly the timing, design and delivery of key transport infrastructure.

The MATP PSP identifies Intersections IT-01 and IT-02 as the principal access points to the WFCA. IT-01 is likely to be planned and delivered in association with future upgrades to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road and may differ from the arrangement shown in the PSP and ICP. IT-02 may support earlier development, subject to detailed design, network capacity assessment, funding and relevant approvals as it is not directly associated with the Western Freeway Upgrade project.

The UDF provides flexibility for development and access arrangements to be refined while protecting the ultimate access and movement network.

2.3.4. Regional employment and freight context

The WFCA is located within one of metropolitan Melbourne's principal industrial, logistics and employment corridors. Significant planned employment land is located within the MATP PSP and surrounding precincts, including the Hopkins Road Business Precinct and employment land south and west of the MTC.

The proposed Western Interstate Freight Terminal and OMR road and rail corridors are longer term projects within the broader Truganina employment area. Their timing and configuration remain uncertain but they reinforce the strategic importance of the region for employment, freight and logistics and the need for the WFCA to manage freight access and interfaces appropriately.

The UDF does not rely on these longer term projects being delivered but should avoid outcomes that would prejudice their future planning or operation.

2.3.5. Conservation Reserves

The MATP PSP identifies two conservation reserves within the WFCA to protect Forest Sun Orchid populations and associated habitat. These reserves contain recognised biodiversity values and form part of the broader environmental network established by the PSP.

The Conservation Reserves are important spatial elements within the UDF. They influence the location and design of roads, public spaces, development interfaces and landscaping. Development must protect their ecological function while allowing them to contribute positively to the landscape character and identity of the precinct.

Detailed design and management of the reserves and their interfaces will remain subject to further ecological assessment, approved management arrangements and consultation with relevant authorities.

2.3.6. Drainage Infrastructure

The PSP identifies a regional drainage network within and adjoining the WFCA. Most of the precinct is located within the Gardiner Lane Drainage Services Scheme, with part of the land also affected by the Deanside Drive Drainage Services Scheme.

The location and configuration of drainage infrastructure influence development areas, roads, public open space, active transport connections and the overall public realm outcome. The drainage arrangement identified in the PSP and Gardiner Lane Drainage Services Scheme remains the preferred outcome.

An alternative arrangement that would relocate the drainage reserve outside the WFCA has been investigated during preparation of the UDF. This would remove the drainage reserve and its associated landscape and public-realm opportunities from the precinct. As it removes public, albeit encumbered, space from the precinct, it should only be pursued where supported by Melbourne Water and the required hydraulic, environmental and drainage functions can be achieved without impacts to public open space, landscape quality or movement connections.

2.3.7. History and identity

The WFCA forms part of the cultural landscape to which Traditional Owners have maintained connections over many generations. Recognition and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural values should be developed in consultation with recognised Traditional Owners.

Post-contact land uses have included agriculture, transport and other activities that have also shaped the area. The historic cobbled roadway within the WFCA provides a tangible connection with this period. The broader site is also associated with Bullen's African Lion Safari, which operated during the 1970s and early 1980s before closing in 1982.

These different layers of history provide opportunities to establish a distinctive sense of place through landscape design, public art, interpretation, naming, wayfinding and the use of locally characteristic materials. Interpretation should be based on appropriate historical and cultural research and consultation.





Figure 5 –Bullen's African Lion Safari: Western Hwy Rockbank. *Source: Facebook*

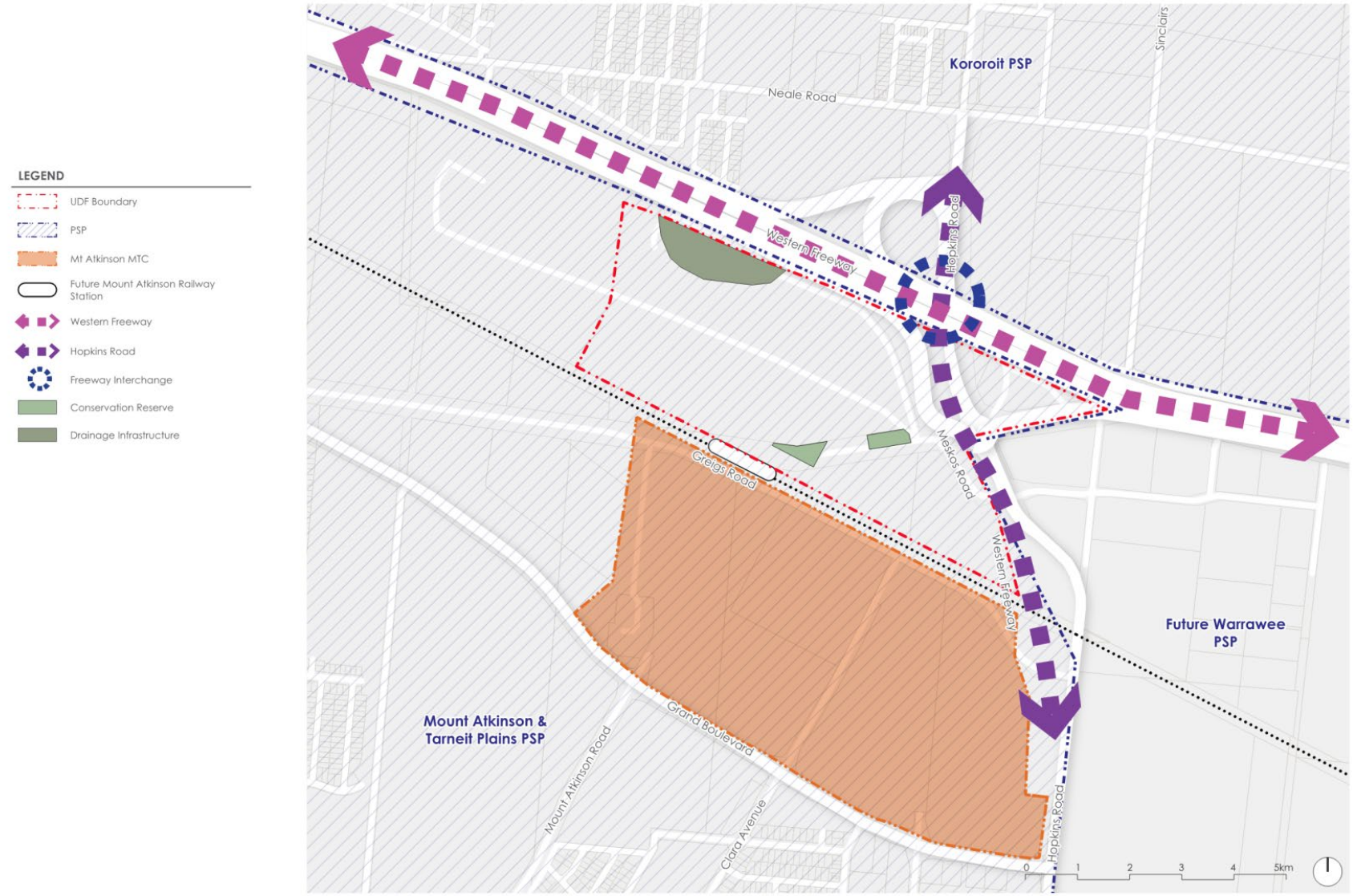


Figure 6 – Site Feature Map


3.Urban Design Framework

3.1. Strategic Directions

The UDF translates the strategic directions of the MATP PSP, technical investigations and stakeholder input into a coordinated framework for the long term development of the WFCA.

Some transport, drainage and development outcomes remain subject to further investigation and external approval. The UDF therefore establishes the strategic directions that subsequent planning, design and delivery must respond to, while allowing infrastructure and development to be refined and delivered progressively.

The UDF is based on the following strategic directions:

- The WFCA will perform two complementary roles within the Mount Atkinson MTC: forming its northern town centre component; and providing a substantial business, large format retail, commercial and employment destination. Retail, services and community activity within the WFCA will complement the principal retail, civic and community focus south of the railway.
- The town centre component will be organised around the Town Centre Park and Pedestrianised Street and Plaza, with direct walking connections to the future Mount Atkinson Railway Station and surrounding commercial areas.
- Business, large format retail and commercial development will capitalise on exposure and access to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road. Land use and development intensity will transition from the finer grained town centre and to larger commercial and employment formats and adjoining industrial and employment land to the west.
- The future railway station will provide an important southern gateway and long term public transport focus. The station precinct and associated connections will be coordinated with the adopted Mount Atkinson South UDF while allowing the WFCA to function effectively before the station is delivered.
- Access will ultimately be provided through intersections IT-01 and IT-02. IT-02 may support earlier development, subject to demonstrated network capacity and relevant approvals. The planning and delivery of IT-01 will be coordinated with future upgrades to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road.
- The movement network will retain provision for Bridge BR-01 as a long term pedestrian and bicycle connection between communities north of the Western Freeway, the WFCA, future railway station and the broader MTC. It will also provide coordinated vehicle, freight, servicing, walking, cycling and potential public transport connections within the WFCA and to adjoining areas.
- Conservation reserves, drainage infrastructure and heritage features will be integrated as defining elements of the precinct's structure and identity. The drainage outcome identified in the PSP and Gardiner Lane Drainage Services Scheme remains preferred. Any alternative requires demonstrated need and support from Melbourne Water.
- Development may occur progressively, but interim land uses, access arrangements and infrastructure must not prejudice the ultimate commercial, employment, movement, public realm, station or drainage framework.

3.2. Vision

The WFCA will be a distinctive and highly accessible commercial and employment destination forming the northern component of the Mount Atkinson Major Town Centre. It will combine a pedestrian focused town centre with substantial business, large format retail, commercial and employment areas that capitalise on freeway exposure, regional accessibility and connections to surrounding employment land.

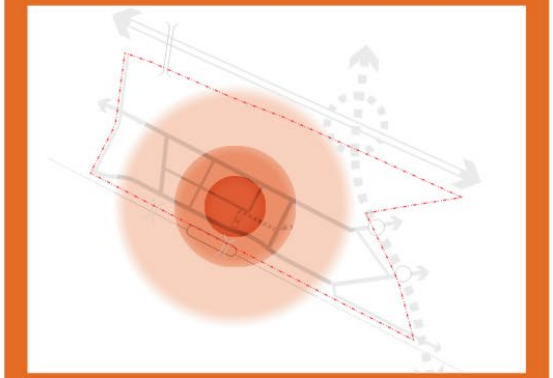
Centred on the Town Centre Park and Pedestrianised Street and Plaza, and connected to the future railway station, the WFCA will provide an attractive and welcoming place for workers, visitors and the wider community. Active development frontages and direct pedestrian connections will link these spaces with the future railway station, potential public transport interchange, commuter parking and surrounding commercial areas, providing a strong identity and high quality public realm for the WFCA.

A coordinated movement network will accommodate workers, visitors, freight and servicing while supporting potential public transport and active-transport access. Landscape, conservation, heritage and sustainable design will contribute to an attractive and climate-resilient precinct capable of adapting as infrastructure, transport services and development opportunities evolve.

3.3. Urban Design Principles

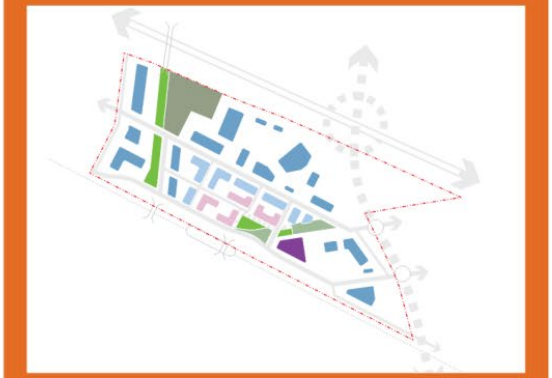
The following principles establish the overarching design outcomes to be achieved across the WFCA. Subsequent sections identify the Key Framework Elements, Requirements and Guidelines that give effect to these principles.

URBAN STRUCTURE



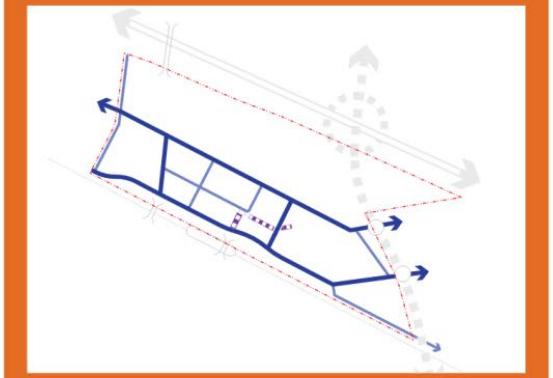
- Establish a clear and legible urban structure comprising a series of connected and identifiable precincts that transition in intensity and function from the town centre and future railway station to the surrounding commercial, large format retail and employment areas, creating a strong sense of place and supporting intuitive wayfinding.
- Focus higher intensity mixed use development around the Town Centre Park and Pedestrianised Street and Plaza, with strong connections to the future railway station, creating the heart of the WFCA and complementing the broader Mount Atkinson MTC south of the railway.
- Provide an adaptable framework that supports staged development and responds to future infrastructure and transport delivery, market change and changing development conditions.

LAND USE



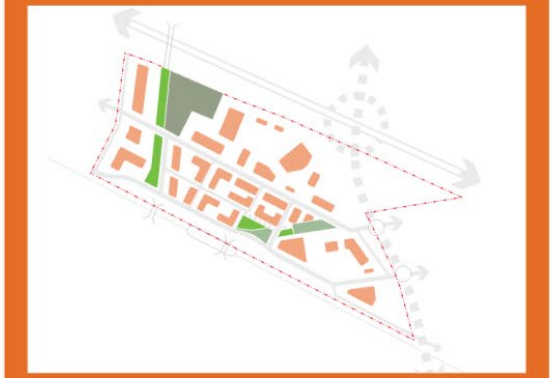
- Deliver a diverse mix of commercial, large format retail, employment and supporting uses that complements the broader Mount Atkinson MTC while capitalising on the precinct's strategic location, freeway access and visibility.
- Support the establishment of a vibrant mixed use town centre focused on the Town Centre Park and Pedestrianised Street and Plaza, integrating retail, local services, employment, residential and community focused activities and connecting to the future railway station.
- Provide an appropriate transition between mixed use, commercial, large format retail, employment and industrial activities through compatible land use planning and interfaces.

MOVEMENT & ACCESS



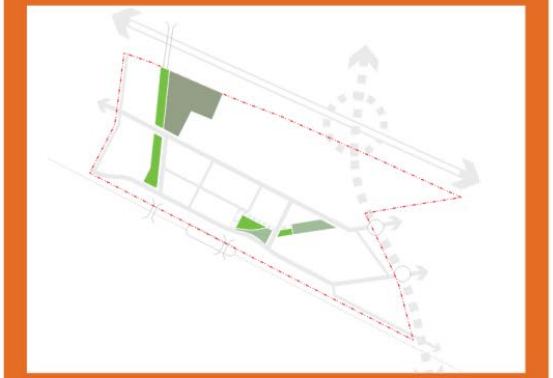
- Create a permeable and highly connected movement network that balances movement and place while accommodating potential public transport, walking, cycling, vehicle access, freight and servicing requirements.
- Prioritise high quality walking and cycling connections that provide direct access to the future railway station, town centre and surrounding commercial and employment areas.
- Support walking and cycling connections between the WFCA, surrounding residential communities, the broader MTC and adjoining employment areas.
- Capitalise on the precinct's strategic location by providing efficient access to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road while maintaining a safe, connected and legible local movement network.

BUILT FORM & INTERFACE



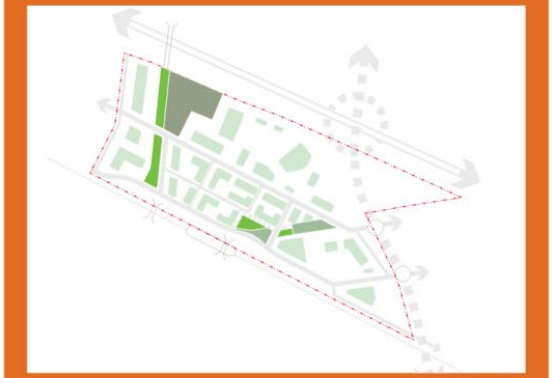
- Deliver active frontages and built form outcomes that support a vibrant and engaging public realm, particularly within the town centre, around the Town Centre Park and Pedestrianised Street and Plaza and along connections to the future railway station.
- Ensure the scale, siting and design of buildings respond to the intended role and character of each precinct and contribute to a coherent built-form character across the WFCA.
- Use built form and landscape to respond to the prominence of the Western Freeway, Hopkins Road, railway corridor, key streets, public spaces and gateway locations, establishing a distinctive identity for the WFCA.
- Manage interfaces between town-centre, commercial, large format retail, employment, transport and conservation areas through appropriate building orientation, design, landscaping and street treatments.

PUBLIC REALM, CONSERVATION & LANDSCAPE



- Use landscape, public open space and the Conservation Reserves as defining elements of the WFCA's identity, urban structure and public realm.
- Create attractive, connected and functional public spaces that support social interaction, passive recreation and movement throughout the WFCA.
- Recognise and interpret Aboriginal cultural heritage, post-contact history and heritage features as part of the public realm and urban structure, reinforcing the WFCA's character and identity.
- Protect the primary conservation function of the Conservation Reserves while establishing sensitive and visually open interfaces that allow them to contribute to the broader landscape character and public realm.

SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT



- Integrate water sensitive urban design, sustainable infrastructure and environmentally responsive design throughout the WFCA.
- Respond to drainage systems, landscape character, environmental values and urban heat to support long term resilience and climate adaptation.
- Establish a resilient urban forest and protect and enhance biodiversity, the ecological values of the Conservation Reserves and other significant landscape assets.

3.4. Urban Structure

The Urban Structure establishes the spatial framework for land use, movement, public realm, landscape and infrastructure across the WFCA. It defines the relationship between the town centre, commercial and employment areas and surrounding land and provides an adaptable structure for progressive development.

Urban Design Response

The Urban Structure reinforces the relationship between the WFCA and the Mount Atkinson MTC south of the railway line while recognising the WFCA's broader commercial and employment function.

The framework comprises three interrelated development components:

- a finer grained town centre component organised around the Town Centre Park and Pedestrianised Plaza, with direct connections to the future railway station.
- substantial business, large format retail and commercial areas that capitalise on access and exposure to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road.
- an employment area along the western edge that provides a transition and functional connection to adjoining industrial and employment land.

These components are linked by an integrated street and movement network that accommodates walking, cycling, potential public transport, vehicles, freight and servicing. The network connects the WFCA with the MTC south of the railway, surrounding communities and adjoining employment areas.

The public realm and landscape framework is centred on the Town Centre Park and Pedestrianised Street and Plaza and extends through public open space, landscaped streets, the Conservation Reserves, drainage corridors and walking and cycling routes. Key sites are identified where a strong built form response is required to reinforce the importance of the site and it's role in creating place.

The future railway station will provide the principal southern gateway and long term public transport focus. The Urban Structure retains provision for the station precinct and associated connections while allowing the WFCA to function and develop before the station is delivered.

The framework supports staged development and future adaptation while maintaining the intended relationships between land use, movement, public realm, landscape and infrastructure.

Key Framework Elements

The Urban Structure is organised around the following key framework elements:

- A Core Town Centre focused on the Town Centre Park and Pedestrianised Street and Plaza, with direct connections to the future railway station.
- A future railway station and transit area providing the principal southern gateway and connection to the MTC south of the railway.
- Substantial business, large format retail and commercial areas with exposure and access to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road.
- An employment area that connects and transitions to adjoining industrial and employment land to the west.
- A connected street and movement network linking the precincts with the Major Town Centre south of the railway, adjoining employment land and surrounding communities.
- An integrated network of public open space, conservation reserves, drainage corridors and heritage features.
- A built form and interface framework that reinforces the role and character of each precinct and responds to the Western Freeway, future industrial land and the railway.

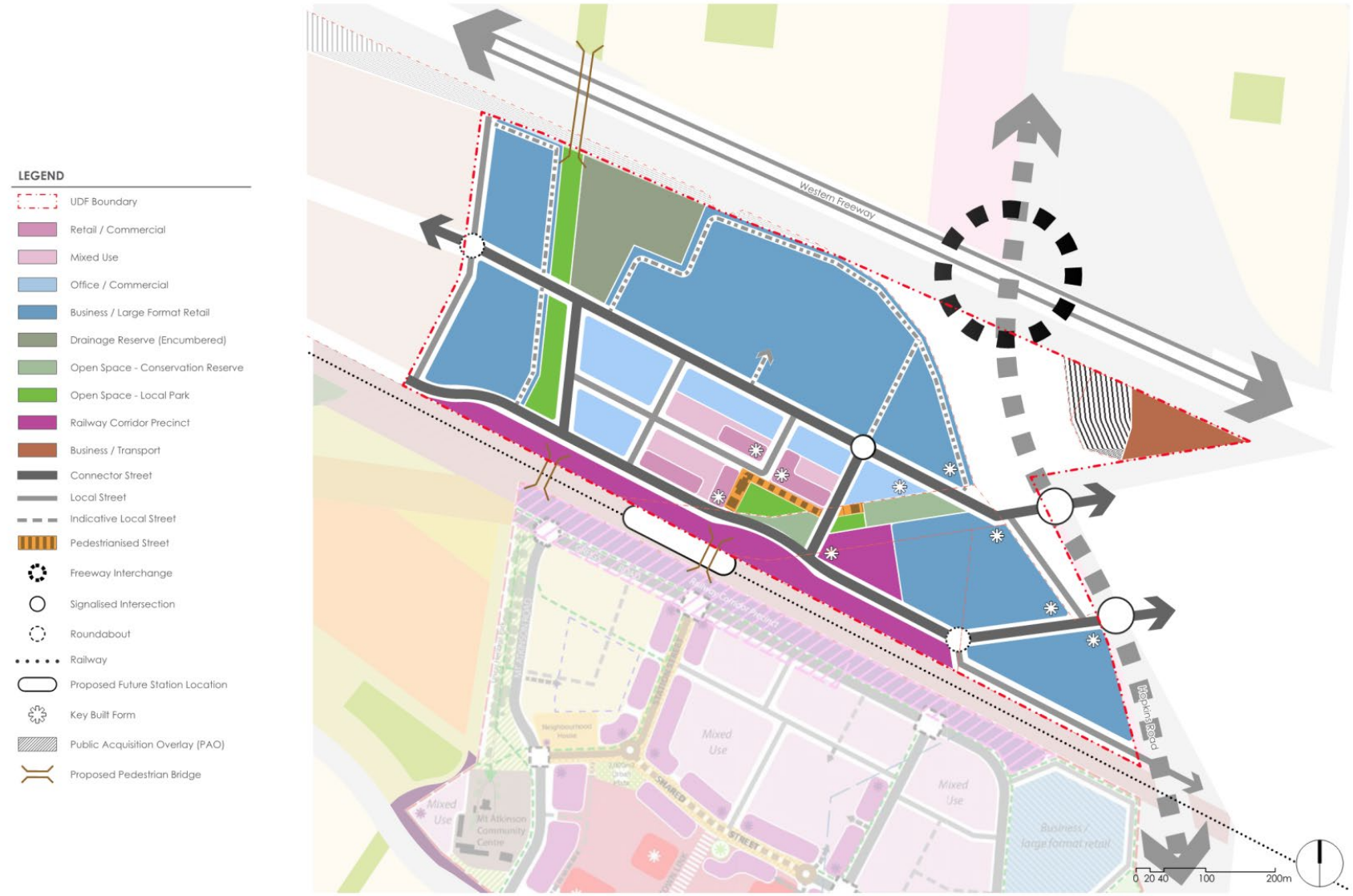


Figure 7 – Urban Structure Plan

Requirements

Development, including subdivision, must:

- **R1 -** Be generally consistent with the Urban Structure Plan at Figure 7.
- **R2 -** Maintain the intended role and spatial relationship of the precincts shown on the Precinct Plan at Figure 12 and described in Section 3.4.1.
- **R3 -** Retain provision for the future railway station, station forecourt, potential public transport interchange, commuter parking and associated pedestrian, bike and development connections.
- **R4 -** Deliver an interconnected movement network that supports walking, bike riding, potential public transport, freight, servicing and vehicle access, and provides connections to the MTC south of the railway and employment land west of the WFCA.
- **R5 -** Orient and configure development to positively address the Town Centre Park, Pedestrianised Street and Plaza, future station precinct, railway corridor, streets, parks and other public spaces.
- **R6 -** Integrate the Conservation Reserves, heritage features, drainage infrastructure and public open space into the broader urban structure while protecting their respective functions and values.
- **R7 -** Ensure staged development, interim land uses, access arrangements and infrastructure do not prejudice the ultimate land use, movement, public realm or infrastructure framework.

Guidelines

Development, including subdivision, should:

- **G1 -** Reinforce key gateways, movement corridors, public spaces and viewlines through coordinated built form, landscape and public realm design.
- **G2 -** Coordinate streets and walking and bike connections within the WFCA and to surrounding communities, employment areas and regional networks.
- **G3 -** Contribute to a cohesive landscape character that extends through the town centre, commercial and employment areas and integrates public open space, environmental values and heritage features.
- **G4 -** Locate buildings, vehicle access, parking, loading and servicing to minimise conflicts with pedestrians, bike riders, public spaces and adjoining uses.
- **G5 -** Arrange streets, buildings and public spaces to reinforce legibility, accessibility, passive surveillance and a strong sense of place.
- **G6 -** Design the street and movement network as a continuation of the network within the Mount Atkinson MTC south of the railway and protect opportunities for future connections.



Figure 8 – Rouse Hill Town Centre Square. ***Source: AJC Architects***

3.4.1. Precinct Framework

The Precinct Framework divides the WFCA into place based areas with distinct but complementary roles, character and development expectations. The precincts are not statutory land use designations and do not alter the applied zoning pattern or independently determine whether a use is permissible.

Each precinct may accommodate several land uses. Its intended character is determined by the combined treatment of built form, streets, public spaces, movement, landscape, interfaces and land use rather than by a single use or zone. The preferred distribution and mix of uses is addressed separately by the Land Use Framework at Section 3.5.

The precincts are intended to function as a connected whole. The Precinct Plan at Figure 12 must be read together with the Land Use Plan at Figure 13 and the relevant movement, public realm, built form and sustainability provisions.

Precinct 1 - Railway and Transit Corridor

The Railway and Transit Precinct identifies land intended to accommodate the future railway station, station forecourt, potential public transport interchange, commuter parking and associated pedestrian and bike connections. It will form the principal southern gateway to the WFCA and its primary connection with the Major Town Centre south of the railway.

The location, configuration, and timing of the future railway station remain subject to further State Government planning and investment. The framework therefore allows the precinct to function before the station is delivered while retaining flexibility for future transport infrastructure and more intensive development over time.

The precinct will provide direct and legible connections between the future railway station, Town Centre Park, Pedestrianised Street and Plaza, commuter parking and surrounding commercial and employment areas. Its ultimate design will also need to respond sensitively to the railway corridor, adjoining Conservation Reserve and historic cobbled roadway.

Precinct 2 - Core Town Centre

The Core Town Centre Precinct will provide the principal activity and public realm focus of the WFCA. It will be organised around the Town Centre Park and adjoining pedestrianised plaza and connected directly to the future railway station, commuter parking and surrounding precincts.

The precinct will have a finer grained, pedestrian oriented urban form that distinguishes it from the larger commercial and employment areas elsewhere in the WFCA. Buildings, streets and public spaces will establish a highly walkable and permeable environment, with active development frontages around the Town Centre Park, Pedestrianised Street and Plaza and principal walking routes.



Figure 9 – Core town Centre & Commercial Transition

Precinct 3 - Commercial Transition

The Commercial Transition Precinct will provide a finer grained and built form transition between the Core Town Centre Precinct and the Business and Large Format Retail Precinct.

The precinct will provide physical and visual continuity with the Core Town Centre but will not operate as an expansion of the principal town centre retail core. Building scale, frontage treatment, street layout and public realm design will manage the transition between the finer grained town centre and the larger building footprints and more vehicle oriented character of the Business and Large Format Retail Precinct.

Development will provide active and attractive interfaces to the Town Centre Park, principal pedestrian routes and adjoining streets where identified on the relevant framework plans.

Precinct 4 - Business and Large Format Retail

The Business and Large Format Retail Precinct will accommodate a substantial proportion of the WFCA's commercial activity and employment in a larger footprint development format consistent with the Land Use Framework.

Its character will respond to the precinct's prominent exposure and access to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road. High quality architecture, articulated building and roof forms, substantial landscaping and attractive interfaces will contribute to the regional identity of the WFCA.

Sites and buildings will be capable of adapting and intensifying over time, supporting different business, commercial and employment uses and more efficient use of land.

Precinct 5 - Employment Transition

The Employment Transition Precinct will provide a functional and built form transition between the commercial areas within the WFCA and adjoining industrial and employment land to the west.

Its character will respond to the larger building footprints and operational requirements associated with its employment role while providing an attractive and coordinated interface with adjoining industrial land, streets and the linear park.

Road, potential public transport and active transport connections should support functional integration with the broader employment area.

Development will also reinforce the continuity of the linear park and associated pedestrian and cycling connections.

Precinct 6 - Commercial / Transport

The Commercial Transport Precinct will accommodate transport oriented commercial uses in a strategic location with convenient access to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road.

Its character will respond to this prominent and highly accessible location through safe and efficient vehicle access, high quality buildings, controlled signage and substantial landscaping. Development will provide a positive gateway presentation and avoid creating a visually dominant or poorly landscaped highway service environment.

Safe and legible walking connections will link the precinct with adjoining commercial areas and potential public transport services.



Figure 10 – Industry Lanes, Richmond. *Source: Architecturs*



Figure 11 – Large format Retail. *Source: LFRA*

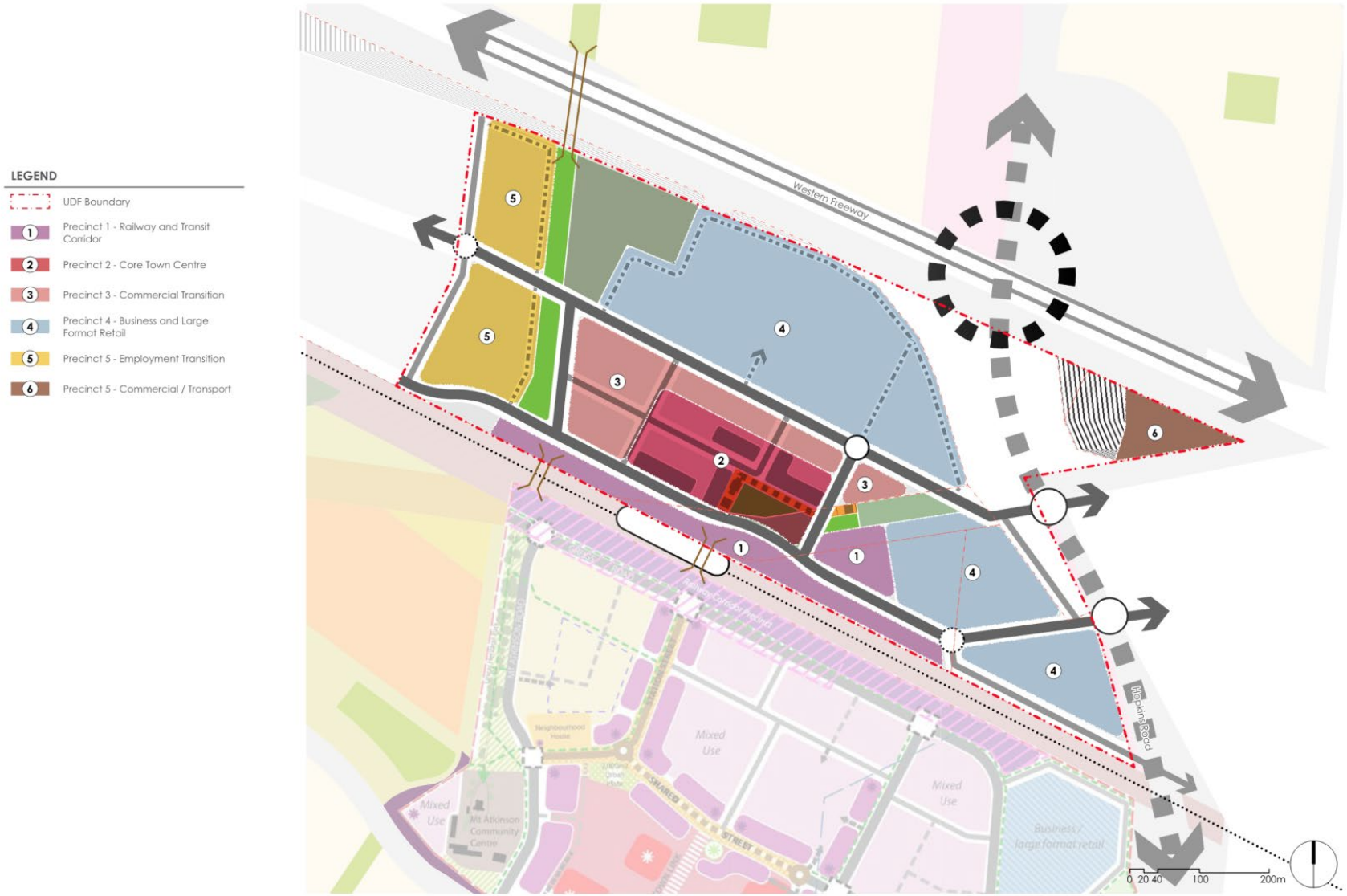


Figure 12 – Precinct Plan

3.5. Land Use

The Land Use Framework translates the land use structure established by the MATP PSP and the applied zoning pattern under the Urban Growth Zone into more detailed guidance for the distribution, mix and relationship of uses across the WFCA. It provides direction about activities at ground and upper levels, their relationship to the retail hierarchy and where different levels of activity, residential development and employment intensity are encouraged. It does not alter the applicable planning controls or independently determine whether a use is permissible.

The Land Use Framework overlays the Precinct Framework and the two must be read together. The applicable zone governs use and development, the land use designation identifies the preferred distribution and mix of uses, and the precinct establishes the place specific role, character, connections, interfaces and design response. The same land use designation may therefore require a different built form or public realm response in different precincts.

The Land Use Plan at Figure 13 spatially expresses this framework. It must be read with the relevant Urban Growth Zone schedule and applied zone provisions, which prevail if there is any inconsistency.

Land Use Key Elements

The Land Use Framework is organised around the following Key Framework Elements:

- A finer grained town centre focus around the future railway station, Town Centre Park and pedestrianised street and plaza, comprising retail, hospitality, commercial, community, residential and supporting uses.
- A substantial commercial and employment role comprising business, large format retail, office and other employment-generating uses with access and exposure to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road.
- A transition in land use and development intensity from the mixed use town centre through commercial areas to larger business, large format retail and employment uses and adjoining industrial and employment land.
- A distribution of uses that responds to the applied zoning pattern and retail hierarchy, manages potential land use conflicts and allows land and buildings to adapt over time.

Retail / Commercial

Underlying Zone: Commercial 1 Zone

The Retail / Commercial designation provides the principal concentration of finer grained shopping, dining, business and service activity within the WFCA. It provides convenient services for workers, commuters, visitors and the surrounding community and supports the role of the Core Town Centre.

Retail / Commercial areas are intended to accommodate convenience retail, food and beverage premises, offices, professional services, community uses and other compatible commercial activities. These uses will be concentrated around the future railway station, Town Centre Park, pedestrianised plaza and other identified active frontages and key built form sites.

The scale and distribution of retail development should reinforce the role of the WFCA as the northern component of the Mount Atkinson MTC while complementing the higher order retail function south of the railway and the surrounding activity centre hierarchy.

A maximum of 2,500 m² of shop floorspace may be established without the need for a planning permit. This threshold is intended to maintain the role of the precinct as a local convenience and transit-oriented destination. Proposals exceeding the threshold must be assessed against the MATP PSP, the Melton Planning Scheme and the applicable retail hierarchy.

Mixed Use

Underlying Zone: Commercial 1 Zone

The Mixed Use designation provides for a combination of retail, commercial, residential, community and supporting uses within the Core Town Centre Precinct. It enables residential development to form a prominent component of the land use mix, alongside retail, commercial and supporting activities.

Mixed use development will increase housing diversity and the residential population close to the future railway station, employment opportunities and town centre services. Horizontal and vertical mixed use arrangements provide flexibility in how development responds to site conditions, market demand and changing community needs.

Where identified on the Land Use Plan and the Preferred Vertical Mixed Use Diagrams (Figures 14-17), active and publicly accessible uses should be provided at ground level, with residential, office and other compatible uses located above. The arrangement of uses will need to manage noise, servicing, loading, waste collection, vehicle access and other potential amenity conflicts.

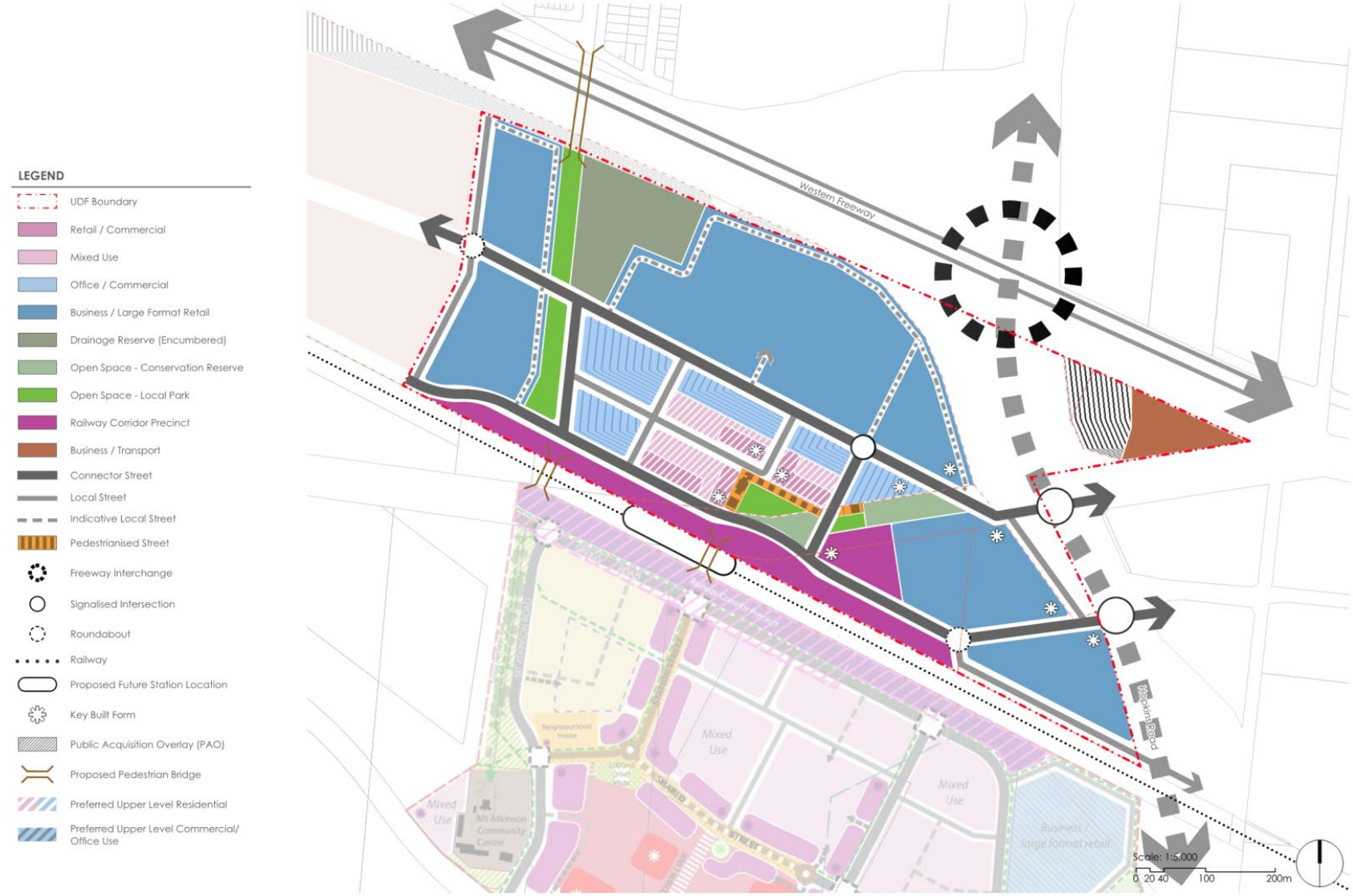


Figure 13 – Land Use Plan

Office / Commercial

Underlying Zone: Commercial 1 Zone or Commercial 2 Zone

The Office / Commercial designation supports a diverse range of employment generating activities including offices, professional services, medical and health services, business premises and other compatible commercial uses.

Office / Commercial areas complement the Retail / Commercial and Mixed Use designations by accommodating employment activities that do not necessarily rely on an active retail frontage while maintaining strong connections to the future railway station, Core Town Centre and surrounding employment areas.

Within the Core Town Centre Precinct, Office / Commercial uses will support the future station and mixed use town centre environment. Within the Employment Transition Precinct, they will reinforce connections with the industrial and employment areas to the west and help manage interfaces between different forms of commercial and employment activity.

Within the Commercial 1 Zone, upper level residential and commercial uses are encouraged where identified on Figure 5 and the Preferred Vertical Mixed Use Diagrams. Land within the Commercial 2 Zone will retain a predominantly commercial and employment generating function.

Business / Large Format Retail

Underlying Zone: Commercial 2 Zone

The Business / Large Format Retail designation provides the principal large site commercial and employment component of the WFCA. It accommodates restricted retail premises, showrooms, trade supplies, business parks, light industrial and other employment generating business uses that benefit from large sites, convenient vehicle access and high exposure locations.

Located along the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road, these areas capitalise on regional accessibility while complementing the finer grained convenience retail, commercial and mixed use functions of the Core Town Centre.

Business / Large Format Retail areas are intended to function as significant and adaptable employment areas rather than solely as a collection of destination retail premises. Sites and buildings should be capable of accommodating different business, commercial and employment uses over time without compromising the intended road, pedestrian, open-space and infrastructure networks.

Compatible industry and warehouse uses may be supported where permitted by the applied zone and consistent with the intended role of the applicable precinct.

Railway Corridor

Underlying Zone: General Residential Zone

The Railway Corridor designation identifies land associated with rail infrastructure, the future railway station, passenger access, potential public transport interchange functions and supporting active transport connections.

The future railway station will provide the principal public transport focus within the WFCA and support the surrounding retail, commercial, mixed use and employment areas. Use and development within or adjoining the corridor must not prejudice the delivery, operation or future expansion of the station, interchange or associated transport infrastructure.

Open Space

The Land Use Plan identifies local parks, linear open space, Conservation Reserves and drainage. Together, these areas support recreation, environmental values, stormwater management, landscape character and pedestrian and cycling connectivity.

These areas perform different functions and should not be treated as interchangeable. Local parks should provide accessible recreation and gathering opportunities, the Conservation Reserves primarily protect identified ecological values, and drainage reserves maintain their required stormwater functions.

Requirements

Use and development must:

- **R8 -** Be consistent with the relevant Urban Growth Zone schedule, applicable applied zone, MATP PSP and other relevant provisions of the Melton Planning Scheme.
- **R9 -** Be generally in accordance with the Land Use Plan at Figure 13 and support the intended role and function of both the applicable land use designation and precinct.
- **R10 -** Contribute to a complementary mix of Retail / Commercial, Mixed Use, Office / Commercial and supporting uses within the Core Town Centre Precinct, generally in accordance with Figure 13 and the Preferred Vertical Mixed Use Diagrams.
- **R11 -** Where shop floorspace is proposed, identify the cumulative amount of existing, approved and proposed shop floorspace across the relevant PSP land and demonstrate compliance with the applicable shop floorspace threshold and retail hierarchy.
- **R12 -** Within a Mixed Use designation, demonstrate how the proposed uses contribute to the intended residential, commercial and employment mix across the site or relevant development stage.
- **R13 -** Accommodate active and publicly accessible ground floor uses adjoining the Town Centre Park, pedestrianised plaza and other identified active frontages.
- **R14 -** Where preferred upper level uses are identified on Figure 13, incorporate residential and commercial uses generally in accordance with the Preferred Vertical Mixed Use Diagrams. An alternative arrangement must demonstrate an equivalent or better response to the intended land use, activity and employment outcomes.
- **R15 -** Office / Commercial land must retain a predominantly commercial and employment generating function within the Office / Commercial designation. Residential development within the Commercial 1 Zone must complement the intended commercial function and be located where identified by the framework.
- **R16 -** Primarily accommodate restricted retail, business, commercial and other employment generating uses within the Business / Large Format Retail designation, consistent with the intended role of the Commercial 2 Zone.
- **R17 -** Configure development in areas identified for Mixed Use or preferred upper level uses on Figure 13 to support the intended ultimate intensity of development. Siting, access and servicing arrangements must not preclude future development or intensification.
- **R18 -** Ensure temporary or interim uses do not prejudice the ultimate land use distribution or the delivery of identified transport, public realm, conservation, drainage or infrastructure outcomes.

Guidelines

- **G7 -** Support temporary or interim land uses that activate undeveloped land where they are compatible with surrounding uses and infrastructure and do not prejudice the long term development of the WFCA.
- **G8 -** Arrange land uses to maximise activity, employment and housing opportunities within the Core Town Centre and close to the future railway station.
- **G9 -** Provide a complementary mix of uses within the Core Town Centre that encourages activity throughout the day and night, including seasonal and temporary activities where appropriate.
- **G10 -** Locate service stations, drive-through food and drink premises and other vehicle oriented uses within the Business / Large Format Retail or Commercial Transport Precincts, generally close to Hopkins Road or a connector street. These uses should be avoided on key built form sites.
- **G11 -** Direct uses with greater operational or amenity impacts to the Employment Transition Precinct where permitted by the applied zone, consistent with Figure 5 and capable of appropriately managing those impacts.
- **G12 -** Design sites and buildings to accommodate changes in use, tenancy size and employment activity over time.
- **G13 -** Locate and design residential and other sensitive uses to manage potential conflicts with loading, servicing, traffic, noise and the operation of adjoining commercial and employment uses.

Preferred Vertical Mix of Use

The Land Use Framework identifies the intended predominant ground level land use pattern across the WFCA. The Preferred Vertical Mix of Uses diagrams illustrate how retail, commercial, residential and supporting uses may be distributed within multi-storey development to activate ground floor frontages and support a more intensive mixed use and employment environment.

The diagrams illustrate indicative vertical land use outcomes. They do not prescribe building height, scale or architectural form. Alternative configurations may be appropriate where they:

- are consistent with the applicable applied zone and land use designation.
- respond to the role and character of the applicable precinct.
- maintain active and publicly accessible ground floor uses along identified frontages.
- appropriately manage amenity and operational conflicts.
- achieve the intended activity, housing and employment outcomes of the UDF.



Figure 14 – Vertical Mix Diagram A

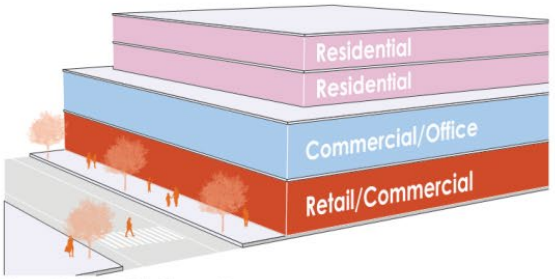


Figure 15 – Vertical Mix Diagram B



Figure 16 – Vertical Mix Diagram C

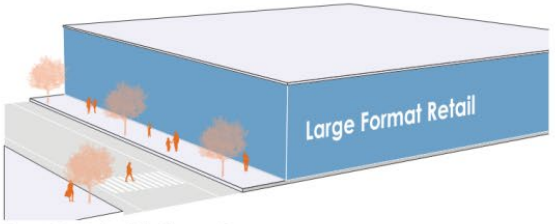


Figure 17 – Vertical Mix Diagram D

3.6. Movement & Access Framework

The Movement and Access Framework establishes a connected, safe and legible network that supports the complementary town centre and employment roles of the WFCA. It prioritises walking, cycling and public transport around the future railway station and Core Town Centre while maintaining efficient vehicle, freight, servicing and delivery access to the broader commercial and employment areas.

The network is structured around intersections IT-01 and IT-02, the future railway station, a continuous network of bus capable connector streets and convenient connections to Hopkins Road, the Western Freeway and the industrial and employment areas to the west. It provides connections to the Western Freeway, Hopkins Road, the Major Town Centre south of the railway, communities north of the freeway and employment areas to the west.

The framework applies a Movement and Place approach, recognising that streets perform both transport and public realm functions. The balance between those functions varies according to the role of each street and the precinct through which it passes.

Key Framework Elements

The Movement and Access Framework is organised around the following Key Framework Elements:

- An integrated street network connecting intersections IT-01 and IT-02 and providing efficient access to the Western Freeway, Hopkins Road and adjoining employment areas.
- A continuous bus-capable connector street network linking IT-01 and IT-02 and providing access to each precinct and adjoining employment areas.
- A future railway station supported by a station forecourt, potential public transport interchange, commuter parking and direct walking and cycling connections.
- A pedestrian focused Core Town Centre comprising a pedestrianised street, Town Centre Park, station forecourt and safe connections to surrounding development.
- Freight, loading and servicing routes that provide efficient access to commercial and employment areas while minimising conflict with principal pedestrian environments and public spaces.
- Car and commuter parking integrated with development and transport facilities without dominating streets, public spaces or active frontages.

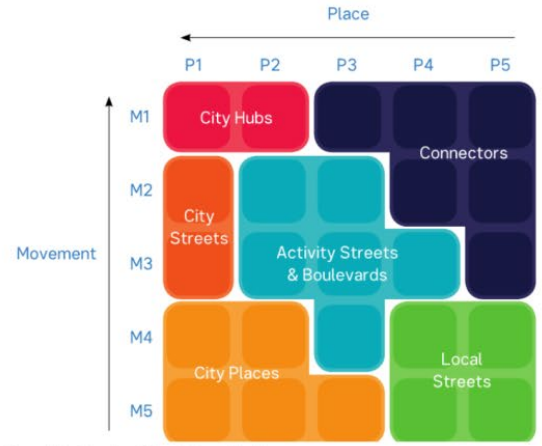


Figure 18 – Road and Street Types Matrix

	General Traffic	Place	Movement & Place Designation	Carriageway	Shared Path	Off Road Cycle Path	Footpath	Street Reserve
Main East West Connector	3	4	Connector	7.0m	Yes	3.0+1.8m	2-2.7m	26.0m
East West Railway Connector	2	5	Activity Street / Boulevard	7.0m	Yes	3.0+1.8m	1.5m	23.6m
Pedestrianised Street	4	3	City Place	6.0m	Yes	6.0m	4.7m	20.0m
Connector Road	5	3	Local Street	7.0m	Yes	3.0+1.8m	1.5-2.0m	26.0m
Local Streets	5	5	Local Street	7.0m	No	7m	2-2.7m	22.0m

Figure 19 – Street Hierarchy Table



Figure 20 – Movement & Place Plan

3.6.1. Movement and Place

The Movement and Place approach recognises that streets have both a movement function and a place function. The relative emphasis placed on each function informs the role, design and operation of each street within the WFCA.

Streets within the Core Town Centre and around the future railway station should place greater emphasis on pedestrian activity, public transport access and public life. These streets should provide lower vehicle speeds, frequent crossing opportunities, generous pedestrian space, shade and direct relationships with adjoining buildings and public spaces.

Connector Streets serving the Business / Large Format Retail and Employment Transition Precincts have a greater movement function. They accommodate vehicles, potential bus services, freight and servicing while providing safe and continuous pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Local Streets balance access to development with a safe, attractive and landscaped public realm appropriate to the adjoining precinct and land use.

The indicative Movement and Place classifications are shown on the Movement and Place Plan and inform the street typologies and cross-sections that follow.



Figure 21 – Pakenham Station - Genton. ***Source: Genton***

3.6.2. Street Network & External Access

The street network provides access to each precinct and connects the WFCA with the MTC south of the railway, surrounding communities and adjoining employment areas. It comprises Connector Streets, the Railway Connector Street, the Pedestrianised Street and Plaza and an interconnected network of Local Streets.

Connector Street

Connector Streets provide the principal vehicle, bus, freight and servicing routes through the WFCA. The connector network will provide a continuous bus capable connection between Intersections IT-01 and IT-02 and convenient access to each precinct.

The principal east-west Connector Street will provide access to the Business / Large Format Retail and Employment Transition Precincts and connect with the industrial and employment land to the west. It will accommodate freight and servicing while providing continuous separated pedestrian and bike infrastructure.

The north-south component of the connector network should be located toward the western end of the Core Town Centre, maintaining a clear distinction between the higher movement street network and the pedestrian priority town centre environment.

Railway Connector Street and Station Forecourt

The Railway Connector Street provides access to Hopkins Road, the future railway station, commuter parking and the Core Town Centre. It has an important place and public transport function and should provide lower vehicle speeds, high quality pedestrian and bike infrastructure and a strong relationship with the station forecourt.

The alignment of the street and adjoining public realm will be configured to:

- provide sufficient space for an expanded station forecourt.
- accommodate a potential bus interchange or bus stop allowing direct transfers between bus and train services.
- incorporate part of the cobbled roadway or associated heritage interpretation as a public realm and heritage feature, subject to further heritage investigation.
- establish a clear relationship between the station, pedestrianised street, Town Centre Park and commuter parking.

Freight movements should be directed away from the Railway Connector Street where a suitable alternative route is available.



Figure 22 – Ed Square, NSW. ***Source: Realestate.com.au***

Pedestrianised Street and Plaza

The Pedestrianised Street and Plaza will provide the principal public realm connection between the future railway station, station forecourt, Town Centre Park and adjoining town centre development.

It will operate primarily as a pedestrian space and will not accommodate general through traffic. Controlled access for emergency, maintenance and servicing vehicles may be provided where necessary and managed through physical controls, designated access times or other appropriate arrangements.

The Pedestrianised Street and Plaza will extend from the station forecourt to the first east west local street and provide:

- a continuous and accessible pedestrian surface.
- direct connections to the Town Centre Park and station forecourt.
- clear and legible movement through the Core Town Centre.

Detailed built form, landscape, amenity and heritage outcomes for the Pedestrianised Street and Plaza are addressed in the Public Realm and Built Form sections.

Local Streets

Local Streets provide access to development sites and complete the internal street network. They will support low vehicle speeds, pedestrian movement, bike access, on-street parking and canopy tree planting appropriate to the adjoining precinct and land use.

The final location and alignment of indicative Local Streets may be refined through detailed planning, provided the intended connectivity, block structure, development frontage and public realm outcomes are maintained.

Intersections and External Access

The ultimate external access strategy is based on intersections IT-01 and IT-02, generally in the locations shown on the Movement and Access Framework Plan. Their final location, configuration, timing and capacity remain subject to further transport investigation and approval by the relevant transport authorities.

Intersection IT-01 will provide access from the Western Freeway and communities to the north and will support freight, servicing and general traffic access to the Business / Large Format Retail and Employment Transition Precincts. Its planning and delivery will be coordinated with future upgrades to the Western Highway.

Intersection IT-02 will connect from Hopkins Road and provide access from the broader Mount Atkinson MTC, adjoining residential communities and future development within the Warrawee PSP. Subject to demonstrated network capacity and relevant approvals, it may provide the principal access for earlier development before IT-01 and the ultimate Connector Street network are delivered.

Potential Interim Connection

A potential interim connection between Intersection IT-02 and the existing Meskos Road access may support staged development of the WFCA and access to employment land to the west where the ultimate street connection cannot be secured or delivered when required.

The feasibility, alignment, configuration, timing and development capacity of the interim connection will be determined through further transport and engineering assessment. Any interim arrangement must operate safely, respond to the cumulative level of development relying upon it and not prejudice the delivery of IT-01, IT-02, the ultimate Connector Street network or the safe operation of Hopkins Road.

Following delivery of the ultimate access arrangements, the interim connection may transition to a Local Street or other access function consistent with the ultimate framework.

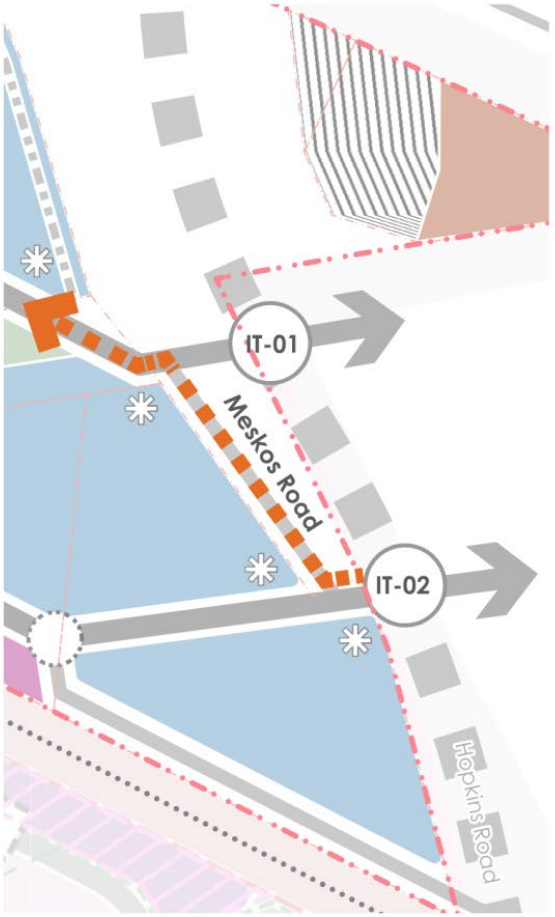


Figure 23 – Interim access from IN-02



Figure 24 – Movement & Access Framework Plan

Internal Intersections

The location and form of internal intersections shown on the framework plans are indicative and will be confirmed through detailed transport assessment. Crossing treatments on streets carrying freight will need to balance pedestrian and cycling safety with the operational requirements of the freight route.



Figure 25 –Pakenham bus Interchange. ***Source: Victoria's Big Build***

3.6.3. Public Transport

Future Railway Station

The future Mount Atkinson railway station is planned as the principal public transport gateway to the WFCA and an important connection between the northern and southern components of the MTC. The Railway and Transit Precinct should support its future integration through direct, legible and accessible walking and cycling connections to the Core Town Centre, surrounding employment areas and land south of the railway.

The ultimate location, configuration and timing of the station remain subject to State Government planning and investment. A 30 metre by 730 metre investigation area has been identified based on the PSP requirements to preserve flexibility for the future station and its associated transport infrastructure. Within this area, the UDF makes provision for:

- the future station and station forecourt.
- a potential bus interchange
- commuter parking.
- Accessible walking and cycling connections across the railway corridor.
- bicycle access and storage.
- safe and direct connections to the Core Town Centre and surrounding commercial and employment areas.

The detailed arrangement of these elements is indicative and will be resolved through future station planning and coordination with the adopted Mount Atkinson MTC South UDF.

The framework anticipates the future railway station will include a future pedestrian bridge spanning the at-grade rail corridor and station platforms. This would form the principal walking connection between the northern and southern components of the MTC and connect surrounding communities on both sides of the railway.

Potential Bus Network

The potential bus network will connect the future railway station with the WFCA, the broader Mt Atkinson MTC and surrounding residential and employment areas.

A potential bus interchange is identified along the Railway Connector Street to provide direct and accessible transfers between bus and train services.

The indicative bus route forms a loop between Intersections IT-01 and IT-02 via the Core Town Centre. The final routes, stops and interchange facilities will be determined in consultation with the relevant transport authorities. The movement framework provides a continuous bus capable route through the Connector Street network, allowing services to respond to development staging and future transport planning.



3.6.4. Walking & Cycling

Walking Network

The walking network connects the Core Town Centre ,railway station, Town Centre Park, pedestrianised street and plaza, Conservation Reserves and surrounding commercial and employment areas. It prioritises direct, legible and accessible connections between these destinations and the broader MTC.

A wide east-west walking connection is located along the northern edge of the Town Centre Park. It links the Core Town Centre with commuter parking, addresses the adjoining active frontage and provides a direct and legible route past the Conservation Reserve.

The planned connections across the railway corridor comprise the future railway station bridge and Bridge BR-02. The station bridge will provide the principal pedestrian connection between the northern and southern components of the MTC. Bridge BR-02 will provide an additional crossing west of the station, improving network resilience and connections to employment areas.

Bridge BR-01 is planned as the principal regional pedestrian and bicycle connection across the Western Freeway. Direct connections from BR-01 continue through the Linear Park to the future railway station, the Core Town Centre and destinations south of the railway.

Cycling Network

The future railway station is a key destination within the cycling network, connecting surrounding residential communities and employment areas with public transport and the Core Town Centre.

The primary east-west bike corridor follows the Railway Connector Street, linking the Linear Park, future railway station, future Warrawee PSP area, and industrial and employment land to the west.

The primary north-south bike route follows the Linear Park and continues across the Western Freeway via Bridge BR-01. This route intersects at the east-west Connector Street, creating a key network crossing.

The Connector Street network provides continuous separated bicycle facilities. An off-street two-way bicycle path should also be provided along the central local street where identified on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Plan.



Figure 27 – Cobblebank Station Cycle Trail.

3.6.5. Car parking

General

Car parking is intended to support access to the WFCA without dominating streets, public spaces or active frontages. Its location and configuration will vary between precincts in response to their land use, built form and public realm context.

Within the Core Town Centre, parking is intended to be located behind, beneath or within buildings, complemented by short term on-street parking. Multi-level parking should incorporate active ground floor uses or other appropriate screening along streets and public spaces.

Wthin the Business / Large Format Retail and Employment Transition Precincts, larger at-grade parking areas may be required but should form part of an integrated site layout in which buildings, landscaping and clearly defined walking routes establish the primary street interface. They should provide:

- direct and clearly defined pedestrian routes between parking areas, buildings and adjoining streets.
- canopy tree planting and landscaping.
- safe pedestrian crossings.
- bicycle parking close to building entrances.
- opportunities for shared or consolidated parking between compatible uses.

Vehicle access, loading and servicing areas should be separated from principal pedestrian routes, active frontages and public transport facilities wherever practicable.



Figure 28 – Pedestrian & Bike Network Plan

Commuter Parking

Commuter parking associated with the future railway station may initially be provided at-grade within the Railway and Transit Precinct. The framework allows this parking to transition to a consolidated or multi-deck arrangement as patronage, development intensity and parking demand increase, enabling more efficient use of this strategically located gateway site.

Commuter parking is intended to provide direct, safe and accessible connections to the future railway station, potential bus interchange, Core Town Centre and the east-west pedestrian route along the northern edge of the Town Centre Park.

Any future multi-level parking structure should incorporate high quality architecture, landscaping, active or visually engaging ground floor frontages and appropriate screening. Its design may incorporate an at-grade bus interchange with commuter parking levels above, and should also respond to the cobbled roadway and adjoining conservation areas.



Figure 29 – Berwick Car Park and Bus Interchange. *Source: Betterfutureawards*

Requirements:

- **R19 -** Subdivision and development must provide the street, potential public transport, walking and cycling network, including footpaths, shared paths, bicycle facilities and crossing points, generally in accordance with the relevant Movement and Access Plans.
- **R20 -** Streets must respond to their applicable Movement and Place classification and be designed generally in accordance with Figures 23 and 24, and relevant indicative cross-sections.
- **R21 -** The Connector Street network must provide a continuous bus capable connection between Intersections IT-01 and IT-02.
- **R22 -** The layout of the Railway Connector Street and adjoining land must retain sufficient space for the future station forecourt, potential bus interchange, commuter access and incorporation or interpretation of the cobbled roadway.
- **R23 -** The Pedestrianised Street and Plaza must prioritise walking and public activity. General through traffic must be excluded from the street, with vehicle access limited to emergency, maintenance or controlled servicing access.
- **R24 -** A continuous, publicly accessible east-west pedestrian route must be provided along the northern edge of the Town Centre Park between the Core Town Centre and commuter parking.
- **R25 -** Pedestrian and bike routes must be direct, legible, accessible and designed in accordance with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, including passive surveillance, appropriate lighting, clear sightlines, controlled access, and good maintenance.
- **R26 -** Planning and design of the Railway and Transit Precinct must provide for a publicly available and universally accessible walking connection, capable of operating at all times, linking the future railway station and potential public transport interchange with the Core Town Centre and the MTC south of the railway.
- **R27 -** Subdivision and development must retain the opportunity for pedestrian and active transport connections across the railway corridor, including the future railway station bridge and BR-02, generally in accordance with the Movement & Access Plan.
- **R28 -** Car parking, vehicle access, loading and servicing areas must be located and designed so they do not dominate principal street frontages or public spaces or create unreasonable conflicts with walking, cycling or potential public transport infrastructure.
- **R29 -** Within the Core Town Centre and Employment Transition Precincts, off-street parking must be located behind buildings through one or a combination of the following methods:
  - Full basement parking completely submerged below ground. The ramp to the car park to be the only visible element at street level.
  - Semi-basement (undercroft) parking partially submerged below ground. The face of the above ground portion of the car park must be sleeved with architecture detailing and landscaping.
  - Car parking within multi-storey buildings with active frontage including uses such as retail, commercial or residential.
  - At-grade car parking screened from view via built form, or landscaping where it is demonstrated that built-form is not achievable.
- **R30 -** Multi-level and rooftop parking must minimise its visual prominence and screen parked vehicles, lighting and servicing infrastructure from surrounding streets and public spaces.
- **R31 -** Car parking areas must incorporate canopy tree planting, landscaping and safe, clearly defined walking routes and be designed in accordance with Council's Off-Street Car Parking Guidelines.

- **R32 -** Where subdivision or development relies on the indicative interim connection between Intersection IT-02 and the existing Meskos Road access, a transport assessment must:
  - identify the cumulative level of development to be served by the interim arrangement.
  - demonstrate that Intersection IT-02, the connecting street and Hopkins Road can operate safely and within their available capacity.
  - identify any interim road or intersection works required.
  - demonstrate that the arrangement will not prejudice delivery of Intersection IT-01 or the ultimate street network.

Guidelines:

- **G14 -** Pedestrian priority crossings on streets that are not designated freight routes should incorporate raised pavements, contrasting materials, tightened intersection geometry or other design treatments that reduce vehicle speeds.
- **G15 -** Future bus stops should provide direct and accessible connections to key destinations and include seating, shelter, lighting and service information appropriate to their role, in consultation with the relevant transport authority and operator.
- **G16 -** On-street parking should support adjoining businesses and public spaces without compromising walking and cycling facilities, potential public transport operations, sightlines or canopy tree planting.
- **G17 -** Parking within or below buildings may be provided through basement, undercroft or sleeved multi-level arrangements. Any visible portion should be integrated with the architecture and landscape design of the development.
- **G18 -** Multi-level parking structures should minimise their visual prominence through active or visually engaging ground-floor frontages, building articulation, high-quality materials, landscaping and integrated screening.
- **G19 -** Parking within the Business and Large Format Retail and Employment Transition Precincts should generally be located to the side or rear of buildings, with buildings defining principal street frontages and direct walking routes provided through parking areas.
- **G20 -** Parking should be shared or consolidated between uses with complementary demand profiles to reduce its overall land requirement. Parking layouts should also support future intensification, redevelopment or transition to more efficient arrangements.
- **G21 -** Public and shared parking areas should incorporate or allow for car-share spaces and electric vehicle charging facilities where appropriate.
- **G22 -** Secure bicycle parking and supporting facilities should be provided near the future railway station, potential public transport interchange, Core Town Centre and principal building entrances.
- **G23 -** Any future consolidated commuter parking facility should allow for integration with the potential public transport interchange, contribute an active or visually engaging interface and respond appropriately to the cobbled roadway, Conservation Reserves and adjoining public realm.

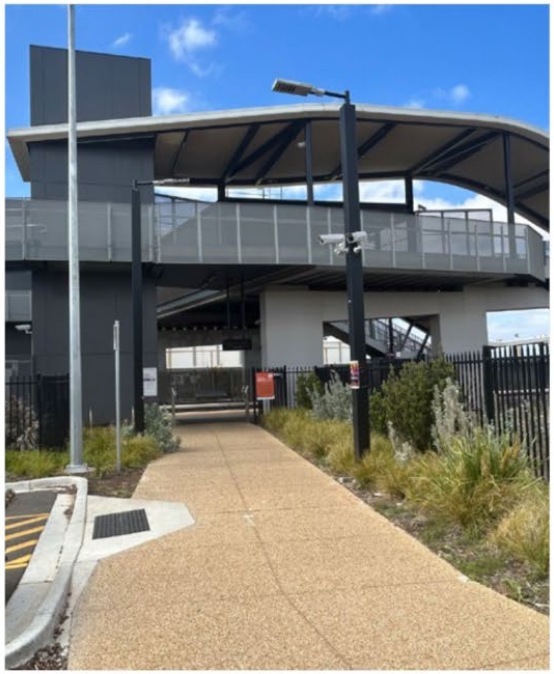


Figure 30 – Cobblebank Station entry and ramp

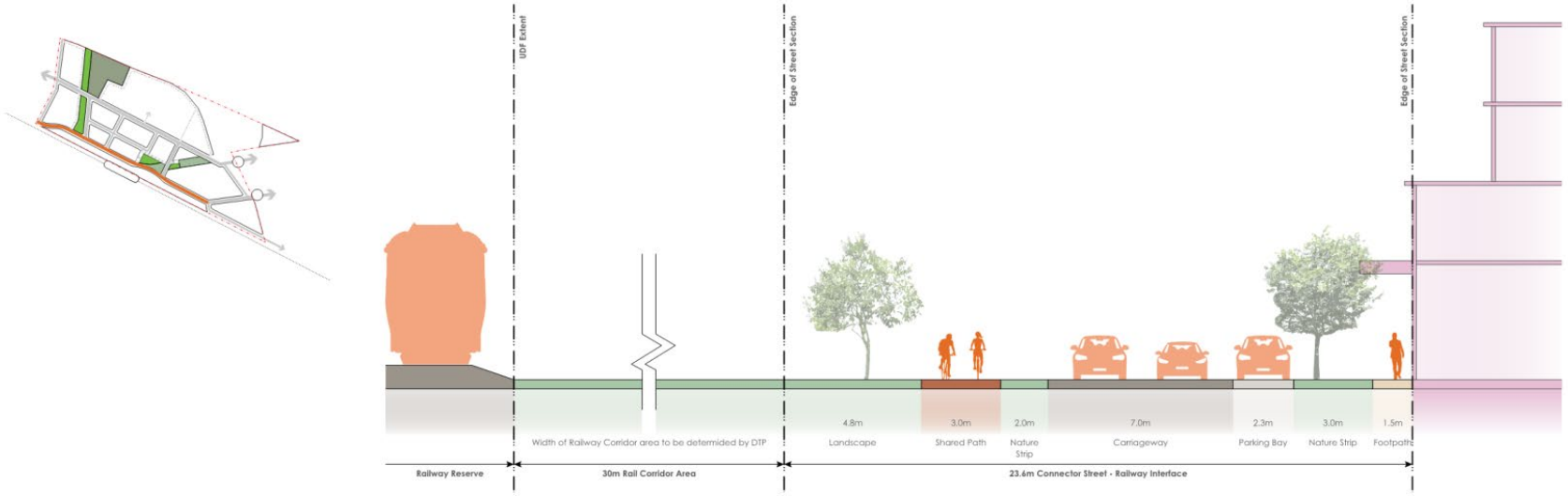


Figure 31 – Railway Connector Street

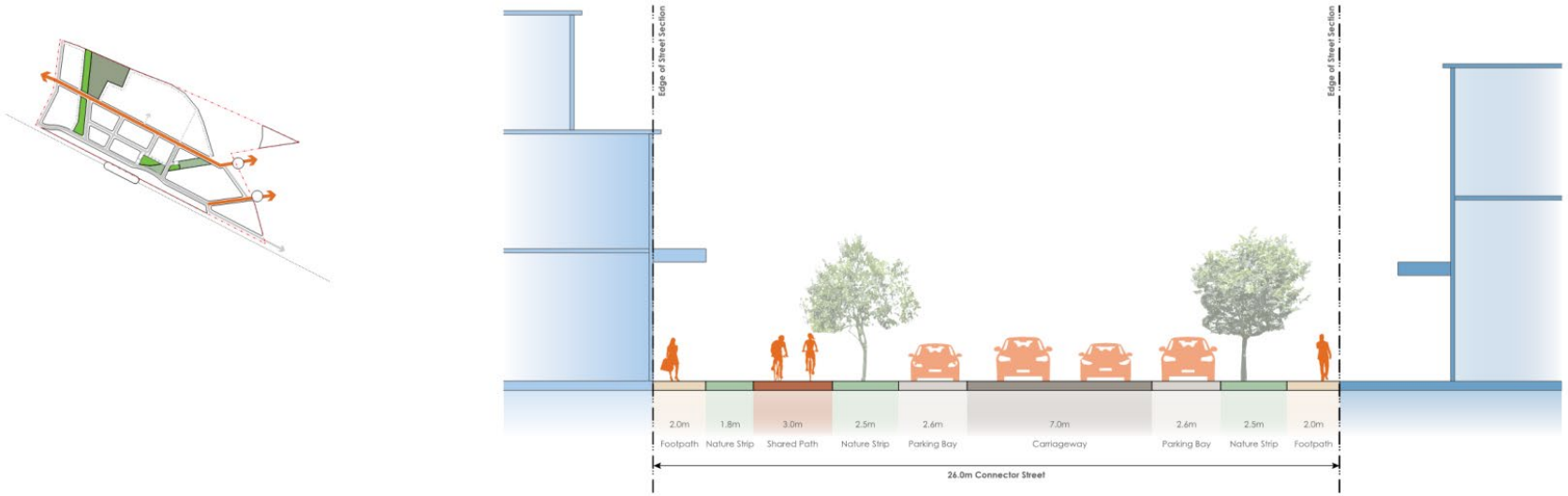


Figure 32 – Industrial Connector Street

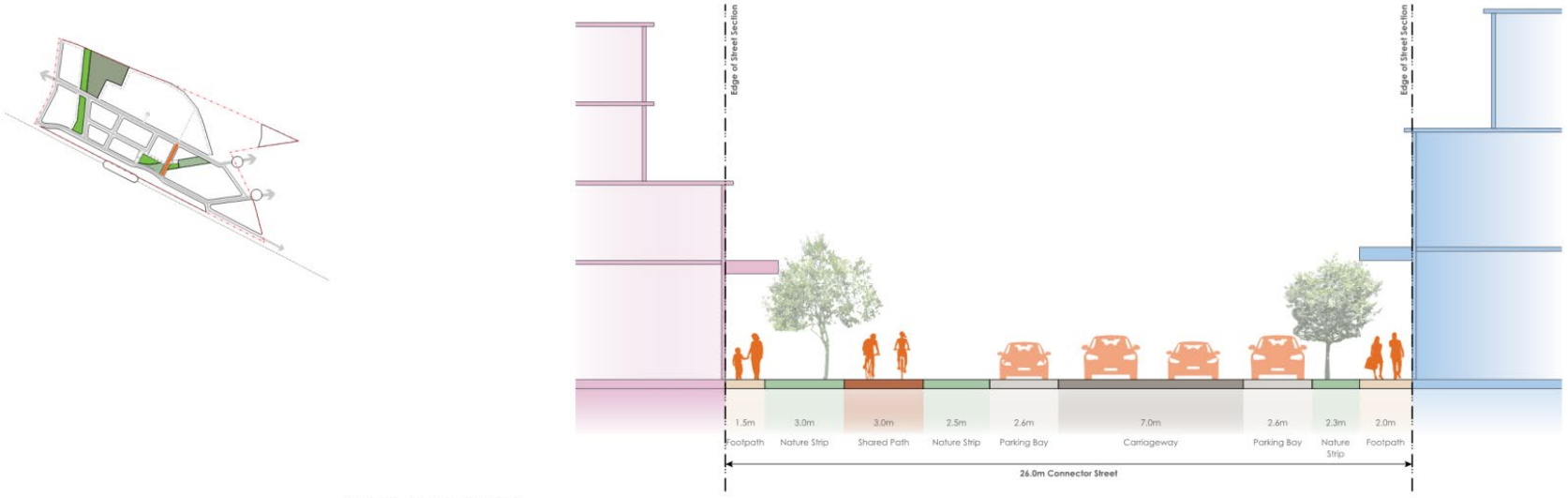


Figure 33 – Connector Street

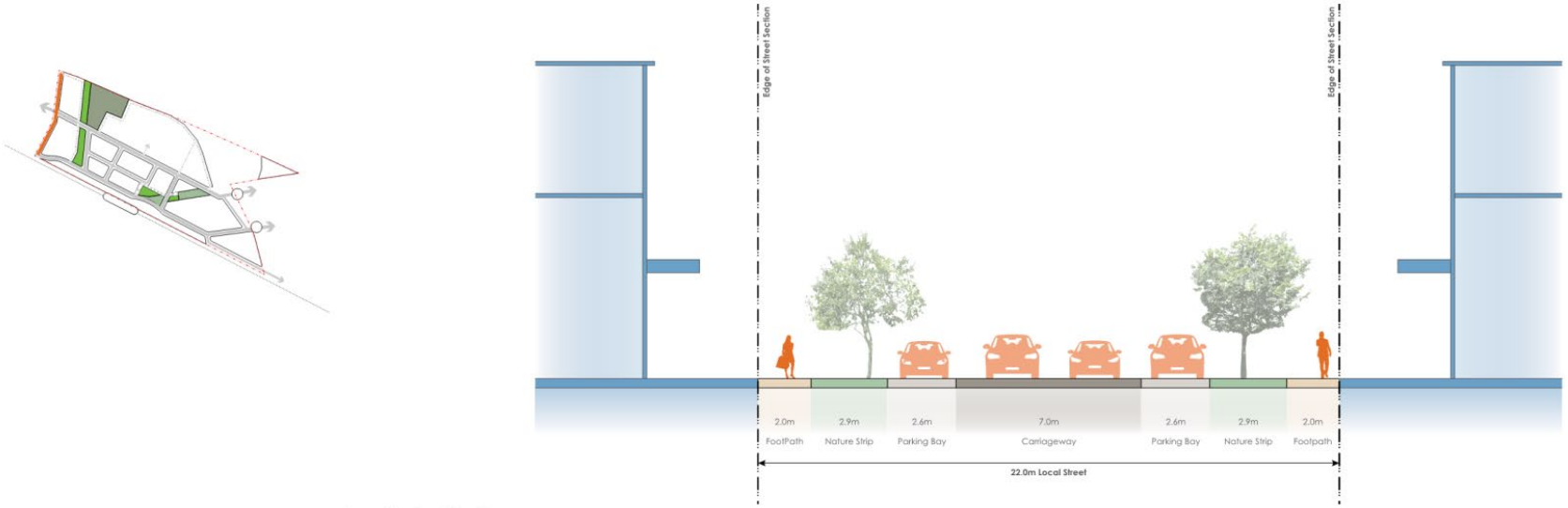


Figure 34 – Local Street

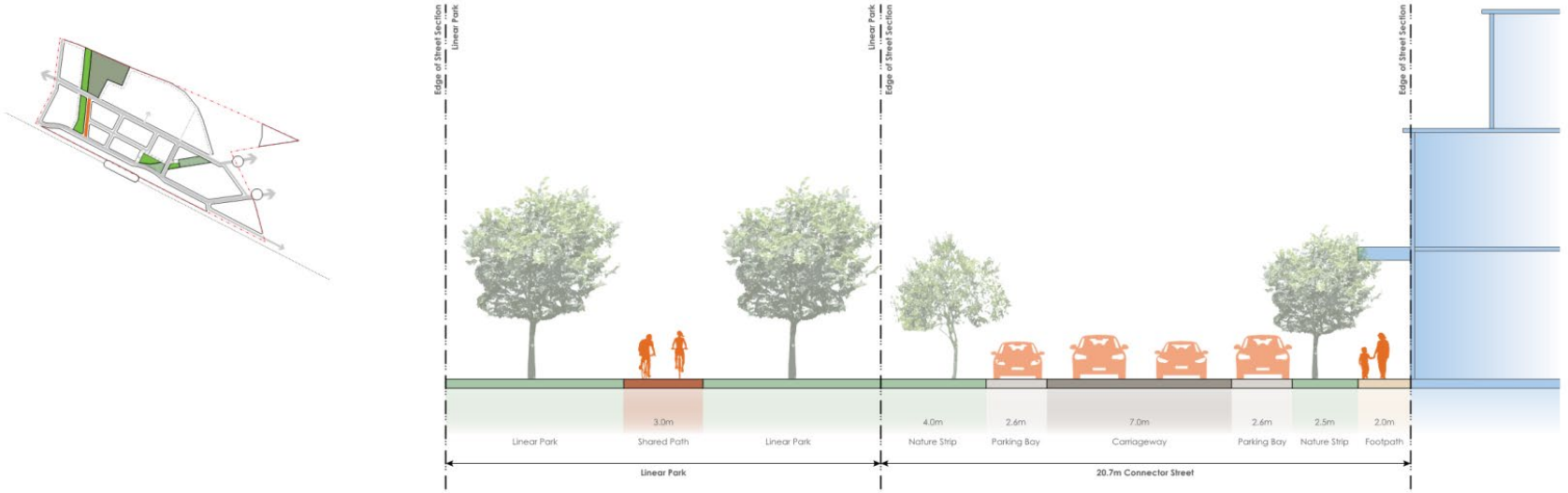


Figure 35 – Connector Street - Linear Park

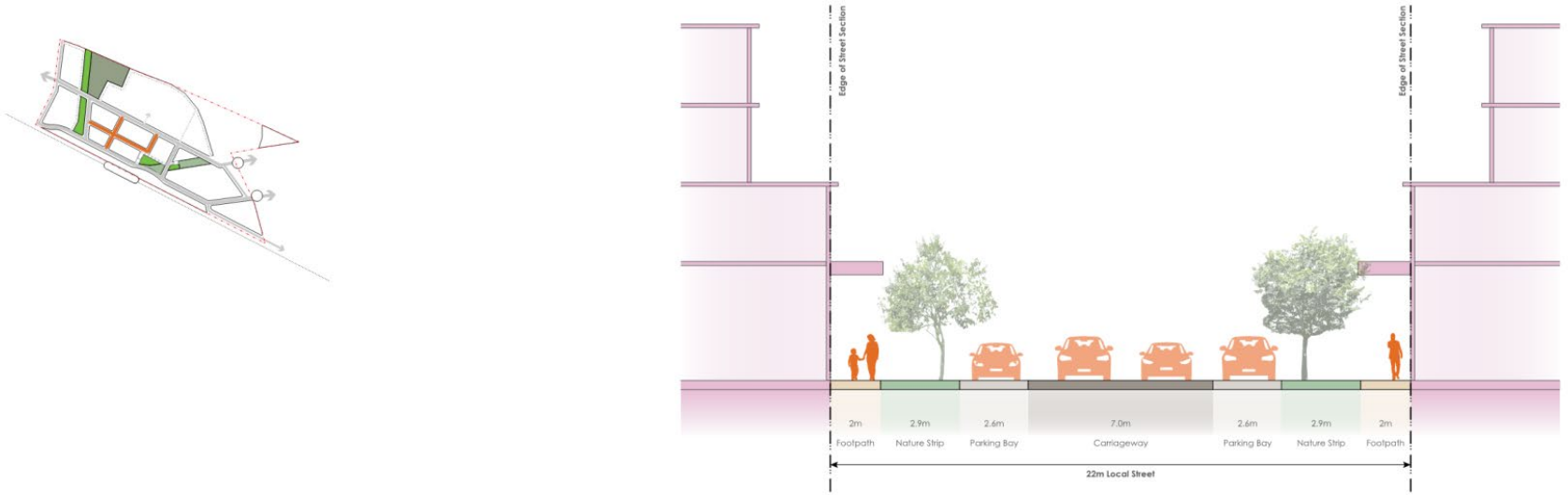
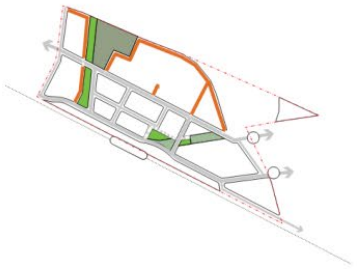


Figure 36 – Local Street



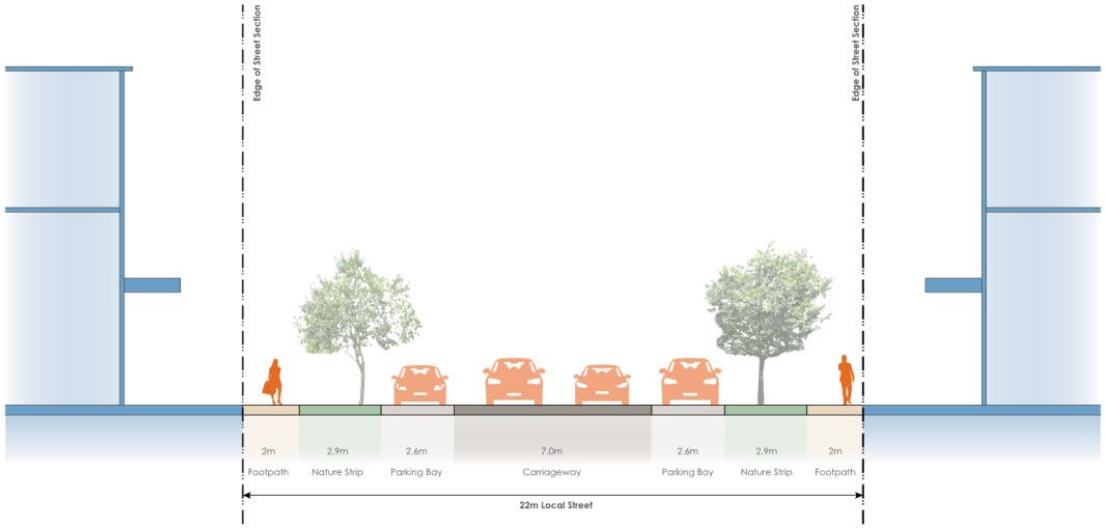
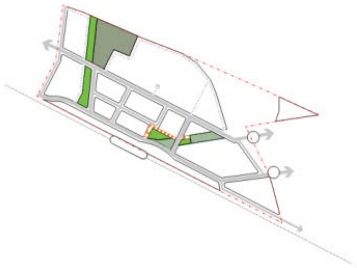


Figure 37 – Local Street



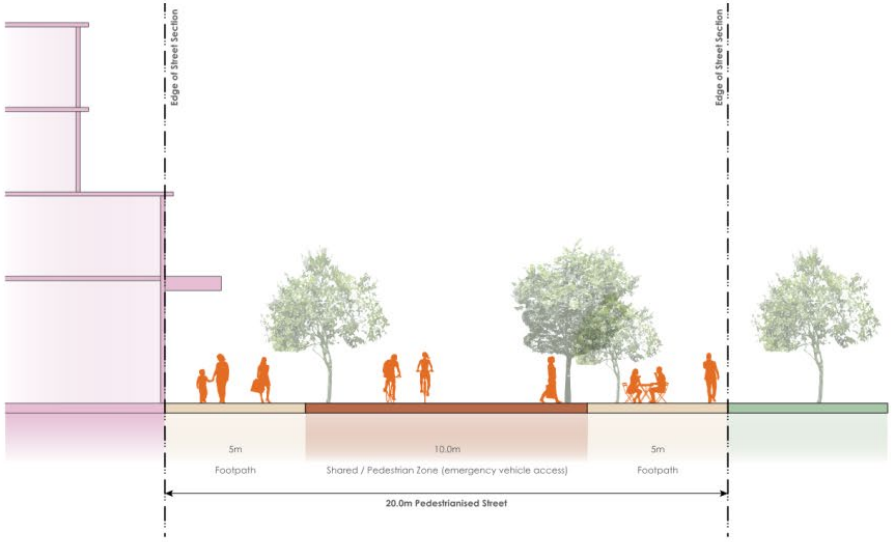


Figure 38 – Pedestrianised Street

3.7. Public Realm, Conservation & Heritage

The Public Realm, Conservation and Heritage Framework establishes an integrated approach to the WFCA's public spaces, landscape, conservation values and cultural heritage. Together, these elements support amenity, biodiversity, movement, recreation and a distinctive sense of place.

The public realm comprises a hierarchy of parks, plazas, pedestrian spaces, landscaped streets and movement corridors. Conservation reserves protect identified ecological values and require sensitive interfaces with adjoining development and public spaces. Heritage elements, including the cobbled roadway and the Indigenous and post-contact history of the site, provide opportunities for retention, interpretation and placemaking.

Opportunities should be taken to integrate public realm, conservation and heritage elements in ways that strengthen landscape character, connectivity and interpretation. Conservation reserves and drainage land can contribute to the broader landscape and amenity network alongside a hierarchy of appropriately located and designed public spaces.

Figure 40 spatially identifies the principal public-realm spaces, conservation reserves and heritage elements within the WFCA.

Framework Key Elements

- A connected hierarchy of public spaces centred on the Town Centre Park, pedestrianised street and plaza, with direct connections to the future railway station and surrounding development.
- The Linear Park as the principal north-south landscape and walking and cycling corridor, connecting Bridge BR-01, the Conservation Reserves, Core Town Centre, future railway station and land south of the railway.
- A landscaped east-west connection along the railway corridor linking the Linear Park, future railway station, commuter parking and adjoining commercial and employment areas.
- The Entry and Central Conservation Reserves, protected primarily for the Forest Sun Orchid populations identified in the MATP PSP and integrated through sensitive and visually open interfaces.
- Retention and interpretation of significant heritage elements, including the cobbled roadway and the Indigenous and post-contact history of the site.
- A distinctive landscape and public realm identity incorporating canopy trees, indigenous planting, basalt materials, public art and views to surrounding landmarks.

3.7.1. Public Realm

The public realm network comprises parks, plazas, pedestrian spaces, landscaped streets and movement corridors that connect the Core Town Centre, future railway station, commercial and employment areas and surrounding communities. Public spaces should be designed as a coordinated network while responding to the different role and character of each precinct.

Town Centre Park

The Town Centre Park will provide the principal civic green space and gathering place within the WFCA. Together with the adjoining pedestrianised street and plaza, it will form the public realm focus of the Core Town Centre.

The park will have a predominantly green and permeable character, framed by active development along its northern edge and connected to commuter parking by a principal east-west walking route. Its eastern edge will integrate with the Pedestrianised Street and Plaza, while its southern interface with the Central Conservation Reserve will provide a sensitive landscape transition that maintains visual openness and protects ecological values.



Figure 39 – Ed Square East Street. *Source: Southwestvoice*

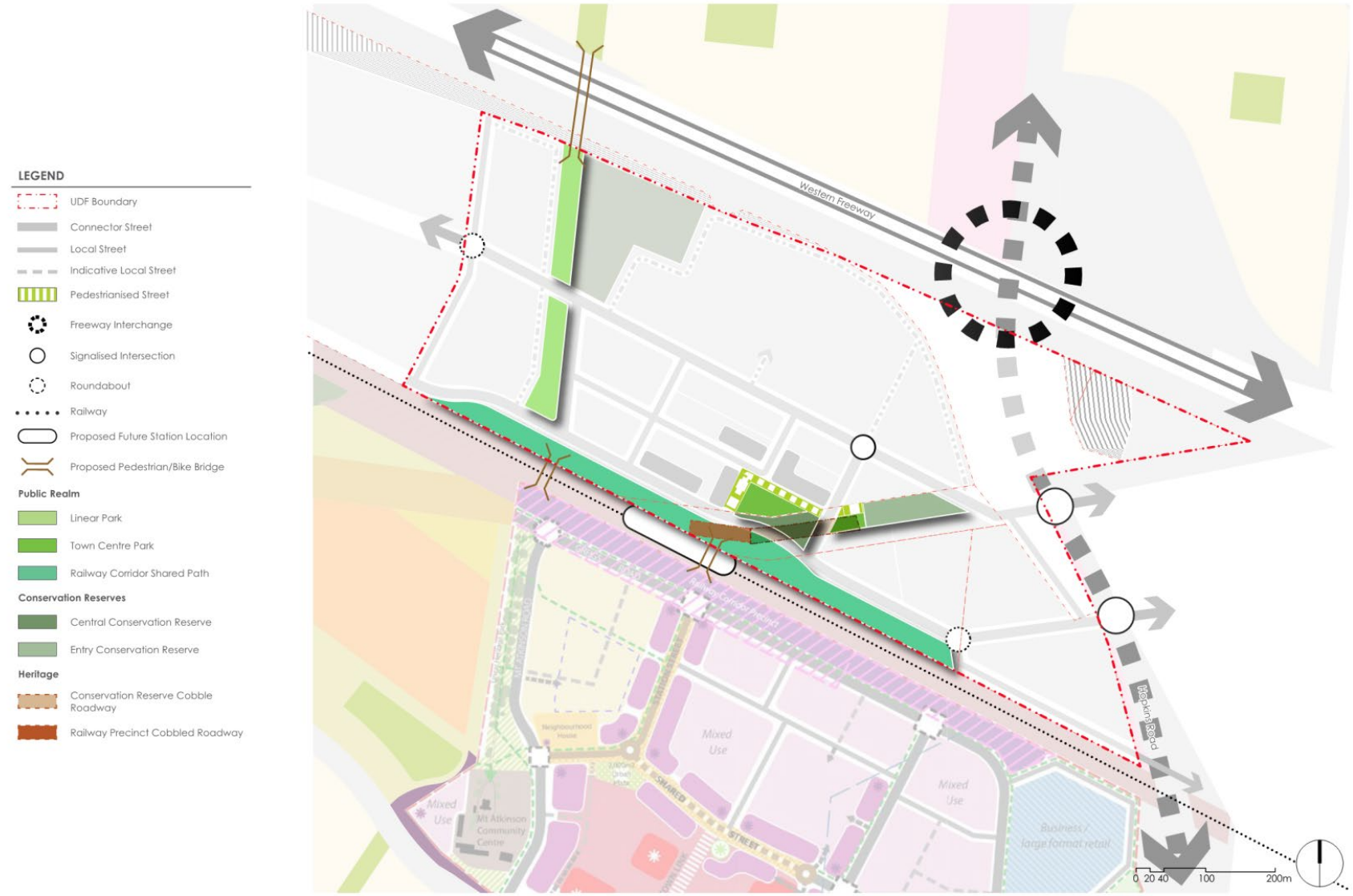


Figure 40 – Public Realm, Conservation & Heritage Plan

Pedestrianised Street and Plaza

The pedestrianised street and plaza will provide the principal hard landscaped civic space within the Core Town Centre. It will connect the future railway station and station forecourt with the Town Centre Park and adjoining retail, commercial and mixed use development.

The space will support everyday movement, outdoor dining, gathering, events and temporary activities. Adjoining buildings will define and activate its edges through occupied ground-floor uses, frequent entrances, clear glazing and weather protection. Emergency, maintenance and controlled servicing access will be accommodated without compromising its pedestrian-priority function.



Figure 41 – Matron Ruby Grant Park. *Source: Landscape Australia*

Linear Park

The Linear Park will provide the primary north-south green space and active transport corridor through the WFCA. It will connect Bridge BR-01 and communities north of the Western Freeway with the future railway station, Core Town Centre and destinations south of the railway.

The Linear Park will combine movement, shade, biodiversity and informal recreation. It will also provide the landscaped connection between the Entry and Central Conservation Reserves and integrate with the drainage reserve where the two networks intersect. The crossing of the east-west Connector Street will be treated as a key network crossing while recognising the movement and freight role of that street.

Railway Corridor Shared Path

The railway corridor shared path will provide the principal east-west connection between the Linear Park, future railway station, Core Town Centre and surrounding areas.

The shared path will form part of a landscaped corridor that provides shade, visual amenity and separation from adjoining streets, parking and development. It will connect directly with the station approaches, Town Centre Park, Pedestrianised Street and Plaza and wider walking and cycling network.

Commercial and Employment Areas

Public realm within the Business / Large Format Retail and Employment Transition Precincts will provide safe, shaded and legible connections between workplaces, public transport, parking areas and the broader pedestrian and bicycle network.

Landscaped streets, building setbacks and smaller outdoor spaces will provide amenity for workers and visitors while contributing to a coherent identity across the WFCA.

3.7.2. Conservation Reserves

Two Conservation Reserves – the Entry Conservation Reserve and the Central Conservation Reserve - are identified in the MATP PSP to protect Forest Sun Orchid populations and associated habitat. They also provide an opportunity to contribute to the landscape structure and identity of the WFCA by defining a principal entry, framing the Town Centre Park and future railway station, and providing opportunities to experience and understand the site's natural environment.

The reserves should be protected and managed primarily for their conservation function. Adjoining development, streets and public spaces should establish sensitive and visually open interfaces that allow the reserves to contribute to the character of the WFCA while protecting their ecological values.

Interface design will be informed by the MATP PSP, any approved conservation or ecological management plan and site specific ecological assessment. Relevant considerations include building siting and overshadowing, landscaping, fencing, access, lighting, stormwater, servicing, construction management and the location of interpretation or viewing areas.



Figure 42 – Conservation Reserve Plan



Figure 43 – Thelymitra Arenaria (Forest Sun Orchid). *Source: Wikipedia*

Entry Conservation Reserve

The Entry Conservation Reserve is located at the northern entry to the WFCA, adjoining Intersection IT-01. It will form part of a landscaped gateway and provide a transition between the Linear Park, adjoining road network and surrounding development.

The framework plan illustrates a refined reserve configuration intended to coordinate with the future design of Intersection IT-01 while maintaining its overall area and conservation function. Any change to the reserve boundary identified in the MATP PSP remains subject to ecological confirmation and the required planning and conservation approvals.

Central Conservation Reserve

The Central Conservation Reserve forms an important landscape setting for the Town Centre Park, future railway station, commuter parking and Pedestrianised Street and Plaza.

It should have a soft and visually connected relationship with adjoining public spaces while retaining a clear conservation function. Walking routes will remain outside the reserve boundary and be designed to avoid vegetation loss, habitat fragmentation and informal access. The treatment of the cobbled roadway within the reserve will be coordinated with its ecological management.

3.7.3. Heritage

The WFCA contains Indigenous and post-contact heritage values that provide opportunities to strengthen its identity and sense of place. The planning and design of the area should support the identification, protection and interpretation of these values in consultation with Traditional Owners, relevant heritage authorities and suitably qualified heritage practitioners.

Heritage interpretation should be integrated into the public realm and built form through landscape design, public art, naming, signage, materials and the retention or incorporation of physical fabric. Interpretation of the site's former use as Bullen's African Lion Safari should only occur where supported by historical research and considered appropriate within the broader interpretation strategy.

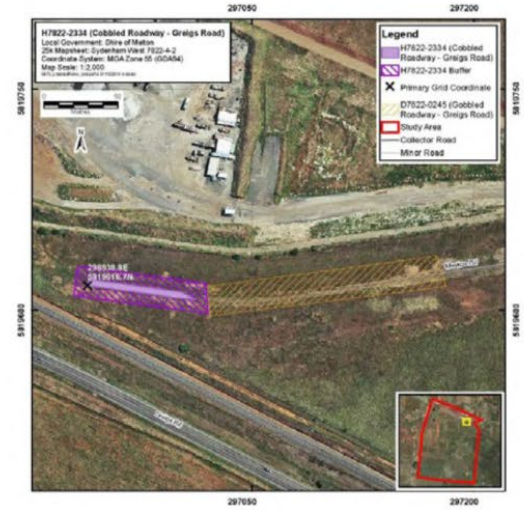


Figure 44 – Cobbled roadway. *Source: Ecology + Heritage Partners*

Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Planning and development must respond to applicable Cultural Heritage Management Plans, legislative requirements and any further cultural heritage investigations undertaken for the land.

Opportunities to incorporate Traditional Owner knowledge, language and cultural interpretation into landscape design, public art, naming and other public realm elements should be developed in consultation with the relevant Traditional Owners.

Cobbled Roadway

Two sections of cobbled roadway have been identified within the WFCA. Further archaeological and heritage investigation is required to confirm their extent, condition and significance, including the extent of the component included in the Victorian Heritage Inventory and the significance of adjoining unlisted sections.

The section within the Central Conservation Reserve should be retained in situ where this is compatible with the conservation management of the reserve. It may contribute to interpretation of both the ecological and post-contact history of the precinct.

The section near the future railway station should be considered as part of the detailed design of the Railway Connector Street, station forecourt and adjoining public realm. The preferred outcome is retention and interpretation in situ. Where complete retention is demonstrated to be impracticable, any relocation, alteration or reuse must be informed by archaeological and heritage assessment and obtain the required approvals, including consultation with Heritage Victoria.

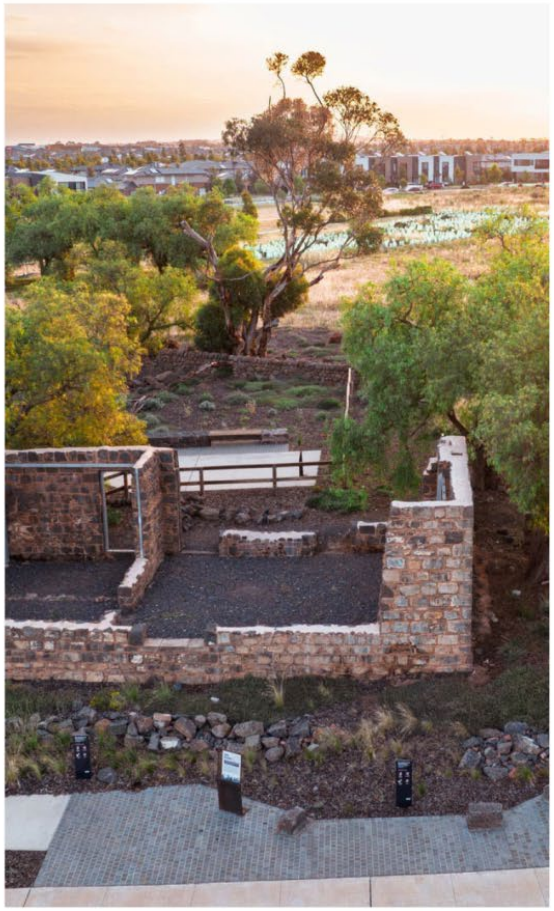


Figure 45 – Rockbank Inn. *Source: Woodlea Heritage*

Requirements:

- **R33 -** Subdivision and development must deliver the public realm, conservation and heritage network generally in accordance with Figure 40 and maintain the identified connections between the Linear Park, Town Centre Park, pedestrianised street and plaza, future railway station and surrounding commercial and employment areas.
- **R34 -**The Town Centre Park must provide:
  - a predominantly green and permeable landscape.
  - an active development interface along its northern edge.
  - a continuous east-west pedestrian connection between the commercial area and commuter parking.
  - a direct and integrated relationship with the pedestrianised street and plaza.
  - safe and accessible connections to the future railway station.
  - a sensitive landscape interface with the Central Conservation Reserve.
- **R35 -**The pedestrianised street and plaza must be designed as a continuous, universally accessible pedestrian priority space incorporating shade, seating, lighting, landscaping and opportunities for adjoining uses to activate the public realm.
- **R36 -**The Linear Park and railway corridor shared path must provide continuous and legible pedestrian and bicycle connections. Parallel paths may be consolidated where separate paths would result in unnecessary duplication or reduce the area available for landscaping and canopy trees.

- **R37 -**Landscape plans for streets and public spaces must:
  - identify anticipated canopy cover at maturity.
  - demonstrate the provision of shade along principal pedestrian routes and within gathering spaces.
  - use indigenous, climate resilient species appropriate to the location.
  - maintain required sightlines and infrastructure clearances.
  - respond to relevant Council landscape, public-realm and engineering standards.
- **R38 -**The Entry and Central Conservation Reserves must be protected and managed for the conservation of Forest Sun Orchid populations and associated habitat in accordance with the MATP PSP and any approved conservation or ecological management plan.
- **R39 -** Where public art is required or proposed, it must be designed and delivered in accordance with Council's applicable public art policy.
- **R40 -**Development adjoining a Conservation Reserve must provide an interface response addressing building setbacks, height and orientation, landscaping, fencing, access, lighting, stormwater, servicing and construction impacts. Development to the north of a Conservation Reserve must also provide shadow diagrams demonstrating the extent and duration of overshadowing and an assessment of its potential effect on ecological values.
- **R41 -**Before approval of any road, station, public realm or infrastructure works that may affect the cobbled roadway, an archaeological and heritage assessment must confirm its extent, condition and significance, including the component identified in the Victorian Heritage Inventory and adjoining sections that have not previously been assessed.
- **R42 -**Development and infrastructure must retain and protect the cobbled roadway in situ to the maximum extent practicable and integrate it with the conservation landscape, station forecourt or adjoining public realm. Any proposal for removal, relocation or alteration must be supported by the required heritage assessment and approvals.
- **R43 -**Public realm plans must identify and incorporate opportunities for conservation and heritage interpretation. This should address the Forest Sun Orchid reserves, the cobbled roadway, Indigenous cultural heritage in consultation with Traditional Owners and relevant aspects of the site's post-contact history.

Guidelines:

- **G24 -** Existing vegetation should be retained and incorporated into streets, parks and other public spaces where compatible with conservation, infrastructure and public safety requirements.
- **G25 -** Public realm improvements within commercial and employment areas should provide shaded pedestrian connections, canopy tree planting and smaller outdoor spaces for workers and visitors.
- **G26 -** The Town Centre Park, pedestrianised street and plaza should incorporate flexible spaces that support informal recreation, outdoor dining, markets, events and temporary activities.
- **G27 -** Landscape design should incorporate indigenous and climate resilient planting, water sensitive urban design and a diversity of species that strengthens biodiversity and seasonal interest.
- **G28 -** Development adjoining public spaces should provide active frontages and a high level of visual permeability, particularly at the ground floor, to encourage passive surveillance and visual connections between building occupants and the public realm.
- **G29 -** Building design should incorporate opportunities for informal seating and weather protection where interfacing public spaces.
- **G30 -** Interfaces with Conservation Reserves should use low-impact landscape treatments and visually open fencing where access control is required. Paths, viewing areas and interpretation should remain outside sensitive habitat and discourage informal access.
- **G31 -** Canopy trees and other planting adjoining Conservation Reserves should be located and selected to avoid adverse overshadowing, root competition and changes to soil or moisture conditions.
- **G32 -** Lighting adjoining Conservation Reserves should minimise unnecessary spill, and stormwater infrastructure should avoid adverse changes to water quality, flow, soil conditions or vegetation
- **G33 -** Public art and cultural interpretation should be incorporated within key public spaces, including the Pedestrian Street and Town Centre Park, to reinforce local identity and contribute to placemaking.
- **G34 -** Basalt and other locally distinctive materials should be incorporated into paving, landscape elements, street furniture, public art and heritage interpretation where appropriate.
- **G35 -** Where complete retention of the cobbled roadway in situ is demonstrated to be impracticable and the necessary heritage approvals are obtained, affected material should be carefully recorded and considered for relocation or reuse within a prominent nearby public space.

3.8. Built Form & Interface

The Built Form and Interface Framework establishes a coordinated approach to building scale, siting, orientation, frontage treatment and architectural quality across the WFCA. It gives physical expression to the intended role and character of each precinct and the activities identified by the Land Use Framework.

Within the Core Town Centre, built form will establish a finer grained and more intensive urban environment focused on the Town Centre Park, pedestrianised street and plaza and connections to the future railway station. Across the broader commercial and employment areas, larger buildings, parking and servicing areas should be integrated into a coherent street and landscape network and present high-quality interfaces to the Western Freeway, Hopkins Road and adjoining industrial land.

The Built Form & Interface Framework Plan identifies the principal frontage and interface types, key built form sites and other spatial built-form directions applying across the WFCA.

Built Form Key Elements

- Greater development intensity and a finer grained urban form around the future railway station and within the Core Town Centre.
- High quality and adaptable large format commercial and employment buildings that address streets and pedestrian routes and respond positively to regional interfaces.
- Core Town Centre Active, Semi-Active and Large Format Retail frontage classifications that establish an appropriate relationship between buildings and the public realm.
- Prominent and distinctive development at key built form sites, gateways, important corners and the termination of significant view lines.
- Coordinated responses to the railway corridor, principal public spaces, Conservation Reserves, Western Freeway, Hopkins Road and adjoining industrial land.
- Integrated treatment of roof forms, parking, loading, servicing, utilities, landscaping and signage as part of the overall site and building design.



Figure 46 – Kelvin Grove. *Source: Calibrerealestate*

3.8.1. Built Form

Building Scale and Intensity

A clear hierarchy of building scale and intensity will reinforce the urban structure and the intended role of each precinct. Greater development intensity and a finer grained pattern of buildings and tenancies will be concentrated within the Core Town Centre and around the Town Centre Park and Pedestrianised Street and Plaza.

The Commercial Transition Precinct will manage the transition between the Core Town Centre and larger building footprints within the Business and Large Format Retail Precinct. Buildings within the Business and Large Format Retail, Commercial Transport and Employment Transition Precincts may have larger floorplates but should retain a clear street address, legible entrances and an appropriate relationship with adjoining streets and public spaces.

Transitions between precincts and adjoining land will be achieved through coordinated changes in building height, massing, setbacks, building separation, landscaping and the positioning of lower building elements.

Key Built Form Sites and Views

Key built form sites are located at prominent gateways, important street intersections, the future railway station, the Town Centre Park and the termination of significant view lines. Development on these sites should provide a distinctive and site responsive architectural outcome that assists with orientation and reinforces the hierarchy of places within the WFCA.

Built form and landscape design should reinforce views toward the future railway station, Mount Atkinson, the Town Centre Park and other key built form sites. The future station and adjoining development should form a recognisable public transport gateway without relying solely on additional building height or signage.

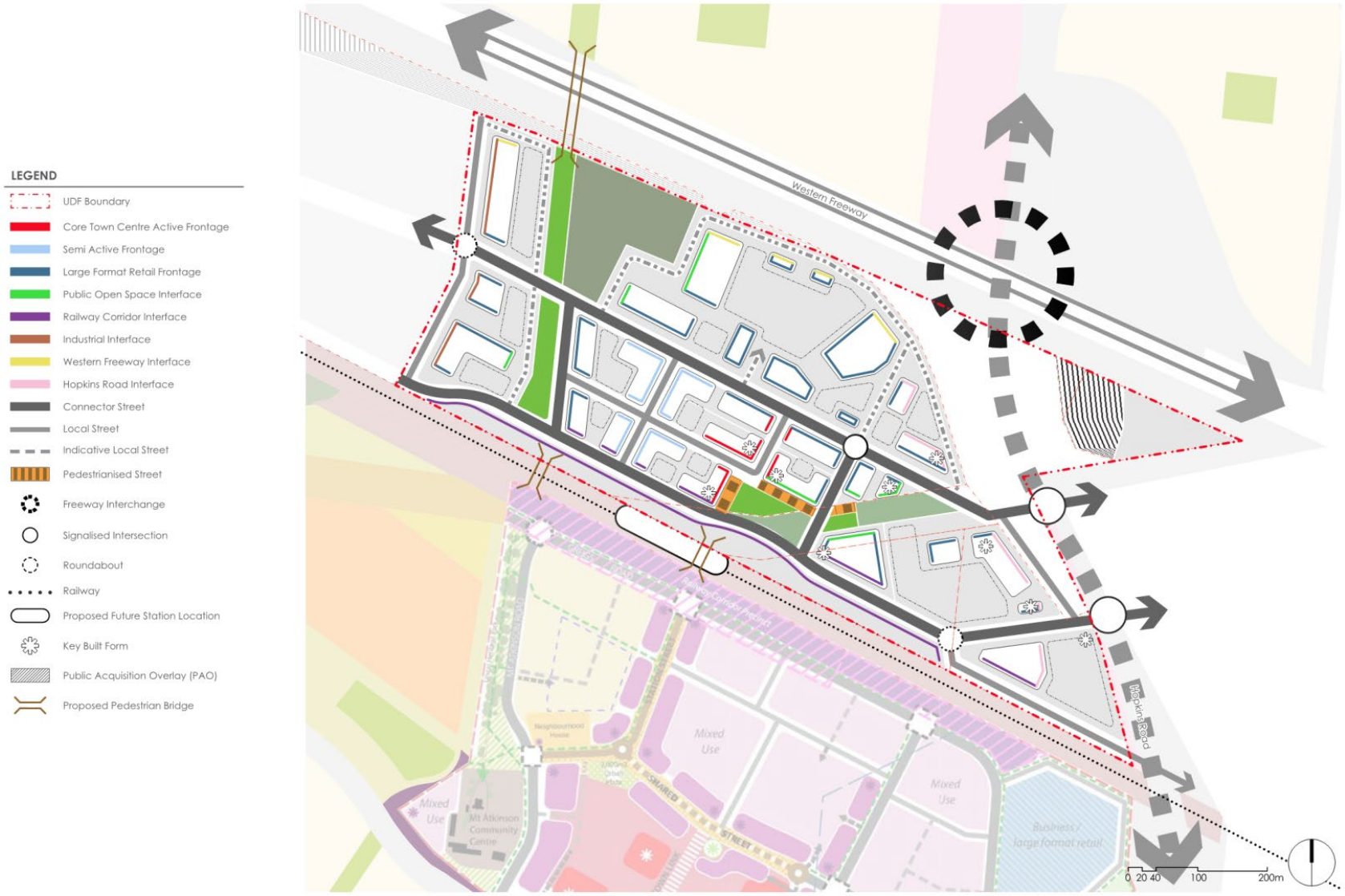


Figure 47 –Frontages & Interfaces Plan

Architectural Articulation, Roof Form and Materials

Building facades should be articulated through changes in building plane, windows, entrances, canopies, materials and integrated landscape elements. Long commercial elevations should be divided into visually distinct sections that reflect entrances, tenancies or structural bays rather than relying only on applied colour or superficial elements.

Large roof forms should incorporate variation in profile, height, parapet treatment or material where necessary to reduce their apparent scale and reinforce entrances, corners and other important building elements. Plant, equipment, service structures and rooftop parking should be integrated into the architectural composition and screened from public views.

Buildings should use durable and high-quality materials suited to their function and setting. Basalt and materials that reference the volcanic landscape and cobbled roadway may be used at key built form sites, entrances and prominent public interfaces where appropriate.

Adaptability

Buildings and sites should support staged development and future changes in use, tenancy configuration and business requirements. Access, parking, servicing and building layouts should allow future intensification without compromising the ultimate street network, frontage treatment or public realm.

3.8.2. Active Frontages

Active frontages create a direct relationship between buildings and the public realm through occupied ground floor uses, clear glazing, frequent entrances and opportunities for activities to extend into adjoining streets and public spaces.

The Built Form and Interfaces Plan identifies Core Town Centre Active Frontages, Semi-Active Frontages and Large Format Retail Frontage. The required level and form of activation will respond to the applicable frontage classification, land use and precinct. Mirrored, heavily tinted, opaque or permanently screened glazing does not provide an active relationship with the public realm. Vehicle access, loading, servicing, utilities and long sections of blank wall should be directed away from identified active frontages.

Core Town Centre Active Frontages

Core Town Centre Active Frontages will establish a fine grained and pedestrian oriented environment around the future railway station, Town Centre Park and pedestrianised street and plaza. Ground floors will accommodate active and publicly accessible uses, frequent entrances, clear glazing and weather protection, with opportunities for outdoor dining, trading and other activity.

Development along the northern edge of the Town Centre Park will address both the park and the principal east-west walking route. Development adjoining the Pedestrianised Street and Plaza will support activity at different times of the day and allow adjoining uses to extend into the public realm. Vehicle access, loading, servicing and exposed building services will be minimised along these frontages.

Semi-Active Frontages

Semi-Active Frontages will support pedestrian movement and passive surveillance without requiring the same intensity of activity as Core Town Centre Active Frontages. Occupied internal spaces, entrances and clear glazing will be oriented toward the street, with vehicle access, parking, loading and servicing positioned to minimise their effect on the frontage.

Large Format Retail Frontages

Large Format Retail frontages will provide an attractive and legible relationship between larger commercial buildings and adjoining streets and pedestrian routes. Each tenancy will have a clearly identifiable entrance connected directly to the public footpath and parking areas. Facades will incorporate glazing or other visually engaging treatments around entrances and be articulated to reflect tenancies, structural bays and important corners.

Buildings and landscaping should define the principal street interface, with parking generally located to the side or rear and loading, storage, waste and servicing screened from public views.



Figure 48 – Semi-Active Frontage at Overton Road, Williams Landing.
Source: Realcommercial

Railway Corridor Frontages and Corner Sites

Development adjoining the railway corridor and associated shared path will provide an attractive and visually engaging interface and maintain direct connections to the future station and surrounding development. Blank walls, exposed servicing and unscreened parking should not form the predominant railway frontage.

Buildings on prominent corners will address both frontages through glazing, articulation, landscape and clearly identifiable entrances. Vehicle access, loading and servicing should be located away from the corner and identified active frontages.



Figure 49 – University Hill. ***Source: Realcommercial***

3.8.3. Key Interfaces

The WFCA contains a range of interfaces that require different built form, landscape and access responses. Where land is affected by more than one interface, development should respond to each relevant condition.

Railway Corridor and Future Station

Development adjoining the railway corridor and future railway station will contribute to an attractive and legible public transport gateway. Buildings should orient occupied spaces, windows and entrances toward the shared path and station approaches where practicable, maintain direct walking connections and address rail noise and vibration without creating inactive or defensive edges. Development must not prejudice the future delivery, operation or expansion of railway and station infrastructure.

Town Centre Park and Principal Public Spaces

Development adjoining the Town Centre Park, pedestrianised street and plaza and station forecourt should provide the highest level of public realm engagement within the WFCA. Buildings will establish a well-defined edge, provide active and publicly accessible ground-floor uses and orient principal entrances toward the adjoining public space. Height, massing and upper levels should maintain comfortable public realm conditions and minimise unreasonable overshadowing.

Linear Park and Other Public Open Space

Development adjoining the Linear Park and other public open spaces will provide a visually open interface, passive surveillance and direct connections to adjoining paths where appropriate. Vehicle access, loading, servicing and waste areas should be located away from the interface, with landscape treatments coordinated with the adjoining open space.

Conservation Reserves

Built form adjoining the Entry and Central Conservation Reserves should protect the Forest Sun Orchid populations and associated habitat while maintaining an appropriate visual relationship with the reserves. Building siting, height, orientation, access, lighting, landscaping, stormwater and servicing will respond to Section 3.7.2 and the relevant conservation or ecological management plan.

Western Freeway and Hopkins Road

Development visible from the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road will provide a coordinated regional presentation through building form, roof design, durable materials, landscaping and signage. Gateway locations at Intersections IT-01 and IT-02 will be reinforced without allowing parking, loading, storage or servicing to dominate these interfaces.

Industrial Interface

Development adjoining industrial land to the west should reinforce the broader employment role of the area and provide a functional transition between different forms of commercial and industrial activity. Uses, buildings, access and landscape treatments will support business and movement connections while managing noise, traffic, lighting, dust and other operational impacts. Sensitive uses should not be located where they could constrain existing or future industrial operations.

Internal Transitions

Transitions between the Core Town Centre, larger commercial areas and employment precincts should be achieved through coordinated changes in building grain, scale, setbacks, landscape and street character.Where development occurs in stages, interim elevations and interfaces should be designed to present an acceptable public realm outcome until adjoining sites are developed.

Requirements

- **R44 -** Built form must be designed generally in accordance with the Built Form and Interfaces Plan.
- **R45 -** A planning permit application must identify the applicable precinct, land use designation, frontage classification and interface type and demonstrate an integrated response to each.
- **R46 -** Built form must reinforce the development hierarchy of the WFCA by providing a finer grained and more intensive urban form within the Core Town Centre and an appropriate response to the larger building footprints and operational requirements of the commercial and employment precincts.
- **R47 -** Buildings must address adjoining streets, parks, pedestrian routes and public spaces.
- **R48 -** Principal building and tenancy entrances must be clearly identifiable, directly accessible from the pedestrian network and located to reinforce movement between buildings, streets, public spaces and public transport.
- **R49 -** Core Town Centre Active Frontages must incorporate:
  - active and publicly accessible ground floor uses.
  - clear glazing providing views between occupied spaces and the public realm.
  - frequent and legible entrances.
  - weather protection along principal pedestrian routes.
  - opportunities for outdoor activity where appropriate.
  - limited vehicle access, blank walls and exposed services.
  - fine grained and provide highly active frontages with windows and entrances as the predominant elements of the ground floor facade.
  - Maximise opportunities to enhance passive surveillance of the public realm.
  - Have a zero setback to create a defined edge.
- **R50 -** Development adjoining the northern edge of the Town Centre Park or the Pedestrianised Street and Plaza must provide a strong active interface through occupied ground floor uses, direct entrances, clear glazing, weather protection and passive surveillance.
- **R51 -** Semi-Active Frontages must orient occupied internal spaces and building entrances toward the street, provide visual interaction with the public realm and minimise the prominence of vehicle access, parking, loading and servicing.
- **R52 -** Large Format Retail Frontages must provide clearly identifiable tenancy entrances, safe and direct pedestrian connections, articulated façades and an attractive landscape interface. Long blank walls, loading, storage and servicing must not dominate the primary public frontage.
- **R53 -** Development adjoining the railway corridor must provide an attractive and visually engaging interface, maintain direct connections with the shared path and future station and avoid presenting blank walls, exposed servicing or unscreened parking as the predominant railway frontage.
- **R54 -** Development on key built form sites, gateway locations, prominent corners and the termination of identified view lines must provide a distinctive and site-responsive architectural outcome that reinforces wayfinding and the hierarchy of places within the WFCA.
- **R55 -** Building height, scale and massing must provide an appropriate transition between adjoining precincts, land uses, public spaces, conservation reserves and industrial land.
- **R56 -** All publicly visible elevations and roof forms must incorporate architectural articulation and durable, high-quality materials. Rooftop plant, equipment, service structures and rooftop parking must be integrated into the building design and screened from surrounding streets, public spaces and significant views.
- **R57 -** Car parking, vehicle access, loading, servicing, waste storage and utilities must be integrated into the site and building design and located to minimise their visibility and impact on active frontages, public spaces and principal pedestrian routes.
- **R58 -** Buildings must provide passive surveillance of adjoining streets, public spaces and pedestrian routes and incorporate relevant CPTED principles.
- **R59 -** Development adjoining public open space or a Conservation Reserve must respond to the applicable interface guidance in Sections 3.7 and 3.8.3, including the management of overshadowing, lighting, access, servicing and other off-site impacts.
- **R60 -** Buildings and sites must be designed to accommodate staged development and future changes in use or tenancy without compromising the ultimate built form, street network, active frontages or public realm outcomes.

Guidelines

- **G36 -** Buildings should incorporate variation in height, roof forms, facade alignment, materials and architectural detail to provide visual interest and reduce the apparent scale of larger development.
- **G37 -** Durable, high quality materials should be used throughout the WFCA. Basalt and other materials that reference the volcanic landscape and cobbled roadway should be incorporated at key built form sites, entrances and prominent public interfaces where appropriate.
- **G38 -** Weather protection should be provided along key pedestrian routes and at building and tenancy entrances through awnings, verandahs, canopies or building overhangs.
- **G39 -** Key built form sites and gateway locations should be emphasised through building composition, prominent entrances, distinctive roof forms, landscaping, lighting or public art rather than relying solely on additional height or signage.
- **G40 -** Ground floor development within the Core Town Centre should provide a fine grained tenancy pattern and support activity at different times of the day and evening.
- **G41 -** Parking associated with Business / Large Format Retail development should generally be located to the side or rear of buildings and shared or consolidated between compatible uses where practicable.
- **G42 -** Landscape design should be integrated with building setbacks, entrances, parking areas and interface treatments rather than provided as isolated or residual planting areas.
- **G43 -** Signage should be coordinated with the architecture and landscape design of the site and should not obscure building articulation, important views or principal entrances.
- **G44 -** Development visible from the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road should provide a coordinated regional presentation through building form, roof design, materials, landscaping and signage.
- **G45 -** Development adjoining industrial land should use building siting, compatible land uses, landscape treatments and access arrangements to support a functional transition without constraining existing or future industrial operations.
- **G46 -** Upper levels containing windows, balconies or sensitive uses should be designed and separated to provide appropriate privacy, daylight, outlook and internal amenity.
- **G47 -** Blank walls should be minimised. Where an exposed wall is temporarily required because development is staged, it should incorporate materials, articulation, public art or landscape treatment that provides a visually interesting design.
- **G48 -** Vehicle access points should be located away from primary street frontages, the Town Centre Park, pedestrianised street and plaza and other public spaces wherever practicable.
- **G49 -** Development should establish a strong and consistent street edge by providing a minimum podium or overall building height equivalent to two storeys (generally greater than 7.0 metres) along public streets. Where a building contains a single storey use, the overall built form should incorporate increased floor-to-ceiling heights or architectural treatments that achieve the appearance and scale of a two-storey building.

3.9. Sustainability & Climate Resilience

The Sustainability and Climate Resilience Framework supports the development of the WFCA as a resource efficient, environmentally responsive and adaptable commercial and employment area.

Sustainability will be integrated into buildings, infrastructure, streets, public spaces and landscapes. The scale of the WFCA provides particular opportunities for water sensitive urban design, urban cooling, biodiversity, renewable energy generation, water reuse, reduced emissions and adaptation to a changing climate.

Key Design Elements

- Delivery of the WL3 wetland and RB3 retarding basin in accordance with the MATP PSP and Gardiner Lane Drainage Services Scheme, unless an alternative strategy is approved by Melbourne Water and the responsible authority.
- Integration of drainage infrastructure with the Linear Park, walking and cycling network and adjoining development and landscape interfaces.
- Integrated water management across buildings, development sites, streets, parking areas and public spaces.
- A connected green infrastructure and urban forest network linking public spaces, streets, Conservation Reserves, drainage infrastructure and landscaped development sites.
- Climate-resilient and adaptable buildings that reduce operational energy and water demand and provide for renewable energy, rainwater reuse, waste recovery and low-emission transport.

3.9.1. Drainage and Integrated Water Management

The MATP PSP and Gardiner Lane Drainage Services Scheme identify the WL3 wetland and RB3 retarding basin within the WFCA. Delivery of this infrastructure in its identified PSP location is the preferred drainage and public realm outcome.

The drainage reserve should be designed as an integrated landscape feature that contributes to the Linear Park, active transport network and broader landscape structure while maintaining its primary stormwater management function. Its precise size, shape and configuration must be confirmed through detailed engineering design and consultation with Melbourne Water.

Passive landscape, biodiversity, walking and informal recreation functions may be incorporated where compatible with hydraulic, water quality, safety, maintenance and access requirements. Drainage, earthworks and landscape design will be coordinated with adjoining development to avoid isolated or inaccessible residual areas and retain the land and connections required for Bridge BR-01.

Alternative Drainage Strategy

An alternative drainage strategy has been investigated that would relocate the drainage reserve to the adjoining Deanside Drainage Scheme outside the WFCA and consolidate flows through a single crossing of the Western Freeway before discharging into an existing waterway and ultimately Kororoit Creek.

Relocation of the reserve outside the WFCA would remove the landscape, public realm and any passive recreation contribution associated with its PSP location. The alternative should therefore only be pursued if it is demonstrated that the alternative drainage location:

- achieves the required hydraulic, water quality and stormwater management outcomes.
- is supported by Melbourne Water and other relevant authorities.
- maintains the continuity and quality of the Linear Park and active transport network.
- addresses any land exchange, infrastructure, staging and statutory planning implications.
- does not prejudice Bridge BR-01 or other planned infrastructure.

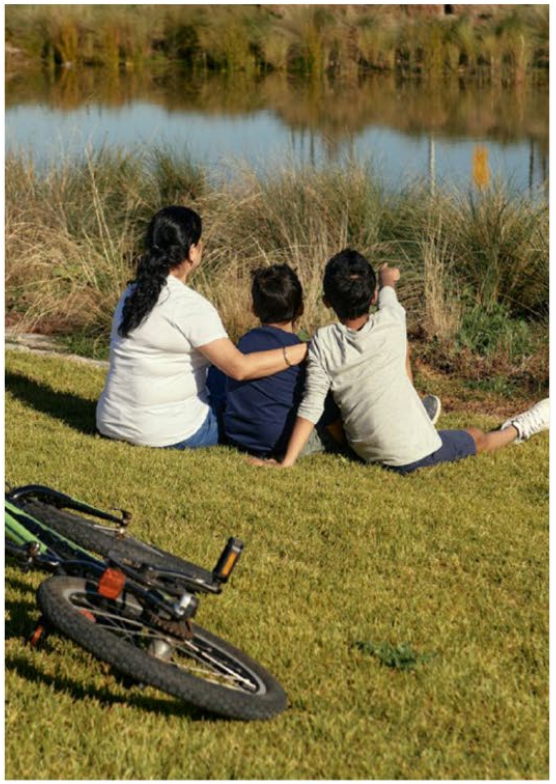


Figure 50 – Drainage Reserve. ***Source: Realestate***

3.9.2. Integrated Water Management

Integrated Water Management will coordinate the capture, treatment, reuse and discharge of water across buildings, development sites, streets, public spaces and drainage infrastructure.

The extensive roof areas, streets and parking areas associated with commercial and employment development provide significant opportunities for rainwater harvesting, passive irrigation and water sensitive urban design. Measures will be coordinated at site and precinct scale to improve stormwater quality, reduce potable water demand, support healthy landscapes and manage flows to the drainage network.

Each development stage should provide an effective water management response and connect with, or make provision for, the ultimate drainage and water management network. Ownership, operation and maintenance responsibilities must be identified for all water sensitive urban design and reuse systems.

3.9.3. Green Infrastructure & Climate Resilience

The streets, parks, pedestrian routes, conservation reserves, drainage infrastructure and landscaped areas within development sites provide an opportunity to establish a connected green infrastructure network across the WFCA.

This network will support urban cooling, support biodiversity, reduce the urban heat-island effect and provide comfortable environments for workers, residents, commuters and visitors. Canopy trees and shade will be prioritised along principal walking routes, within public spaces, around potential public transport facilities and building entrances and within large parking areas.

Planting and tree selection will respond to Melton's existing and anticipated future climate and provide diversity and resilience to heat, drought, intense rainfall, pests and disease. Planting adjoining Conservation Reserves must respond to the requirements of the Forest Sun Orchid populations, while planting within drainage areas must maintain required hydraulic, safety and maintenance functions.

3.9.4. Sustainable Buildings

Commercial, large format retail, office, mixed use and employment development will integrate sustainability measures from the outset of site planning and building design.

Buildings should reduce operational energy and water demand, respond to summer heat and solar exposure and support renewable energy generation, rainwater harvesting and low-emission transport. Roof layouts should coordinate solar panels, rainwater collection, plant, equipment and capacity for future technology without compromising architectural quality.

Durable materials, adaptable structural and servicing systems and effective waste-management arrangements will support future changes in use and improve whole-of-life environmental performance.

All development should respond to applicable Council environmentally sustainable design policies and guidelines.



Figure 51 – Green Square, Sydney. ***Source: Building Planning***

Requirements

- **R61 -** Development must respond to applicable Council environmentally sustainable design policies and guidelines and include a sustainability response proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposal.
- **R62 -** Subdivision and development must provide for delivery of the WL3 wetland and RB3 retarding basin generally in accordance with the MATP PSP and Gardiner Lane Drainage Services Scheme unless an alternative drainage strategy is approved by Melbourne Water and the responsible authority.
- **R63 -** Any alternative drainage strategy must demonstrate that it:
  - achieves the required hydraulic, water-quality and flood-management outcomes;
  - maintains the continuity and quality of the Linear Park and active transport network;
  - does not prejudice BR-01 or other planned infrastructure;
  - provides an appropriate landscape and development interface; and
  - addresses all land, infrastructure, staging and statutory planning implications.
- **R64 -** Subdivision and development must provide an integrated water-management response addressing stormwater capture, treatment, reuse and discharge and demonstrating how each development stage will connect with the ultimate drainage network.
- **R65 -** Water sensitive urban must be incorporated into streets, parking areas, public spaces and development sites, including passive irrigation of trees and landscaping where appropriate.
- **R66 -** Landscape plans must demonstrate how development contributes to the connected green infrastructure network and must identify:
  - anticipated tree-canopy coverage at maturity.
  - tree species, location and growing conditions.
  - soil volume and passive irrigation arrangements.
  - shade provided to principal pedestrian routes and parking areas.
  - ongoing establishment and maintenance requirements.
- **R67 -** Large commercial, large format retail, office, mixed use and employment development must demonstrate how building design:
  - reduces operational energy and water demand.
  - incorporates or allows for renewable energy generation.
  - captures and reuses rainwater.
  - responds to summer heat and solar exposure.
  - supports future adaptation.
  - integrates sustainability infrastructure with the building and roof design.
- **R68 -** Development must provide bicycle parking, end-of-trip facilities and electric vehicle charging infrastructure in accordance with applicable planning scheme and Council requirements and allow for future expansion where appropriate.
- **R69 -** Waste storage and collection must be integrated into site and building design, support waste separation and resource recovery and be screened from streets, public spaces and principal pedestrian routes.
- **R70 -** Sustainability, water-management and landscape systems must include clear arrangements for staging, ownership, operation, monitoring and ongoing maintenance.

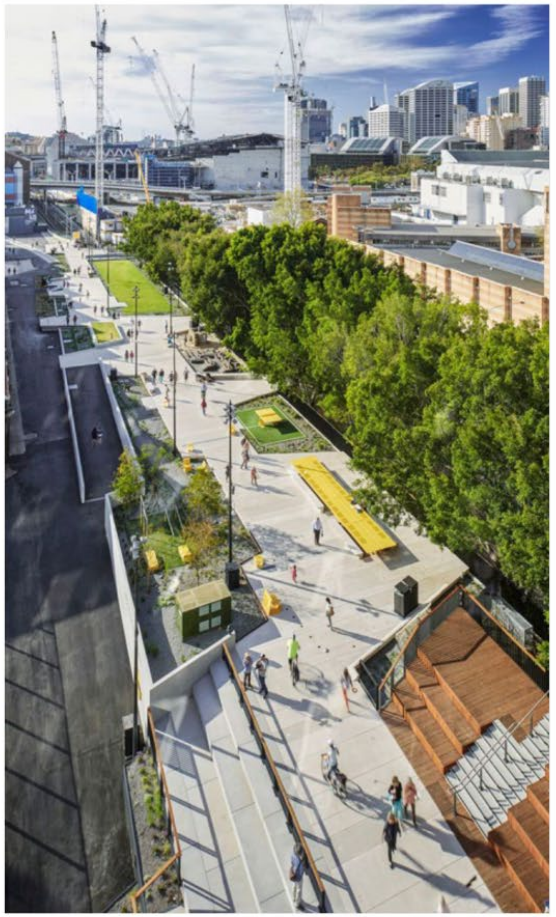


Figure 52 – The Goods Line linear open space. ***Source: Landscape Australia***

Guidelines

- **G50 -** Streets, development sites and public spaces should minimise unnecessary impervious surfaces and incorporate permeable treatments where appropriate to their use, loading and maintenance requirements.
- **G51 -** Canopy tree planting and shade should be prioritised along principal pedestrian routes, within public spaces, around public transport facilities and within large parking areas.
- **G52 -** Planting should use a diverse range of indigenous, drought tolerant and climate resilient species suited to Melton's existing and anticipated future climate.
- **G53 -** Rainwater captured from large roof areas should be reused for landscape irrigation, toilet flushing and other suitable non-potable purposes.
- **G54 -** Planting along streets should seek to achieve 30% tree canopy coverage (calculated at tree maturity)
- **G55 -** Roof design should maximise opportunities for solar energy generation and coordinate solar panels, rainwater collection, plant and equipment and provision for future energy storage systems.
- **G56 -** Building orientation, external shading, glazing and façade design should reduce unwanted summer heat gain while maintaining natural daylight and occupant comfort.
- **G57 -** Durable materials with lower embodied carbon, recycled content or responsible sourcing should be used where suitable for the building and its intended function.
- **G58 -** Car sharing services and electric vehicle charge points should be encouraged within the street network and car parks in locations convenient to users of key facilities and land uses.



Figure 53 – Urban Greening *Source: University of Melbourne*


4.Implementation, Staging & Review

4.1. Implementation Framework

The WFCA will be delivered progressively in response to market demand, infrastructure delivery, land ownership and government investment. The timing of individual development projects will be influenced by factors outside the control of landowners and Council, including the delivery of major road, public transport and drainage infrastructure.

Accordingly, the UDF adopts a flexible implementation framework that enables development to occur progressively as opportunities arise while protecting the long term vision for the precinct. Rather than prescribing fixed development stages or timeframes, the framework identifies the key infrastructure dependencies and implementation principles required to facilitate orderly development.

4.1.1. Indicative Development Pathway

The ultimate vision for the WFCA is not dependent on a fixed staging sequence. Development is expected to occur progressively in response to market demand and the delivery of major infrastructure. The following sequencing represents the most likely implementation pathway based on current land ownership, infrastructure planning and commercial demand, noting that Phases Two and Three, in particular, could be interchangeable depending on timing of delivery of key infrastructure such as the Mt Atkinson Railway Station.

Phase One: Early Development

Early development may be driven by industrial and employment activity west of the WFCA and demand for larger commercial or large format retail sites. This development is most likely within the Business and Large Format Retail, Commercial Transport and Employment Transition Precincts.

Intersection IT-02 may provide the initial access to this development. The UDF identifies a potential interim internal connection between Intersection IT-02 and the existing Meskos Road alignment. Its use will depend on land access, detailed design, transport assessment, infrastructure capacity and approval by the relevant authorities. This connection could facilitate staged access to the larger development parcels within Precinct 5, allowing development to respond to market demand rather than being constrained should IT-01 not be available for early access.

Early development should protect land required for the future movement network, drainage infrastructure and public realm, ensuring that interim works do not compromise the long-term vision for the precinct. The capacity of the interim road network will also need to be assessed to ensure development does not exceed capacities of the available infrastructure.

Phase Two: Large Format Retail/ Commercial Expansion (once both intersections are available)

As demand for large format retail grows, development is expected to expand progressively across Precincts 4, 5 and 6 as additional access and internal road connections are delivered. This expansion should occur in conjunction with the progressive extension of the internal road network and supporting infrastructure.

The availability of both IT-01 and IT-02 to service the WFCAUDF area and industrial land to the west will significantly improve access and network resilience by providing a dedicated gateway for heavy vehicle movements from the Western Freeway. Once operational, the ultimate road hierarchy can be implemented, reducing reliance on interim access arrangements and improving the efficiency of freight and customer movements throughout the precinct.

Phase Three: Mt Atkinson Railway Station and Core Town Centre Development

The Core Town Centre and Railway and Transit Precincts may develop progressively before the future railway station is delivered. The delivery of the Mt Atkinson Railway Station will be the catalyst for the commercial maturation of the Core Town Centre. Increased public transport accessibility and pedestrian activity will support higher order retail, hospitality, commercial and office uses, together with the delivery of the public realm that is the heart of the WFCA Core Town Centre.

Early development within this area is likely to comprise mixed-use residential development, reflecting the lower reliance of residential uses on public transport patronage and town centre activity. This will assist in establishing an initial residential population that supports the longer-term evolution of the Core Town Centre.

As the town centre matures, commercial development should progressively intensify around the station and Core Town Centre public realm, reinforcing the role of the Core Town Centre as the primary mixed-use destination within the WFCA.

The Alternative Sequencing Plan at Figure 56 demonstrates potential impacts to sequencing should the railway station be delivered in an earlier timeframe than envisaged. This would be reliant on appropriate access being provided for both private vehicles and buses, but may support some earlier delivery within the Core Town Centre.

4.1.2. Key Dependencies and Staging Considerations

The following implementation considerations are expected to influence the sequencing and timing of development within the WFCA:

Land Use:

- Development of industrial land west of the WFCA is expected to generate early demand.
- Early large format retail development is expected to be driven by anchor tenants seeking large development parcels with convenient access. Parcels near initial access points are expected to be the most commercially viable.
- Commercial development within the Core Town Centre will be strongly influenced by the timing of delivery of the railway station. Demand for this development will be low until traffic is generated by the railway station.
- The extent of development that can occur before both signalised intersections are delivered on Hopkins Road may be constrained by network capacity considerations.

Movement and Access:

- Intersection IT-02 is expected to provide the primary access point for early development until IT-01 is delivered.
- Any interim access from IT-02 (prior to IT-01 being delivered) to the main east-west connector street is to be provided via the existing Meskos Road alignment.
- Delivery of Intersection IT-01 is expected to be coordinated with future upgrades to the Western Freeway and will enable the ultimate road network and preferred freight access arrangements.
- The timing, location and delivery of the Mount Atkinson railway station and electrification of the Ballarat Railway Line to Melton remains uncertain and will influence the pace and timing of development within the Core Town Centre, and the staging of development.
- Delivery of Bridge BR-01 requires coordination with the Western Freeway upgrade and future OMR planning.

Public Realm, Conservation and Heritage

- Conservation management and interface requirements for the Conservation Reserves will be required to be resolved prior to any development commencing that has potential to impact them.
- Archaeological and heritage investigation must be completed before works that may affect the cobbled roadway.
- Staged development must retain and progressively deliver the identified public spaces, Linear Park, walking and cycling connections and landscape interfaces.

Sustainability & Climate Resilience

- A drainage solution approved by Melbourne Water and the responsible authority is required to support development of the WFCA and adjoining employment land.
- Each development stage must provide an effective interim servicing and water management response and demonstrate how it will connect with the ultimate drainage and infrastructure network.

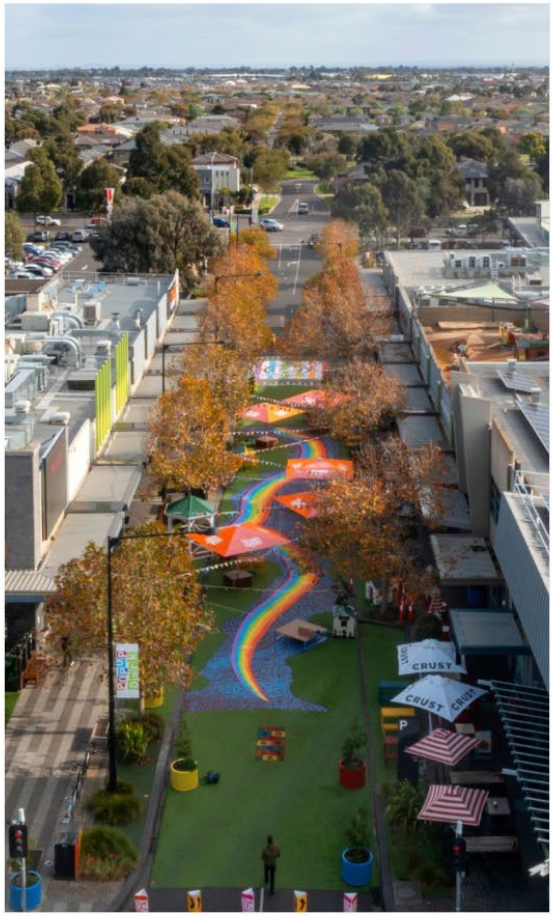


Figure 54 – Stockland, Point Cook.

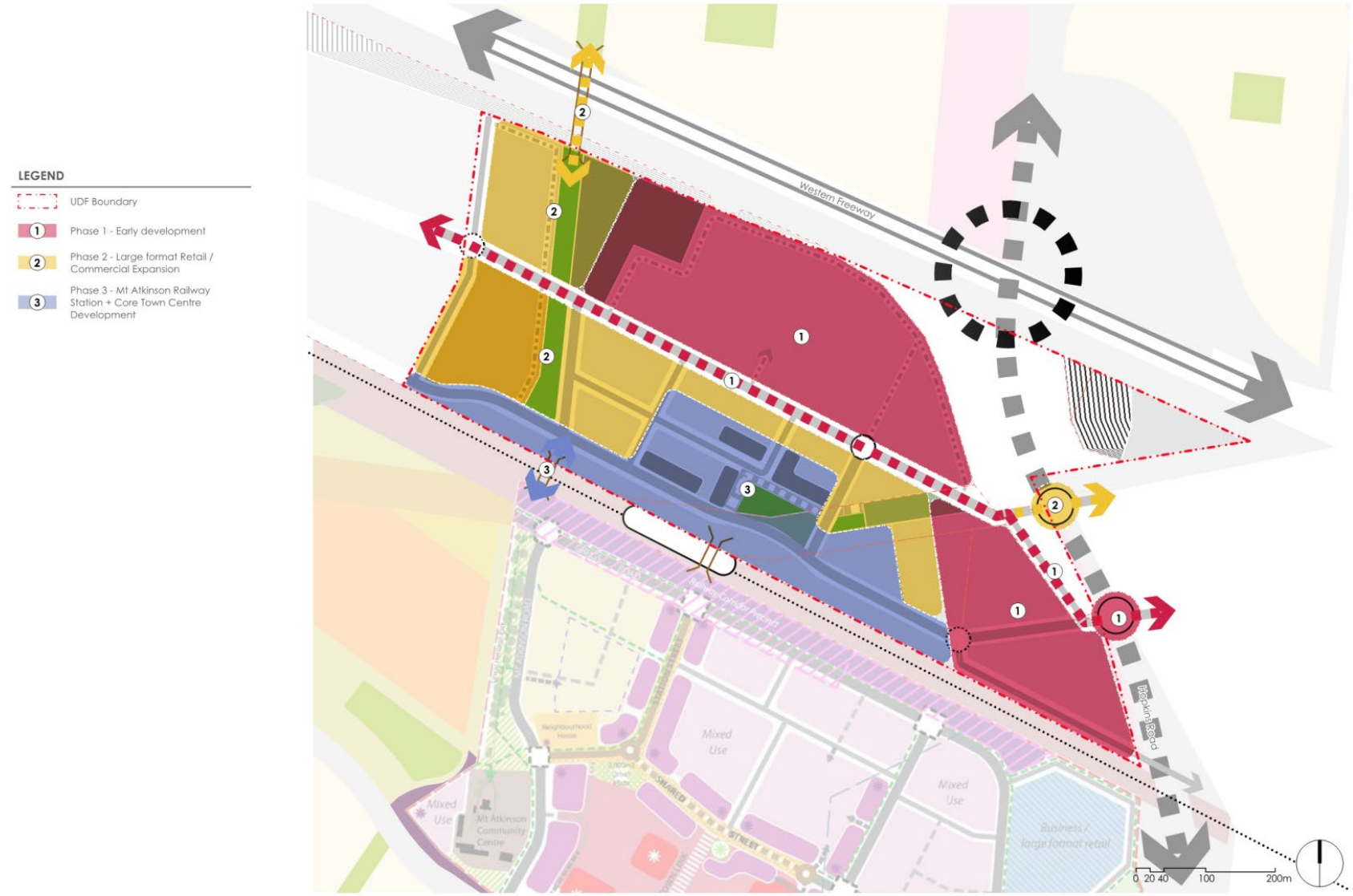


Figure 55 – Sequencing Plan

4.2. ICP and key infrastructure delivery

The MATP PSP and ICP identify infrastructure required to support development of the WFCA. The descriptions below distinguish the ICP item from the current delivery issue or UDF response. The ultimate scope, timing and funding of each item remain subject to the applicable ICP, detailed design and agreement with the relevant authority.

4.2.1. ICP Items

IT-01: Signalised intersection: Hopkins Road / east-west connector road. Construction of primary arterial to connector road 3-way signalised intersection and roundabout (interim treatment) within declared arterial road reserve.

The ultimate form and timing of IT-01 is expected to be coordinated with future upgrades to the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road and may differ from the arrangement shown in the ICP. Until its delivery is confirmed, development must retain the required connection and demonstrate that any alternative or interim access arrangement does not compromise IT-01 or the ultimate network.

IT-02: Signalised intersection: Hopkins Road / east-west connector road. Construction of primary arterial to connector road 3-way signalised intersection (interim treatment).

The development of the intersection requires access to Land Parcel 19 which is not in the same ownership as the majority of the UDF land. This may constrain access to early development opportunities. A potential interim connection using the existing Meskos Road alignment may support earlier development, subject to landowner agreement, detailed design, transport assessment, funding and relevant approvals.

BR-01: Pedestrian and cyclist bridge. Construction of pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Western Freeway to the future Kororoit Precinct.

BR-01 is a key piece of infrastructure to ensure safe pedestrian access from communities north of the Western Freeway. Its design, feasibility, cost and timing require coordination with the Western Freeway upgrade and future Outer Metropolitan Ring Road planning. The UDF retains the approach to BR-01 and the connecting Linear Park corridor while allowing the final bridge arrangement to be resolved through future infrastructure planning.

BR-02: Pedestrian and cyclist bridge. Construction of pedestrian and cycle bridge (ultimate treatment) across the Melbourne-Ballarat rail corridor, and the purchase of land (0.07ha) for the bridge.

Bridge BR-02 would provide a secondary railway crossing to the future station overpass. Its ultimate role and timing will depend on the future station arrangement, Bridge BR-01 and the wider walking and cycling network. Development must retain the identified bridge approaches and connections.

BR-03: Hopkins Road level crossing upgrade. Construction of a pedestrian accessway to the level crossing at the intersection Hopkins Road and the Melbourne-Ballarat rail corridor, including automatic gates and pedestrian crossing.

This item has been superseded by the Hopkins Road Level Crossing Removal Project and should be identified as completed or redundant in future ICP and UDF updates, as appropriate.

OS-05 & OS-06: Local parks of 0.54 and 0.44ha forming a linear green connector and active transport corridor through the WFCA.

OS-07 and OS-08: Local Parks of 0.24ha and 0.18ha, to be combined within the WFCA to provide a more consolidated area of open space within the Core Town centre precinct.

The UDF consolidates these spaces as the Town Centre Park to provide a more usable and site-responsive civic open space while maintaining the total open-space contribution within the relevant property (Land Parcel 6), subject to Council approval and any required ICP accounting or amendment.

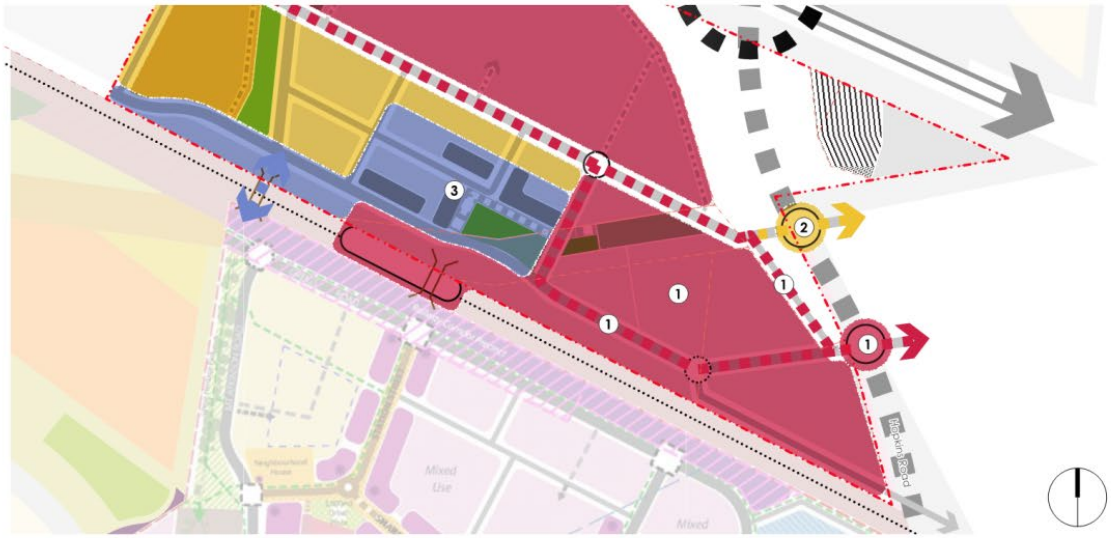


Figure 56 – Alternative Sequencing Plan Scenario

4.2.2. Other key Infrastructure

Drainage Reserve (WI01) – 2.32ha within the Gardiner lane DSS (Melbourne Water).

The Gardiner Lane Drainage Services Scheme identifies drainage infrastructure within the WFCA. Delivery of an approved drainage solution is a key dependency for development of the WFCA and adjoining employment land.

The preferred outcome is delivery of the wetland and retarding basin in the location identified by the MATP PSP and Drainage Services Scheme. An interim or alternative solution may be considered in consultation with Melbourne Water and the responsible authority, subject to the requirements in Section 3.9. Any alternative that changes the PSP land use or zoning arrangement may require a planning scheme amendment and associated land and infrastructure agreements.

4.3. Review

The UDF has been prepared using the best available information and reflects current expectations for retail, commercial, industrial and residential development.

As a long-term strategic framework, the UDF should be reviewed periodically to ensure it continues to provide relevant guidance as new information, infrastructure commitments and market conditions evolve.

The UDF should be reviewed every five years and updated as required. An earlier review may be initiated following:

- Delivery of the Mt Atkinson Railway Station and bus interchange.
  - The final location of the railway station may require reconfiguration of the street network to align with the station entrance and overpass.
- Delivery of either IT-01 and/or the associated future upgrade of the Western Freeway.
- Delivery of IT-02.
- Confirmation of the timing and delivery of the Outer Metropolitan Ring Road.
- Changes to the requirements of servicing authorities that impact the land use outcomes.
- Significant changes in retail, commercial or industrial demand, or changes to the activity centre hierarchy.
- Technological change, including autonomous vehicles, that may affect transport planning, movement networks or car parking demand.
- Implications arising from the future urban structure of the Warrawee PSP.
- Limited implementation of the UDF over the review period, requiring the underlying market, infrastructure and planning assumptions to be reassessed.

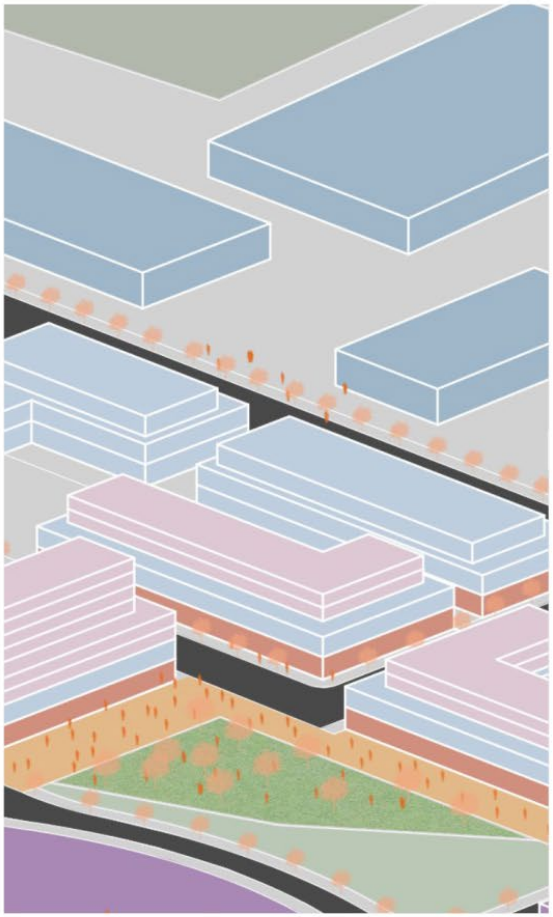


Figure 57 – Town Centre 3D Modelling

UrbanDesign and management
Land Development | Project Management
Planning | Urban Design | Civil Engineering

Cr Ramsey departed the Chamber at 7:21pm and returned to the Chamber at 7:23pm.

12.3 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MATTERS

Author: Troy Delia - Acting Manager Governance
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present to Council the confirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 17 August 2026 and 17 September 2026 (the minutes).

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Note the confirmed Minutes and the Chair Summary Report for the Audit and Risk Committee meetings held 17 August 2026 (provided as **Appendices 1 and 2** to this report).
2. Note the confirmed Minutes and the Chair Summary Report for the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 17 September 2026 (provided as **Appendices 3 and 4** to this report).
3. Adopt the recommendations endorsed or approved by the Audit and Risk Committee, arising within the minutes (**Appendices 1 and 3**).
4. Adopt the revised Audit and Risk Committee Charter, provided as **Appendix 5**.

Motion

Crs Abboushi/Vandenberg.

That Council:

1. Note the confirmed Minutes and the Chair Summary Report for the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 17 August 2026 (provided as **Appendices 1 and 2** to this report).
2. Note the confirmed Minutes and the Chair Summary Report for the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 17 September 2026 (provided as **Appendices 3 and 4** to this report).
3. Adopt the recommendations endorsed or approved by the Audit and Risk Committee, arising within the minutes (**Appendices 1 and 3**).

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 17 August 2026 (**Appendix 1**) are appended to this report. Additionally, a summary Report prepared by the Audit and Risk Committee Chairperson, Jeff Rigby, for 17 August 2026 (**Appendix 2**) is also appended to this report.

The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 17 September 2026 (**Appendix 3**) are appended to this report. Additionally, a summary Report prepared by the Audit and Risk Committee Chairperson, Jeff Rigby, for 17 September 2026 (**Appendix 4**) is also appended to this report.

The minutes contain recommendations for the consideration of Council.

The Audit and Risk Committee also reviewed its Charter at its meeting on 17 August 2026. Changes proposed by the Committee and Management have been incorporated and the amended Audit and Risk Committee Charter is appended as **Appendix 5** for approval**.**

2. Background/Issues

The Audit and Risk Committee is established by the Council pursuant to Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* ('the Act').

The primary function and responsibility of the Audit and Risk Committee is to monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with the Act including any regulations, and chiefly, the overarching governance principles, Council's financial and performance reporting, Council's risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls and oversee the internal and external audit function.

The Audit and Risk Committee makes recommendations to Council for its consideration. These recommendations are set out in the minutes attached at **Appendix 1 and 3** for matters that the Audit and Risk Committee considered.

The Audit and Risk Committee is required to review its Charter biennially. At its meeting on 17 August 2026 the Charter was reviewed and is appended as **Appendix 5,** with a track changes copy provided as **Appendix 6**.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A progressive and trusted Council

3.2 An organisation that prioritises good governance, integrity and accountability and is community minded in its decision-making.

4. Financial Considerations

Any and all financial considerations are set out within the reports and minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

Not applicable.

6. Risk Analysis

A risk analysis is contained within each report to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Risks identified by the Audit and Risk Committee and recommendations in relation to same should be carefully considered by Council as these represent an independent and forensic appraisal of the issues.

7. Options

Council has the option to provide any feedback or direction to the Audit and Risk Committee it feels is appropriate on the discharge of the Committee's responsibilities under the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

The Audit and Risk Committee is not a delegated committee and operates in an advisory capacity to Council, therefore Council has the discretion to accept, reject or amend the Committee's recommendations.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Audit and Risk Committee Minutes - 17 August 2026
2. Chair Summary Report - 17 August 2026
3. Audit and Risk Committee Minutes - 17 September 2026
4. Chair Summary Report - 17 September 2026
5. Audit and Risk Committee Charter 2026 - Clean Copy
6. Audit and Risk Committee Charter 2026 - Marked Up

MELTON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting of the Melton City Council

17 August 2026

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, a member only pre-meeting was held, followed by an in camera conversation with the Chief Executive Officer.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. WELCOME / ACKNOWLEDGMENT 6

2. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE 6

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST 6

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS 6

5. OTHER BUSINESS CARRIED OVER FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING 7

5.1 TRACKING REPORT FOR AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING ACTIONS 7

To present the Tracking Report for Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Actions as at August 2026.

6. PRESENTATION OF STAFF REPORTS 7

6.1 REVIEW OF AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE CHARTER 8

For the Audit and Risk Committee to review its Charter.

6.2 ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE 8

To present the results of the annual assessment of the performance of the Audit and Risk Committee (Committee), undertaken pursuant to section 54(4)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

6.3 ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2026 8

To provide the Committee with an overview of the agenda for this meeting against the Annual Work Plan 2026.

6.4 INTERNAL AUDIT STATUS REPORT AS AT AUGUST 2026 8

To present the Internal Audit Status Report as at August 2026 (the Report).

6.5 SCOPE FOR THE INTERNAL AUDIT OF HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE 9

To present the Scope for the Internal Audit of Home and Community Care.

6.6 SCOPE FOR THE INTERNAL AUDIT OF PROCURE TO PAY **9**

To present the Scope for the Internal Audit of Procure to Pay.

6.7 INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKING REPORT FOR AUGUST 2026 **9**

To present the Internal Audit Recommendations Tracking Report for August 2026.

6.8 INTERNAL AUDITOR - RECENT ISSUES INSIGHTS QUARTERLY REPORT **9**

To present the Internal Auditors' Recent Issues Insights Quarterly Report, August 2026 (the Report).

6.9 ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT **10**

To provide the Audit and Risk Committee (Committee) with an update on the implementation of Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework (Framework) following the adoption of the Risk Management Policy by Council on 22 June 2026.

The report outlines the progress in embedding the Framework across the organisation, including the development of supporting resources, business unit engagement, the establishment of operational risk registers, the progression of Council's strategic risks and risk appetite statements, and the significant implementation program underway.

6.10 ENTERPRISE IT RISKS AND TCP PROGRAM UPDATE **10**

To provide a presentation update to the Audit and Risk Committee regarding Information Technology Key Risks, covering the ICT and Digital Strategy, Security Roadmap and Technology Change Program.

6.11 SAFETY AND WELLBEING IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE **10**

To provide the Audit and Risk Committee with a high-level progress update on the Safety and Wellbeing Improvement Plan.

6.12 REVIEW OF ANNUAL INSURANCE PROGRAM **10**

To provide the Audit and Risk Committee with an overview of Council's 2026/27 Insurance Program, including renewal outcomes, key market conditions, premium movements and assurance that Council maintains an appropriate level of insurance coverage to support its operations and strategic objectives.

6.13 REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S CREDIT CARDS **11**

To provide an update to the Audit and Risk Committee on the continued oversight and monitoring of Corporate Credit Cards.

6.14 CEO PROCUREMENT DELEGATIONS QUARTERLY REPORT **11**

To provide the Audit and Risk Committee with a quarterly report on use of the role specific procurement delegations for the CEO whilst two value thresholds for procurement methodologies exist at Melton City Council, and a summary of CEO corporate credit card usage and compliance.

6.15 MELTON CITY COUNCIL LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2027-2036 **11**

Audit and Risk Committee to note Melton City Council Financial Plan 2027-2036.

6.16 QUARTERLY INVESTMENT HOLDINGS REPORT **11**

To present the Investment Holdings Report for the 12 months ended 30 June 2026.

6.17 ASSET MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK UPDATE **12**

To present the Audit and Risk Committee with an updated status report regarding key actions and initiatives related to Melton City Council's Asset Management Accountability Framework (AMAF), including the progress of the Asset Management Maturity Uplift Program, the Technology Change Program (TCP), and strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing organisational asset management capabilities, governance, planning, and decision-making.

6.18 WORKFORCE PLAN **12**

To provide the Audit and Risk Committee with an update on Melton City Council's Workforce Plan 2026-2030.

6.19 AGED CARE SERVICES UPDATE **12**

To provide the Audit Risk Committee an updated report regarding Melton City Council Aged Care Service delivery.

6.20 MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH UPDATE **12**

To provide the Audit and Risk Committee an information report on the ongoing Maternal and Child Health service at the Melton City Council.

6.21 MELTON PUBLIC CEMETERY - 2025/26 ANNUAL REPORT **13**

To present an update on the Melton Cemetery for 2025/26.

7. OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE COMMITTEE **13**

8. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS 13

8.1 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY REFUND AND REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM 13

To provide the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) with an overview of the establishment and implementation of Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Refund and Reimbursement Program.

8.2 QUARTERLY GOVERNANCE REPORT 13

To provide the Audit and Risk Committee with an update of Council's key governance, integrity, legal and compliance activities.

9. NEXT MEETING 13

10. CLOSE OF BUSINESS 13

MELTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE MELTON CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE MELTON CIVIC CENTRE, 232 HIGH STREET, MELTON ON 17 AUGUST 2026 AT 11:00 AM

Present: Jeff Rigby (Chair)
John Watson (online)
Bruce Potgieter
Cr Lara Carli (Mayor)
Cr Dr Phillip Zada (Deputy Mayor)

Attendees:		
	Roslyn Wai	Chief Executive Officer
	Sam Romaszko	Director City Futures
	Liz Rowland	Chief Financial Officer
	Troy Scoble	Director City Life
	Neil Whiteside	Director City Delivery
	Emily Keogh	Head of Governance
	Toni Toaldo	Chief People Officer
	Renee Hodgson	Manager Governance
	Indy Purushothaman	Interim Manager Finance
	Kat Noy	Manager Risk and Compliance
	Oliver Gabriel	Strategic Asset Lead
	Troy Delia	Senior Coordinator Governance

1. WELCOME / ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 12.03pm with an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed the Committee members and attendees.

2. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Wilson Tang, Internal Auditor.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND / OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

3.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made by Committee members or attendees.

3.2 INTEGRITY DECLARATIONS

Council's Chief Executive Officer and Head of Governance declared that aside from the matters reported under confidential business or any other reports in this agenda, there was no new or impending legal action against Council or instances of statutory breach or fraud that had come to their attention since the last meeting of the Committee and that are not prevented from being disclosed to the Committee by statutory or integrity agency procedural requirements.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Audit and Risk Committee noted the out-of-session confirmation of the Minutes and Summary Report of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 21 May 2026 that were presented to Council at its Scheduled Meeting held on 22 June 2026.

5. OTHER BUSINESS CARRIED OVER FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1 TRACKING REPORT FOR AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING ACTIONS

Author: Troy Delia - Senior Coordinator Governance
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Tracking Report for Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Actions as at August 2026, provided as **Appendix 1**.

The Audit and Risk Committee confirmed that members have read and understood the reports as tabled for the following items of business and no discussion was required:

1. 6.1 - Review of Audit and Risk Committee Charter
2. 6.3 - Annual Work Plan 2026
3. 6.4 - Internal Audit Status Report
4. 6.6 - Scope for the Internal Audit of Procure to Pay
5. 6.8 - Internal Auditor - Recent Issues Insights Quarterly Report
6. 6.14 - CEO Procurement Delegations Quarterly Report
7. 6.18 - Workforce Plan

6. PRESENTATION OF STAFF REPORTS

6.1 REVIEW OF AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE CHARTER

Author: Troy Delia - Senior Coordinator Governance
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed its Charter and endorsed the proposed amendments shown in **Appendix 1**, for presentation to Council for approval, with the additional amendment of replacing 'ratify' with 'note' on page 6 of the Charter under section 5.

6.2 ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE

Author: Troy Delia - Senior Coordinator Governance
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Noted the results of the annual assessment of its performance undertaken pursuant to section 54(4)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020,* provided as **Appendix 1;** and
2. Pursuant to section 54(4)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020,* provide a copy of the annual assessment to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council meeting.

6.3 ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2026

Author: Renee Hodgson - Manager Governance
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Annual Work Plan 2026, provided as **Appendix 1**.

6.4 INTERNAL AUDIT STATUS REPORT AS AT AUGUST 2026

Author: Renee Hodgson - Manager Governance
Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed and noted the Internal Audit Status Report as at August 2026.

6.5 SCOPE FOR THE INTERNAL AUDIT OF HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE

Author: Renee Hodgson - Manager Governance
Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed and approved the Scope for the Internal Audit of Home and Community Care.

Action: Management to discuss with Council's Internal Auditor the opportunity to consider widening the focus of the Internal Audit of Home and Community Care to include broader financial management of the service.

6.6 SCOPE FOR THE INTERNAL AUDIT OF PROCURE TO PAY

Author: Renee Hodgson - Manager Governance
Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed and approved the Scope for the Internal Audit of Procure to Pay.

6.7 INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKING REPORT FOR AUGUST 2026

Author: Renee Hodgson - Manager Governance
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Reviewed and noted the Internal Audit Recommendations Tracking Report as at 4 August 2026, provided as **Appendix 1**, and
2. Endorsed recommended revised implementation dates of Internal Audit Recommendations outlined in the report.

6.8 INTERNAL AUDITOR - RECENT ISSUES INSIGHTS QUARTERLY REPORT

Author: Renee Hodgson - Manager Governance
Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed and noted the Internal Auditors' Recent Issues Insights Report, August 2026, provided as **Appendix 1**.

6.9 ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT

Author: Katherine Noy - Manager Risk & Compliance
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Noted the significant progress made in implementing Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework.
2. Noted the outcomes of the Councillor Strategic Risk and Risk Appetite Workshop.
3. Noted the development of Council's Enterprise Risk Management Toolkit and the implementation activities currently underway across the organisation.
4. Noted the commencement of Council's operational risk register uplift program.

6.10 ENTERPRISE IT RISKS AND TCP PROGRAM UPDATE

Author: Ajay Ravindran - Chief Information Officer
Presenter: Liz Rowland - Chief Financial Officer

The Audit and Risk Committee noted the report provided by Council's Chief Financial Officer, regarding Enterprise Information Technology Key Risks and the Technology Change Program Horizon One (TCP-H1) Phase 2 dashboard.

Action: Chief Financial Officer to review Council's Information Asset Register to ensure that all assets are accounted for in the register.

6.11 SAFETY AND WELLBEING IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Author: John Keehner - Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator
Presenter: Toni Toaldo - Chief People Officer

The Audit and Risk Committee noted progress against the Safety and Wellbeing Improvement Plan.

Action: For future Safety and Wellbeing Improvement Plan Update reports, include percentage complete for items in progress on the implementation dashboard.

6.12 REVIEW OF ANNUAL INSURANCE PROGRAM

Author: Ajay Ramdas - Risk Officer
Presenter: Katherine Noy - Manager Risk & Compliance

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Noted the Annual Insurance Program for 2026/27
2. Noted the significant insurance market conditions impacting local government premiums
3. Noted that Council has successfully renewed all insurance policies effective 1 July 2026.

At 1.06pm, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned for a duration of 10 minutes.

At 1.21pm, the meeting was resumed.

6.13 REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S CREDIT CARDS

Author: Noel Irwin - Manager Procurement
Presenter: Liz Rowland - Chief Financial Officer

The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed and noted the update on the monitoring of Corporate Credit Cards.

6.14 CEO PROCUREMENT DELEGATIONS QUARTERLY REPORT

Author: Noel Irwin - Manager Procurement
Presenter: Liz Rowland - Chief Financial Officer

The Audit and Risk Committee noted the CEO Procurement Delegations Quarterly Report.

6.15 MELTON CITY COUNCIL LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2027-2036

Author: Liz Rowland - Chief Financial Officer
Presenter: Liz Rowland - Chief Financial Officer

The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed and noted the Melton City Council Financial Plan 2027-2036.

Action: Management to update the Committee on changes to the future Long Term Financial Management Plan as Council continues to progress the strategy of the organisation and to delineate the projections for capital expenditure that reflects Council and grant funded projects, contributed assets, and asset renewal.

6.16 QUARTERLY INVESTMENT HOLDINGS REPORT

Author: Natalie Marino - Manager Finance
Presenter: Liz Rowland - Chief Financial Officer

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Reviewed and noted the Quarterly Investment Holdings Report.
2. Noted the reported reduction in the invested assets' value for the financial year and that the overall returns for each product had exceeded the nominated benchmarks for investment performance

6.17 ASSET MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK UPDATE

Author: Oliver Gabriel - Strategic Asset Lead
Presenter: Liz Rowland - Chief Financial Officer

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Noted the progress achieved in aligning the non-compliant clauses of AMAF with applicable standards.
2. Noted the progress of the Asset Management Maturity Uplift Program for 2026–27.
3. Noted the initiation of strategic planning and governance initiatives aimed at enhancing organisational asset management maturity and accountability.
4. Noted the ongoing deployment of TechnologyOne Phase 2 and related asset management capability enhancement activities, including the commencement of the Strategic Asset Management (SAM) module implementation.

Action: Future Asset Management Accountability Framework Update reports to include comments that clarify the progress of initiatives with relatively long timeframes for delivery.

6.18 WORKFORCE PLAN

Author: Janine Thomas - Project Systems & Data Coordinator
Presenter: Toni Toaldo - Chief People Officer

The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Workforce Plan 2026–2030 (Summary Version) and its role in mitigating key workforce-related risks through improved workforce planning, capability development, leadership effectiveness, succession planning and service continuity.

6.19 AGED CARE SERVICES UPDATE

Author: Coral Crameri - Manager Community Care
Presenter: Troy Scoble - Director City Life

The Audit and Risk Committee noted the report regarding the ongoing Aged Care Services being provided by Council.

6.20 MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH UPDATE

Author: Heidi Brundell - Manager Maternal Child and Health
Presenter: Troy Scoble - Director City Life

The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Maternal and Child Health Service Update.

6.21 MELTON PUBLIC CEMETERY - 2025/26 ANNUAL REPORT

Author: Sean McManus - Manager, Advocacy & Government Relations
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

The Audit and Risk Committee noted the update provided on the Melton Cemetery for 2025/26.

7. OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE COMMITTEE

Nil.

At 2.11pm, Neil Whiteside, Troy Scoble, Sam Romaszko, Indy Purushothaman, Toni Toaldo, and Oliver Gabriel departed the meeting.

8. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

8.1 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY REFUND AND REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

8.2 QUARTERLY GOVERNANCE REPORT

9. NEXT MEETING

Thursday 17 September 2026 at 10.30am at Melton Civic Centre.

10. CLOSE OF BUSINESS

The meeting closed at 2.18pm.

Confirmed

Dated this

.....CHAIRPERSON

City of Melton Audit & Risk Committee
Summary Report of the Committee for the Meeting Held on 17 August 2026

Committee Meeting Key Outcomes

1. The Committee reviewed its current Charter and all members agreed to a number of minor amendments being made to the Charter, with the Committee endorsing the amended Charter for presentation to Council for approval.

2. The Committee received and discussed a report detailing the results of an annual self-assessment survey completed in the previous month by both Committee members and Council officers who regularly interact with the Committee. Since 2024, the annual survey has utilised a form where survey participants scored key attributes of performance covering the areas of the Committee's Charter, Skills & Experience, Understanding the Business, Meeting Administration & Conduct, Communications with Council, Management Commitment & Support, Financial Management, Risk, Internal Audit and External Audit. The Committee considered the performance ratings and feedback of the Committee members cohort and the Council Officers cohort, and self-assessed its performance to be satisfactory. Council's CEO is required under Section 54(4)(b) of the *Local Government Act* 2020 (Vic) to table at the Council's next meeting a report on the annual performance assessment, and the report will detail the self-assessment by the Committee members cohort. The Committee welcomes feedback from Councillors with respect to performance and opportunities for improvement.

3. The Committee received and approved the Internal Audit scope proposed under the Internal Audit Plan for *Home and Community Care* that will commence in October 2026, with the Internal Audit Report scheduled to be tabled at the Committee meeting in February 2027. The audit will assess Council's Home and Community Care services with the aim of confirming that key processes for client assessment, service planning and review, service delivery, safeguarding practices, incident management, financial management, regulatory and funding compliance, performance monitoring, data quality and continuous improvement are appropriately designed and operating effectively in practice to support safe, high-quality efficient and outcome-focussed services for residents and their carers.

4. The Committee received and approved the Internal Audit scope proposed under the Internal Audit Plan for *Procure to Pay (P2P)* that will commence in November 2026, with the Internal Audit Report scheduled to be tabled at the Committee meeting in February 2027. The audit seeks to confirm that key controls over procurement planning, supplier selection, purchase order creation, approvals, contract management, invoice processing and payment are robust and aligned to regulatory and policy requirements, and that risks of fraud, error, non-compliance and poor value for money are appropriately managed. The audit will also examine whether reliable financial and procurement information is available to support sound decision-making and public accountability.

Committee Discussions

5. The Committee reviewed and discussed the progress of the implementation by Council of recommendations from prior internal audits, with the Committee noting that 81 recommendations from 17 internal audits remain to be closed out and 78 recommendations were confirmed as completed since the previous status report to the Committee in May 2006. The Committee acknowledged the number of completed recommendations as a significant and positive outcome for the organisation. The Committee was satisfied with explanations provided for extensions of time to the due date for 13 recommendations that are still progressing, and only one of those recommendations was rated high risk with a five-month extension of time given after consultation with Internal Auditor and the Committee Chair.

6. Other items of business considered and discussed by the Committee are detailed as follows.

   a. An update report on the implementation of Council's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Framework with the Committee noting that Council adopted a Risk Management Policy at the June 2026 meeting following its review by the Committee in the previous month. The Committee acknowledged the significant progress achieved in implementing the ERM Framework, in particular the outcomes of the Councillor Strategic Risk and Risk Appetite Workshop, the development of Council's ERM Toolkit, various implementation activities occurring across the organisation and the commencement of Council's operational risk register uplift program.

   b. The regular update report, presented on this occasion by Council's Chief Financial Officer, on information technology key risks relating to Council's *ICT and Digital Strategy* and the *Technology Change Program (TCP) – Horizon One*. The Committee noted risk mitigations, with 14 of 20 IT enterprise risks now closed out, and that the *TCP* is reported as off-track primarily due to a delayed commencement of Stage 2 of Horizon One. The program is being reviewed with an intention of resetting the program 'baseline' to reflect the short-term delay impacts and potential mitigations.

   c. A six-month update report on Council's *Safety and Wellbeing Improvement Plan (SWIP)* that consolidated and addresses a number of gaps identified through audit and risk reviews, including an internal audit report completed in October 2024. The Committee noted progress and achievements in the areas of safety culture, safety governance and assurance, organisational capability, improved injury management, emergency preparedness, child safety, contractor and volunteer management and workforce wellbeing.

   d. Council's insurance program for 2026/27 and the various factors driving insurance costs for the local government sector level was discussed, with the Committee noting the impact on the premiums levied on Council. The Committee also noted that an Insurance Strategy is being developed to establish a longer-term strategic approach to insurance management by aligning insurance arrangements with Council's ERM Framework and looks forward to engaging with management on this proactive risk management initiative.

   e. The oversight and monitoring of corporate credit card compliance was reported to the Committee, with the Committee noting the status of a series of key actions being implemented to strengthen the control environment for credit card usage.

   f. Council's adopted 10-year Interim Financial Plan 2027-2036 was tabled, with the Committee noting the plan and discussing the progress achieved to date against 15 strategic actions initially adopted two years ago in the rolling 10-year plan.

   g. The investment holdings report for the quarterly reporting period of 2025/26 ending 30 June, with the Committee noting an accompanying investment report from the Victorian Funds Management Corporation (VFMC) for the fourth quarter of 2025/26. The Committee noted the reported reduction in the value of Council's invested assets for the financial year, but also that the overall investment returns for the 2025/26 year were better than the return targets for the asset classes of Council's current investments. Looking forward, the VFMC believes the near-term backdrop remains constructive however markets remain vulnerable to renewed volatility.

   h. The Committee received the regular update report on key asset management activities and initiatives being implemented to improve Council's asset management systems and performance. The Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance's *Asset Management Accountability Framework*, a best practice framework that applies to Victorian public

sector entities, is the structure being used for monitoring implementation progress and achieving the required maturity uplift in the asset management function at Council.

i. An update report was presented on Council's Aged Care Services delivery, detailing the programs and services Council currently delivers, the impact of aged care regulatory reforms on service provision and associated risks, and future considerations by service providers given current uncertainties with future delivery models and requirements.

j. A Maternal and Child Health (MCH) report was received, with the Committee noting workforce and service capacity uplift outcomes to meet the growing birthing rates in the municipality, the MCH funding model under a partnership with the State, and the high risk status of MCH services reflecting the risk framework required for a clinical service, complex client cases, vulnerable families and an ageing workforce.

k. The 2025/26 Annual Report for the Melton Public Cemetery, which was noted by the Committee, provided an update on cemetery operations and maintenance, master plan implementation and future operational considerations.

7. The Committee received and noted reports presented for the following items of business.

   a. The Committee's Annual Work Plan for 2026, with the Committee fulfilling the requirements of the plan for the year to date, but acknowledging that two internal audit reports scheduled to be presented at this meeting had been held over for presentation at the Committee's next meeting on 17 September 2026.

   b. The Internal Audit Status report for 2026-27 confirming that, aside from the one month delay with the two internal audit reports held over and with the approval of the two internal scopes detailed under the previous Point Nos 3 and 4, the schedule for internal audits is tracking as planned.

   c. A summary version of Council's Workforce Plan 2026-2030 detailing its strategic role in mitigating key workforce-related risks through improved human resources planning, capability development, succession planning and service continuity.

   d. The standing report on CEO Procurement Delegations.

   e. The regular report prepared by the Internal Auditor for government entity clients detailing events reported by integrity agencies, developments in the sector and governance insights from various sources that are relevant to or of interest to local government authorities.

   f. Two separate confidential update reports on key governance, integrity, legal and compliance activities.

Matters for Consideration by Council

8. A revised Committee Charter incorporating minor amendments agreed to by Committee members is to be presented to Council for approval.

9. The Chief Executive Officer will present a report to the Council meeting scheduled to be held immediately following this Committee meeting that details the annual performance self-assessment by the Committee members cohort.

Prepared by
Jeff Rigby
Committee Chairperson
Audit & Risk Committee
City of Melton
26 August 2026

CITY OF Melton

Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Minutes

17 September 2026

Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting of the Melton City Council

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, an in camera conversation was held with the Internal Auditor.

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To present the final report for the Internal Audit of Land Development Contributions Framework.

6.2 INTERNAL AUDIT OF SITE SECURITY - FINAL REPORT Error! Bookmark not defined.

To present the final report for the Internal Audit of Site Security.

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MELTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE MELTON CITY COUNCIL HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 12:30 PM

Present:	Jeff Rigby (Chair)	
	John Watson	
	Bruce Potgieter	
	Cr Lara Carli (Mayor)	
Attendees:	Roslyn Wai	Chief Executive Officer
	Sam Romaszko	Director City Futures
	Liz Rowland	Chief Financial Officer
	Neil Whiteside	Director City Delivery
	Emily Keogh	Head of Governance
	Indy Purushothaman	Interim Manager Finance
	Colin Marshall	Manager Facilities and Asset Services
	Troy Delia	Acting Manager Governance
Invited Guest:	Wilson Tang	Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

1. WELCOME / ELECTION OF CHAIR (IF REQUIRED)

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 12.56pm with an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed the Committee members and attendees.

2. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cr Dr Phillip Zada (Deputy Mayor) and Troy Scoble, Director City Life.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND / OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

3.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made by Committee members or attendees.

3.2 INTEGRITY DECLARATIONS

Council's Chief Executive Officer and Head of Governance declared there was no new or impending legal action against Council or instances of statutory breach or fraud that had come to their attention since the last meeting of the Committee and that are not prevented from being disclosed to the Committee by statutory or integrity agency procedural requirements.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Audit and Risk Committee noted the out-of-session confirmation of the Minutes and Summary Report of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 17 August 2026, and the committee supported the following change to the Table of Contents on page 5 of the confirmed minutes.

The description for item 8.1 is amended to read as follows: To provide the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) with an overview of the establishment and implementation of Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Refund and Reimbursement Program.

The minutes as amended will be presented to Council at its Scheduled Meeting on 28 September 2026.

5. OTHER BUSINESS CARRIED OVER FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil.

6. PRESENTATION OF STAFF REPORTS

6.1 INTERNAL AUDIT OF LAND DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS FRAMEWORK - FINAL REPORT

Author: Renee Hodgson - Manager Governance
Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Received and accepted the final report for the Internal Audit of Land Development Contributions Framework (the Report); and
2. Recommended Council adopt the recommendations arising within the Report.

Action:

Management to provide on a six-monthly basis a status report on the progressive development of a Developer Contributions Accounting Framework that is key to the implementation of the agreed recommendations.

Management to provide a briefing to the Committee on the proposed VAGO performance audit that is to examine the management of developer contributions where Council is selected to participate in the audit.

At 1.29pm Liz Rowland and Sam Romaszko departed the meeting.

6.2 INTERNAL AUDIT OF SITE SECURITY - FINAL REPORT

At 1.33pm Colin Marshall entered the meeting.

Author: Renee Hodgson - Manager Governance
Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Received and accepted the final report for the Internal Audit of Site Security (the Report), and
2. Recommended Council adopt the recommendations arising within the Report.

At 1.43pm Collin Marshall departed the meeting.

7. OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE COMMITTEE

Nil.

8. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting to review Financial Statements is to be advised.

9. CLOSE OF BUSINESS

The meeting closed at 1.46pm.

Confirmed

Dated this

.....CHAIRPERSON

City of Melton Audit & Risk Committee
Summary Report of the Committee for the Meeting Held on 17 September 2026

Committee Meeting Key Outcomes

The Committee received, discussed and accepted two internal audit reports presented by Council's Internal Auditor, Mr Wilson Tang of Moore Australia, that are detailed as follows.

1. An internal audit of Council's *Land Development Contributions Framework* to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of controls supporting end-to-end management of developer contributions across Council to ensure compliance, accuracy, transparency and well-controlled processes. The comprehensive audit examined the lifecycle stages of financial contribution assessment and calculation, contribution collection from developers, accounting for and recording of funds (including restricted reserves and interest from invested funds), acquittal of funds, expenditure on eligible infrastructure, and reporting to internal and external stakeholders. The audit also evaluated whether the management of developer contributions is aligned to adopted Council Developer Contribution Plans and supporting policy documents.

   The report concluded that the overall control environment rating for developer contributions is *Fair*, with 11 of 12 audit findings rated as medium risk and single remaining audit finding rated as low risk, and 40 recommendations were agreed with management. The Committee has recommended Council adopt all recommendations presented in the report. The Committee also requested that management provide a periodic report to the Committee that details the progressive development of a Developer Contributions Accounting Framework that is key to the implementation of the agreed recommendations, and management has agreed to this request.

2. An internal audit of *Site Security* to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of Council's site security framework and provide assurance that it adequately protects people, assets and information across the various council-managed locations and facilities, which included performing site walkthroughs at the four Council facilities of the Melton Library, Youth Centre, Rockbank Community Hall and Bridge Road Community Centre. The audit also assessed whether site security responsibilities are clearly defined, effectively coordinated across departments and supported by appropriate governance, reporting, and risk management processes.

   The report concluded that the overall control environment for site security is *Fair*, with five of the six audit findings rated as medium risk and the remaining single audit finding presented as an opportunity for improvement, and 20 recommendations were agreed with management. The Committee has recommended Council adopt all recommendations presented in the report.

Matters for Consideration by Council

3. There are no matters from this meeting that the Committee wishes to present or raise for Council's consideration.

Prepared by
Jeff Rigby
Committee Chairperson
Audit & Risk Committee
City of Melton
17 September 2026

Audit and Risk Committee Charter

Recommended to Council by the Audit and Risk Committee on
5 December 2024

Adopted by Council on 16 December 2024
Amended by Council 25 May 2026

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1. Background

The Melton City Council ('Council') Audit and Risk Committee ('the Committee') is established pursuant to Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* ('the Act').

This Charter sets out the Committee's functions and responsibilities, authority, composition and tenure, roles and responsibilities, reporting and administrative arrangements.

The primary functions and responsibilities of the Committee are to monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with the Act (including any regulations), the overarching governance principles, Council's financial and performance reporting, Council's risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls and to oversee the internal audit and external audit functions.

The Committee does not have executive powers or authority to implement actions in areas over which management has responsibility and does not have any delegated financial responsibilities. The Committee does not have or undertake any management function and is therefore independent of management.

The internal auditor, external auditor and other assurance providers support the Committee by providing independent and objective assurance on corporate governance, risk management, internal control and compliance.

A Committee Work Plan is established annually to ensure the Committee effectively discharges its responsibilities under this Charter.

2. Authority

The Committee is established by the Council, pursuant to Section 53 of the Act. It is not a delegated committee and has no delegated responsibilities. Rather, it operates in an advisory capacity to Council in the performance of which it has the ability to:

- Perform activities within the scope of this Charter;
- Require the attendance of Senior Council Officers at meetings as appropriate;
- Have unrestricted access to members of the management team, employees, and relevant information;
- Review the process for reporting pursuant to the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012*;
- Oversee the performance of the external auditor and appointment and performance of the internal auditor;
- Meet in private without the attendance of management; and
- Request necessary financial resources to be provided to enable the Committee to receive any necessary legal, accounting, or other professional advice.

3. Membership

The Committee will be comprised of five members as follows:

- Three (3) members who are not Councillors and these members are described in this Charter as external independent members; and
- Two (2) Councillor members.

The Chairperson of the Committee shall be appointed from the external independent members of the Committee by all members of the Committee up to a maximum term of three years within their term of appointment and not exceeding the first year of a new term of Council.

In the absence of the appointed Chairperson from a meeting, the meeting will appoint an acting Chairperson from the external independent members present.

4. Terms of Appointment

External Independent Members

The appointment of external independent members shall be made by Council following an open market recruitment process.

The applications for membership will be assessed against appropriate selection criteria. These criteria will fall within the areas of:

a. Expertise in financial management and risk;

b. Experience in public sector management.

Consideration should also be given to previous audit and risk committee experience, and the composition of the Committee, where possible, will be balanced in regard to age, gender, ethnicity, and people living with a disability.

External independent members must collectively have experience in a. and b. above pursuant to section 53 of the Act.

The Selection Panel ('Panel') for appointment to the Committee will consist, unless a conflict of interest exists, of the Mayor, Chief Executive Officer and the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee, or an alternate external independent member where a conflict of interest exists for the Chairperson. In the case of a conflict of interest for the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer, the Deputy Mayor will substitute for the Mayor and/or a Director of the Council will substitute for the Chief Executive Officer on the selection Panel.

The Panel will assess candidates against the selection criteria, and also take into account the experience of the candidates and their likely ability to apply appropriate analytical and strategic management skills. The Panel will put a recommendation before Council for a decision.

External independent members shall be appointed for a term of three years. The term of each member should be arranged so that there is an orderly rotation of membership and avoidance of more than one member retiring at the same time.

At the conclusion of their first three-year term, existing external independent members will be eligible to be reappointed at the discretion of Council for a second three-year term provided that a formal assessment of the member's performance is undertaken by the Panel to inform Council's reappointment decision. Existing members will also be eligible to apply to be reappointed for a second three-year term should Council instead decide to recruit for the position. External independent members can only serve on the Committee for two consecutive terms.

In the event of an external independent member resigning/retiring before the expiry of their term then this vacancy will be filled as soon as practicable after the vacancy occurs. Further, should the resignation/retirement of the members coincide then Council may extend the remaining members term by one year to ensure continuity.

In the event the Council proposes to remove an external independent member of the Committee, it must give 4 weeks written notice to the member of its intention to do so and provide that member with the opportunity to be heard if that member so requests via a written submission to the Chief Executive Officer. The Mayor, Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee (if not the member subject to removal from the Committee) will consider the submission and may decide to meet with the member to further clarify issues raised in the submission prior to it being submitted to Council. The decision to remove the member will then be made by, and is at the discretion of, the Council.

Remuneration will be paid to each external independent member of the Committee as determined by Council from time to time. The remuneration shall be a set sessional fee for attendance at each formal meeting with an additional amount paid to the Chairperson and will be increased automatically at the commencement of each financial year, in line with the prescribed rate cap for the coming year. Remuneration will be paid to each external independent member of the Committee after each meeting upon submission of a tax invoice.

Councillor Members

The Councillor members of the Committee shall be appointed annually by Council at its Annual Meeting where Councillor representation is decided upon.

The term of the Councillor member to the Committee shall be for a one-year term and a Councillor member may be appointed by Council for further terms.

Councillor members may appoint a substitute Councillor in the event they are unable to attend a meeting.

5. Meetings

Conduct of meetings shall be consistent with Council's Governance Rules, insofar as they can be adapted to the Committee meeting, and at the discretion of the Chairperson.

The Committee shall meet as required and according to the annual schedule adopted by Council, but must meet a minimum of five times per year, which includes a meeting to consider the audited annual Financial and Performance Statements.

A schedule of Committee meetings and the Committee's annual Work Plan will be developed and agreed to by the members and recommended to Council annually for adoption. Meetings will be arranged as much as possible to coincide with relevant Council reporting deadlines, in particular the finalisation of the annual Financial and Performance Statements and the Annual Report to the Minister for Local Government.

Additional meetings shall be convened at the discretion of the Chairperson or at the written request of any member of the Committee, Internal Auditor or External Auditor.

Members of the Committee are expected to attend every meeting of the Committee in person and, in the event that a member is unable to attend in person then, with the approval of the Chairperson, they may attend online through arrangements made with the Head of Governance and subject to availability of any required technology.

The agenda and supporting documentation will be circulated to members of the Committee at least 3 working days in advance of each meeting.

With the approval of the Chairperson, the draft minutes of a Committee meeting will be issued to Committee members for confirmation by an out-of-session resolution to enable confirmed minutes detailing the Committee's advice and recommendations to be presented at a subsequent Council meeting following the Committee meeting.

The Committee will then note confirmed minutes of a meeting at the subsequent meeting of the Committee and the Chairperson will sign a printed version of the confirmed minutes that will be taken as the record of the meeting.

Council shall provide administrative support to the Committee.

The following requirements shall apply to all meetings of the Committee.

- A quorum of any meeting will be at least two external independent members and at least one Councillor member. In this instance a quorum is three (3) members.
- Only Committee members are entitled to vote at meetings. All members have full and equal voting rights on all matters considered by the Committee unless a member is unable to vote due to a conflict of interest. The Chairperson of the Committee shall have a casting vote on occasions where there is an equal number of votes on a matter. Resolutions shall pass on a simple majority vote.
- Other Councillors may attend meetings in an observation capacity, and the Committee may invite or require any persons to attend meetings as it deems necessary.
- The Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and the Head of Governance will represent the organisation and attend all meetings. Other Council staff may be invited to attend at the discretion of the Committee to advise and provide information when required.
- Council staff and Councillors who are not members of the Committee do not have a right to vote and may be excluded from meetings for any matter when votes are taken.
- The Internal Auditor will attend all meetings where internal audit reports are presented or as requested by the Committee, except when the Committee decides to meet in camera.
- The External Auditor (as may be appointed by the Victorian Auditor General) must attend the meeting when the annual Financial Statements and external audit management reports are considered and shall attend other Committee meetings as required.
- The External Auditor may request to meet in-camera with the Committee.
- The Committee will meet at least annually and separately with the External Auditor and Internal Auditor without management present and when required by the Committee, the auditors or Council.
- Any meeting documents provided in hard copy must be surrendered to Council and destroyed at Council premises.

6. Performance

The Committee will collectively evaluate and discuss its own performance against the Charter and provide a copy of the annual assessment to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council

meeting subsequent to that evaluation. The evaluation will include feedback from Committee members and members of the Executive Leadership Team and, subject to agreement by the Chair of the Committee, other senior officers that have regular interactions with the Committee. .

7. Indemnity

The Council will indemnify and keep indemnified each external independent member of the Committee against all actions or claims whether arising during or after their term of appointment has concluded in respect of anything necessarily done or reasonably done or omitted to be done in good faith:

a. in the performance of a duty or function or the exercise of an any matter under the Act, regulations, a local law or this charter; or

b. in the reasonable belief that the act or omission was in the performance of a duty or a function or the exercise of a matter under the Act, regulations, a local law or this charter.

8. Committee Member Regulatory Obligations

Committee members are expected to be aware of their obligations under Section 53 of the Act. These obligations relate to misuse of position as a member of the Committee (Section 123), confidential information (Section 125) and conflict of interest (Sections 126 to 131). Details about these obligations are included as guidance for Committee members in Appendix A to this Charter.

9. Reporting

The Committee shall after every meeting provide the minutes of that meeting to the next Scheduled Meeting of Council.

The Committee shall provide advice and report to Council on any matters of significance as determined by the Committee and for the Chairperson and/or Committee Members to be available to meet with Council as required.

The Chairperson will twice per annum prepare on behalf of the Committee a report to Council on the Committee's activities and provide the report through the Chief Executive Officer. One of these reports will be prepared after the meeting at which the annual Financial and Performance Statements have been considered and recommended to Council for adoption. Each report will advise Council how the Committee has discharged its responsibilities as set out in this Charter for the reporting period.

The Melton City Council Annual Report will contain information on Committee members, the number of meetings held and member attendance record, the audit processes and the results of work completed by the Internal Auditor and External Auditor.

The Committee Charter and details of Committee members will be published on Council's website.

10. Duties and Responsibilities

A. External Audit

The Committee will:

1. Review the External Auditor's proposed audit scope and approach to be applied each year in light of Council's present circumstances and changes in regulatory and other requirements.
2. Review with the External Auditor Council's draft annual Financial Statements focusing on:
    a. Changes to accounting policies and Approved Accounting Standards;
    b. Significant adjustments to the financial statements (if any) arising from the audit process;
    c. Compliance with accounting standards and other reporting requirements of financial and non-financial information; and
    d. Significant variances with explanations from prior years.
3. Review with the External Auditor Council's draft annual Performance Statement and consider the results in the context of the quarterly reports received throughout the year and explanations of any unusual or unexpected results.
4. Discuss and review with the External Auditor issues arising from the audit including all Management Letters and reports issued by the auditor for completeness and appropriateness.
5. Receive and discuss findings and recommendations made by the External Auditor and management's proposed responses and monitor the progress of actions to be taken.
6. Meet separately with the External Auditor to discuss any matters that the Committee or External Auditor consider should be discussed without management in attendance.
7. Ensure the External Auditor has access to the Committee Chairperson or the Committee when required.
8. Consider the independence of the External Auditor in the context of any other services provided to Council, with a preference that the External Auditor does not provide services other than external audit functions.
9. Review on an annual basis the performance of the External Auditor.

B. Internal Audit

The Committee will:

1. Review the level of resources allocated to internal audit functions and activities.
2. Review the three year strategic plan and annual program of the Internal Auditor to ensure that it takes into consideration the risk profile of Council.
3. Review the scope of the internal audit plan and the effectiveness of the function, evaluating whether the plan addresses the following issues:
    a. Effectiveness of internal controls over significant areas of risk, including non-financial management control systems;
    b. Effectiveness of internal controls over key processes relating to revenue, expenditure, assets, and liabilities;
    c. Efficiency and effectiveness of significant Council programmes; and
    d. Compliance with legislation, policies, best practice guidelines and contractual arrangements.
4. Receive, review, and approve or otherwise of the scope of work for each proposed audit prior to the audit being undertaken.

5. Monitor that the significant findings and recommendations made by the Internal Auditor and management's proposed responses are received, discussed, and appropriately acted upon, and monitor the progress of actions to be taken.
6. Review the appropriateness of special internal audit assignments by the internal audit services provider at the request of Council or Chief Executive Officer.
7. Consider the independence of the Internal Auditor in the context of any other services provided to Council.
8. Monitor the effectiveness of the internal audit function on an ongoing basis.
9. Monitor that there are no unjustified restrictions or limitations placed on the Internal Auditor.
10. Meet with the Internal Auditor annually or as required to consider any matters that the Committee or Internal Auditor should discuss privately.
11. Review on an annual basis the performance of the Internal Auditor, and where performance is not considered satisfactory, discuss with Council and management appropriate steps to take, which could include the appointment of a new Internal Auditor.
12. Through the Committee Chairperson, be party to the process of appointment of the Internal Auditor.

C. Financial and Performance Reporting

The Committee will:

1. Review Council's financial position via the presentation of Council's Quarterly Financial Management reports and report to Council on any material issues which may require action or attention.
2. At least annually review changes to the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework and understand the impact of those changes on Council's performance indicators;
3. Review significant accounting and reporting issues, including complex or unusual transactions and areas requiring professional judgment, and recent professional and regulatory pronouncements, and understand their impact on financial reports.
4. Review the audited annual Financial Statements prior to their approval by Council to determine whether the Committee considers them appropriate and is satisfied with the information known to the Committee, and assess whether the Financial Statements reflect appropriate accounting policies and comply with all relevant standards and regulatory requirements.
5. Review with management and the External Auditor all matters required to be communicated to the Committee under the Australian Auditing Standards.
6. Monitor the progress of any litigation, claim or contingency which could have a material effect on Council's financial position or operating result.
7. Recommend to Council the approval in principle of the annual Financial Statements and Performance Statement to Council, and review any significant changes and the reasons for the changes that may arise subsequent to that advice but before the Statements are adopted by Council.

D. Internal Control Environment

The Committee will:

1. Review the adequacy and effectiveness of key policies, systems, and controls for providing a sound internal control environment.
2. Determine whether systems and controls are reviewed regularly and updated where deficiencies are identified and improvements required.
3. Monitor significant changes to systems and controls to assess whether those changes significantly impact Council's risk profile.
4. Monitor that a program is in place to test compliance with systems and controls.
5. Assess whether the control environment is consistent with Council's Governance Principles.

E. Risk Management

The Committee will:

1. Monitor the risk exposure of Council by determining if management has in place appropriate risk management processes and adequate management information systems.
2. Review Council's Risk Management Policy and Framework and risk profile.
3. Monitor the process of review of Council's risk profile to ensure that material risks are dealt with appropriately.
4. Receive status reports on a regular basis of the risk register and actions being taken to manage identified risks.
5. Review the insurance programme annually prior to renewal.
6. Monitor the progress of any significant and/or material legal action either against or being taken by Council.
7. Monitor the effectiveness of Council's business continuity and disaster recovery processes and practices.

F. Fraud Prevention Systems and Controls

The Committee will:

1. Monitor the effectiveness of fraud and corruption prevention policies and fraud detection processes throughout the organisation.
2. Identify and refer specific actions or investigations deemed necessary to the Chief Executive Officer, the Internal Auditor or the Council, as appropriate.
3. Review reports in relation to any subsequent investigation, including the investigation of any suspected cases of fraud or corruption.
4. Review internal controls over revenue, expenditure, assets and liability processes.
5. Review internal controls over significant areas of risk including non-financial management control systems.
6. Receive reports by management about the actions taken by Council to report such matters to the appropriate integrity bodies.

G. Compliance Management

The Committee will:

1. Review the systems and processes implemented by Council for monitoring compliance with relevant legislation and regulations and the results of management's follow up of any instances of non-compliance.
2. Receive briefings on any significant compliance matters.
3. Receive reports from management on the findings of any examinations by regulatory or integrity agencies (whether related to investigations at Council or other agencies), such as the Ombudsman, IBAC, the Local Government Inspectorate, etc. and monitor Council's responses.

11. Review of the Committee Charter

The Committee will review the Charter at least biennially and recommend changes to Council for approval.

Appendix A

Committee Member Regulatory Obligations

Guidance to Members

LGA Section	LGA Requirement
Misuse of Position	
123(1)	A Committee member must not intentionally misuse their position to: a) Gain or attempt to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for themselves or for any other person; or b) Cause, or attempt to cause, detriment to the Council or another person
123(3)	Circumstances involving misuse of a position by a member of the Committee include: a) Making improper use of information acquired as a result of being a member of the Committee; or b) Disclosing information that is confidential information; or c) Directing or improperly influencing, or seeking to direct or improperly influence, a member of Council staff; or d) Exercising or performing, or purporting to exercise or perform, a power, duty or function that the person is not authorised to exercise or perform; or e) Using public funds or resources in a manner that is improper or unauthorised; or f) Participating in a decision on a matter in which the member has a conflict of interest.
Confidential Information	
125	A member of the Committee must not intentionally or recklessly disclose information that the member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information. There are some exemptions to this requirement, the key one being that if the information disclosed by the member has been determined by Council to be publicly available.
Conflicts of Interest	
126	A member of the Committee has a conflict of interest if the member has: a) A general conflict of interest as described in Section 127; or b) A material conflict of interest as described in Section 128.
127	A member of the Committee has a general conflict of interest in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that the members private interests could result in that member acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty as a member of the Committee.
128	A member of the Committee has a material conflict of interest in a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter.

Please Note

The above guidance is not verbatim from the Act and does not include all details as explained in Part 6, Division 1 of the Act. For a full understanding of the requirements of the Act in relation to the matters summarised above, members are expected to make themselves fully aware of the requirements of the Act.

Audit and Risk Committee Charter

Recommended to Council by the Audit and Risk Committee on
5 December 2024

Adopted by Council on 16 December 2024
Amended by Council 25 May 2026

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1. Background

The Melton City Council ('Council') Audit and Risk Committee ('the Committee') is established pursuant to Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* ('the Act').

This Charter sets out the Committee's functions and responsibilities, authority, composition and tenure, roles and responsibilities, reporting and administrative arrangements.

The primary functions and responsibilities of the Committee are to monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with the Act (including any regulations), the overarching governance principles, Council's financial and performance reporting, Council's risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls and to oversee the internal audit and external audit functions.

The Committee does not have executive powers or authority to implement actions in areas over which management has responsibility and does not have any delegated financial responsibilities. The Committee does not have or undertake any management function and is therefore independent of management.

The internal auditor, external auditor and other assurance providers support the Committee by providing independent and objective assurance on corporate governance, risk management, internal control and compliance.

A Committee Work Plan is established annually to ensure the Committee effectively discharges its responsibilities under this Charter.

2. Authority

The Committee is established by the Council, pursuant to Section 53 of the Act. It is not a delegated committee and has no delegated responsibilities. Rather, it operates in an advisory capacity to Council in the performance of which it has the ability to:

- Perform activities within the scope of this Charter;
- Require the attendance of Senior Council Officers at meetings as appropriate;
- Have unrestricted access to members of the management team, employees, and relevant information;
- Review the process for reporting pursuant to the ~~Protected~~ *Public Interest* *Disclosure Act 2012*;
- Oversee the performance of the external auditor and appointment and performance of the internal auditor;
- Meet in private without the attendance of management; and
- Request necessary financial resources to be provided to enable the Committee to receive any necessary legal, accounting, or other professional advice.

3. Membership

The Committee will be comprised of five members as follows:

- Three (3) members who are not Councillors and these members are described in this Charter as external independent members; and
- Two (2) Councillor members.

The Chairperson of the Committee shall be appointed from the external independent members of the Committee by all members of the Committee up to a maximum ~~of~~ term of three years within their term of appointment and not exceeding the first year of a new term of Council.

In the absence of the appointed Chairperson from a meeting, the meeting will appoint an acting Chairperson from the external independent members present.

4. Terms of Appointment

External Independent Members

The appointment of external independent members shall be made by Council following an open market recruitment process.

The applications for membership will be assessed against appropriate selection criteria. These criteria will fall within the areas of:

a. Expertise in financial management and risk;

b. Experience in public sector management.

Consideration should also be given to previous audit and risk committee experience, and the composition of the Committee, where possible, will be balanced in regard to age, gender, ethnicity, and people living with a disability.

External independent members must collectively have experience in a. and b. above pursuant to section 53 of the Act.

The Selection Panel ('Panel') for appointment to the Committee will consist, unless a conflict of interest exists, of the Mayor, ~~–~~ Chief Executive Officer and the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee, or an alternate external independent member where a conflict of interest exists for the Chairperson. In the case of a conflict of interest for the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer, the Deputy Mayor will substitute for the Mayor and/or a Director of the Council will substitute for the Chief Executive Officer on the selection Panel.

The Panel will assess candidates against the selection criteria, and also take into account the experience of the candidates and their likely ability to apply appropriate analytical and strategic management skills. The Panel will put a recommendation before Council for a decision.

External independent members shall be appointed for a term of three years. The term of each member should be arranged so that there is an orderly rotation of membership and avoidance of more than one member retiring at the same time.

At the conclusion of their first three-year term, existing external independent members will be eligible to be reappointed at the discretion of Council for a second three-year term provided that a formal assessment of the member's performance is undertaken by the Panel to inform Council's reappointment decision. Existing members will also be eligible to apply to be reappointed for a second three-year term should Council instead decide to recruit for the position. External independent members can only serve on the Committee for two consecutive terms.

In the event of an external independent member resigning/retiring before the expiry of their term then this vacancy will be filled as soon as practicable after the vacancy occurs. Further, should the resignation/retirement of the members coincide then Council may extend the remaining members term by one year to ensure continuity.

In the event the Council proposes to remove an external independent member of the Committee, it must give 4 weeks written notice to the member of its intention to do so and provide that member with the opportunity to be heard if that member so requests via a written submission to the Chief Executive Officer. The Mayor, Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee (if not the member subject to removal from the Committee) will consider the submission and may decide to meet with the member to further clarify issues raised in the submission prior to it being submitted to Council. The decision to remove the member will then be made by, and is at the discretion of, the Council.

Remuneration will be paid to each external independent member of the Committee as determined by Council from time to time. The remuneration shall be a set sessional fee for attendance at each formal meeting with an additional amount paid to the Chairperson and will be increased automatically at the commencement of each financial year, in line with the prescribed rate cap for the coming year. Remuneration will be paid to each external independent member of the Committee after each meeting upon submission of a tax invoice.

Councillor Members

The Councillor members of the Committee shall be appointed annually by Council at its Annual Meeting where Councillor representation is decided upon.

The term of the Councillor member to the Committee shall be for a one-year term and a Councillor member may be appointed by Council for further terms.

Councillor members may appoint a substitute Councillor in the event they are unable to attend a meeting.

5. Meetings

Conduct of meetings shall be consistent with Council's Governance Rules, insofar as they can be adapted to the Committee meeting, and at the discretion of the Chairperson.

The Committee shall meet as required and according to the annual schedule adopted by Council, but must meet a minimum of five times per year, which includes a meeting to consider the audited annual Financial and Performance Statements.

A schedule of Committee meetings and the Committee's annual Work Plan will be developed and agreed to by the members and recommended to Council annually for adoption. Meetings will be arranged as much as possible to coincide with relevant Council reporting deadlines, in particular the finalisation of the annual Financial and Performance Statements and the Annual Report to the Minister for Local Government.

Additional meetings shall be convened at the discretion of the Chairperson or at the written request of any member of the Committee, Internal Auditor or External Auditor.

Members of the Committee are expected to attend every meeting of the Committee in person and, in the event that a member is unable to attend in person then, with the approval of the Chairperson, they may attend online through arrangements made with the Head of Governance and subject to availability of any required technology.

The agenda and supporting documentation will be circulated to members of the Committee at least 3 working days in advance of each meeting.

With the approval of the Chairperson, the draft minutes of a Committee meeting will be issued to Committee members for confirmation by an out-of-session resolution to enable confirmed minutes detailing the Committee's advice and recommendations to be presented at a subsequent Council meeting following the Committee meeting.

The Committee will then ~~ratify~~ note confirmed minutes of a meeting at the subsequent meeting of the Committee and the Chairperson will sign a printed version of the confirmed minutes that will be taken as the record of the meeting.

Council shall provide administrative support to the Committee.

The following requirements shall apply to all meetings of the Committee.

- A quorum of any meeting will be at least two external independent members and at least one Councillor member. In this instance a quorum is three (3) members.
- Only Committee members are entitled to vote at meetings. All members have full and equal voting rights on all matters considered by the Committee unless a member is unable to vote due to a conflict of interest. The Chairperson of the Committee shall have a casting vote on occasions where there is an equal number of votes on a matter. Resolutions shall pass on a simple majority vote.
- Other Councillors may attend meetings in an observation capacity, and the Committee may invite or require any persons to attend meetings as it deems necessary.
- The Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and the Head of Governance will represent the organisation and attend all meetings. Other Council staff may be invited to attend at the discretion of the Committee to advise and provide information when required.
- Council staff and Councillors who are not members of the Committee do not have a right to vote and may be excluded from meetings for any matter when votes are taken.
- The Internal Auditor will attend all meetings where internal audit reports are presented or as requested by the Committee, except when the Committee decides to meet in camera.
- The External Auditor (as may be appointed by the Victorian Auditor General) must attend the meeting when the annual Financial Statements and external audit management reports are considered and shall attend other Committee meetings as required.
- The External Auditor may request to meet in-camera with the Committee.
- The Committee will meet at least annually and separately with the External Auditor and Internal Auditor without management present and when required by the Committee, the auditors or Council.
- Any meeting documents provided in hard copy must be surrendered to Council and destroyed at Council premises.

6. Performance

The Committee will collectively evaluate and discuss its own performance against the Charter and provide a copy of the annual assessment to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council

meeting subsequent to that evaluation. The evaluation will include feedback from Committee members and members of the Executive Leadership Team and, subject to agreement by the Chair of the Committee, other senior officers that have regular interactions with the Committee. ~~The evaluation will include feedback from both Committee members and senior officers who have regular interactions with the Committee~~.

7. Indemnity

The Council will indemnify and keep indemnified each external independent member of the Committee against all actions or claims whether arising during or after their term of appointment has concluded in respect of anything necessarily done or reasonably done or omitted to be done in good faith:

a. in the performance of a duty or function or the exercise of an any matter under the Act, regulations, a local law or this charter; or

b. in the reasonable belief that the act or omission was in the performance of a duty or a function or the exercise of a matter under the Act, regulations, a local law or this charter.

8. Committee Member Regulatory Obligations

Committee members are expected to be aware of their obligations under Section 53 of the Act. These obligations relate to misuse of position as a member of the Committee (Section 123), confidential information (Section 125) and conflict of interest (Sections 126 to 131). Details about these obligations are included as guidance for Committee members in Appendix A to this Charter.

9. Reporting

The Committee shall after every meeting provide the minutes of that meeting to the next Scheduled Meeting of Council.

The Committee shall provide advice and report to Council on any matters of significance as determined by the Committee and for the Chairperson and/or Committee Members to be available to meet with Council as required.

The Chairperson will twice per annum prepare on behalf of the Committee a report to Council on the Committee's activities and provide the report through the Chief Executive Officer. One of these reports will be prepared after the meeting at which the annual Financial and Performance Statements have been considered and recommended to Council for adoption. Each report will advise Council how the Committee has discharged its responsibilities as set out in this Charter for the reporting period.

The Melton City Council Annual Report will contain information on Committee members, the number of meetings held and member attendance record, the audit processes and the results of work completed by the Internal Auditor and External Auditor.

The Committee Charter and details of Committee members will be published on Council's website.

10. Duties and Responsibilities

A. External Audit

The Committee will:

1. Review the External Auditor's proposed audit scope and approach to be applied each year in light of Council's present circumstances and changes in regulatory and other requirements.
2. Review with the External Auditor Council's draft annual Financial Statements focusing on:
   a. Changes to accounting policies and Approved Accounting Standards;
   b. Significant adjustments to the financial statements (if any) arising from the audit process;
   c. Compliance with accounting standards and other reporting requirements of financial and non-financial information; and
   d. Significant variances with explanations from prior years.
3. Review with the External Auditor Council's draft annual Performance Statement and consider the results in the context of the quarterly reports received throughout the year and explanations of any unusual or unexpected results.
4. Discuss and review with the External Auditor issues arising from the audit including all Management Letters and reports issued by the auditor for completeness and appropriateness.
5. Receive and discuss findings and recommendations made by the External Auditor and management's proposed responses and monitor the progress of actions to be taken.
6. Meet separately with the External Auditor to discuss any matters that the Committee or External Auditor consider should be discussed without management in attendance.
7. Ensure the External Auditor has access to the Committee Chairperson or the Committee when required.
8. Consider the independence of the External Auditor in the context of any other services provided to Council, with a preference that the External Auditor does not provide services other than external audit functions.
9. Review on an annual basis the performance of the External Auditor.

B. Internal Audit

The Committee will:

1. Review the level of resources allocated to internal audit functions and activities.
2. Review the three year strategic plan and annual program of the Internal Auditor to ensure that it takes into consideration the risk profile of Council.
3. Review the scope of the internal audit plan and the effectiveness of the function, evaluating whether the plan addresses the following issues:
   a. Effectiveness of internal controls over significant areas of risk, including non-financial management control systems;
   b. Effectiveness of internal controls over key processes relating to revenue, expenditure, assets, and liabilities;
   c. Efficiency and effectiveness of significant Council programmes; and
   d. Compliance with legislation, policies, best practice guidelines and contractual arrangements.
4. Receive, review, and approve or otherwise of the scope of work for each proposed audit prior to the audit being undertaken.

5. Monitor that the significant findings and recommendations made by the Internal Auditor and management's proposed responses are received, discussed, and appropriately acted upon, and monitor the progress of actions to be taken.
6. Review the appropriateness of special internal audit assignments by the internal audit services provider at the request of Council or Chief Executive Officer.
7. Consider the independence of the Internal Auditor in the context of any other services provided to Council.
8. Monitor the effectiveness of the internal audit function on an ongoing basis.
9. Monitor that there are no unjustified restrictions or limitations placed on the Internal Auditor.
10. Meet with the Internal Auditor annually or as required to consider any matters that the Committee or Internal Auditor should discuss privately.
11. Review on an annual basis the performance of the Internal Auditor, and where performance is not considered satisfactory, discuss with Council and management appropriate steps to take, which could include the appointment of a new Internal Auditor.
12. Through the Committee Chairperson, be party to the process of appointment of the Internal Auditor.

C. Financial and Performance Reporting

The Committee will:

1. Review Council's financial position via the presentation of Council's Quarterly Financial Management reports and report to Council on any material issues which may require action or attention.
2. At least annually review changes to the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework and understand the impact of those changes on Council's performance indicators;
3. Review significant accounting and reporting issues, including complex or unusual transactions and areas requiring professional judgment, and recent professional and regulatory pronouncements, and understand their impact on financial reports.
4. Review the audited annual Financial Statements prior to their approval by Council to determine whether the Committee considers them appropriate and is satisfied with the information known to the Committee, and assess whether the Financial Statements reflect appropriate accounting policies and comply with all relevant standards and regulatory requirements.
5. Review with management and the External Auditor all matters required to be communicated to the Committee under the Australian Auditing Standards.
6. Monitor the progress of any litigation, claim or contingency which could have a material effect on Council's financial position or operating result.
7. Recommend to Council the approval in principle of the annual Financial Statements and Performance Statement to Council, and review any significant changes and the reasons for the changes that may arise subsequent to that advice but before the Statements are adopted by Council.

D. Internal Control Environment

The Committee will:

1. Review the adequacy and effectiveness of key policies, systems, and controls for providing a sound internal control environment. ~~This should be done on a rotational basis over a three to four year period.~~
2. Determine whether systems and controls are reviewed regularly and updated where deficiencies are identified and improvements required.
3. Monitor significant changes to systems and controls to assess whether those changes significantly impact Council's risk profile.
4. Monitor that a program is in place to test compliance with systems and controls.
5. Assess whether the control environment is consistent with Council's Governance Principles.

E. Risk Management

The Committee will:

1. Monitor the risk exposure of Council by determining if management has in place appropriate risk management processes and adequate management information systems.
2. Review Council's Risk Management Policy and Framework and risk profile.
3. Monitor the process of review of Council's risk profile to ensure that material risks are dealt with appropriately.
4. Receive status reports on a regular basis of the risk register and actions being taken to manage identified risks.
5. Review the insurance programme annually prior to renewal.
6. Monitor the progress of any significant and/or material legal action either against or being taken by Council.
7. Monitor the effectiveness of Council's business continuity and disaster recovery processes and practices.

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G. Compliance Management

The Committee will:

1. Review the systems and processes implemented by Council for monitoring compliance with relevant legislation and regulations and the results of management's follow up of any instances of non-compliance.
2. Receive briefings on any significant compliance matters.
3. Receive reports from management on the findings of any examinations by regulatory or integrity agencies (whether related to investigations at Council or other agencies), such as the Ombudsman, IBAC, the Local Government Inspectorate, etc. and monitor Council's responses.

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The Committee will review the Charter at least biennially and recommend changes to Council for approval.

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Guidance to Members

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123(3)	Circumstances involving misuse of a position by a member of the Committee include: a) Making improper use of information acquired as a result of being a member of the Committee; or b) Disclosing information that is confidential information; or c) Directing or improperly influencing, or seeking to direct or improperly influence, a member of Council staff; or d) Exercising or performing, or purporting to exercise or perform, a power, duty or function that the person is not authorised to exercise or perform; or e) Using public funds or resources in a manner that is improper or unauthorised; or f) Participating in a decision on a matter in which the member has a conflict of interest.
Confidential Information	
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128	A member of the Committee has a material conflict of interest in a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter.

Please Note

The above guidance is not verbatim from the Act and does not include all details as explained in Part 6, Division 1 of the Act. For a full understanding of the requirements of the Act in relation to the matters summarised above, members are expected to make themselves fully aware of the requirements of the Act.

Cr Vandenberg departed the Chamber at 7:29pm.

12.4 LEADWEST JOINT DELEGATED COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Author: Troy Delia - Acting Manager Governance
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee meeting held on 2 September 2026 and the LeadWest 2025/26 Annual Report.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council note the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee meeting held on 2 September 2026 and the LeadWest 2025/26 Annual Report, provided as **Appendix 1 and 2** respectively to this report.

Motion

Crs Zada/Majdlik.

That Council note the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee meeting held on 2 September 2026 and the LeadWest 2025/26 Annual Report, provided as **Appendix 1 and 2** respectively to this report.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of the LeadWest Committee is to oversee the preparation and implementation of the LeadWest Strategic Plan and identified sub projects as adopted and agreed by member Councils.

The minutes attached to this report are the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee meeting held on 2 September 2026. Also attached to this report is the 2025/26 Annual Report.

2. Background/Issues

The LeadWest Committee was established as a Joint Delegated Committee pursuant to section 64 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act), with the Cities of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, and Wyndham, on and from 1 August 2021.

It has delegated powers and functions in an Instrument of Delegation and Schedule and has Terms of Reference that govern its operations, meeting, and reporting arrangements.

Attached to this report are the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee meeting held on 2 September 2026 and the 2025/26 Annual Report, provided as **Appendix 1 and 2** respectively.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A progressive and trusted Council

3.2 An organisation that prioritises good governance, integrity and accountability and is community minded in its decision-making

4. Financial Considerations

The ongoing budget for the LeadWest Committee will include two components. Firstly, to deliver the projects in the four-year implementation plan, recommendations will be made to member Councils for consideration in each Council's annual budgeting process. Secondly, a payment of a base contribution to apply equally to all Councils.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

The LeadWest Committee provides a mechanism for a regional approach to advocacy and the delivery of a Strategic Plan. The LeadWest Strategic Plan is underpinned by a rolling implementation plan which will be delivered by teams from across the member councils implementing specific projects. This Plan was prepared following extensive consultation including a focus on engaging Councillors from the member Councils.

6. Risk Analysis

The legal framework for the LeadWest Committee structure is pursuant to s.64 of the *Local Government Act 2020.* There is no perceived risk in the recommendation contained within this report.

7. Options

That Council note the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee and the 2025/26 Annual Report as per the recommendation to this report.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Unconfirmed Minutes LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee Meeting - 2 September 2026
2. Annual Report LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee - 2025/26

LeadWest

LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee

DRAFT Meeting Minutes – 2 September 2026

Meeting Details

Date	**Wednesday 2 September 2026**	
Time	**3:00pm – 5:00pm**	
Location	**Online**	
Chair	**Cr Susan Yengi,** Maribyrnong City Council	
Attendees	**Cr Lucy Nguyen**	Brimbank City Council
	Ms Fiona Blair	Chief Executive Officer, Brimbank City Council
	Cr Rayane Hawli	Deputy Chair, Hobsons Bay City Council
	Mr Phu Nguyen	Chief Executive Officer, Hobsons Bay City Council
	Cr Dr Phillip Zada	Melton City Council
	Ms Roslyn Wai	Chief Executive Officer, Melton City Council
	Cr Susan Yengi	Maribyrnong City Council
	Mr Mike McIntosh	Acting Chief Executive Officer, Maribyrnong City Council
	Cr Peter Maynard	Wyndham City Council
	Mr Stephen Wall	Chief Executive Officer, Wyndham City Council
	Ms Simone Kemp	Executive Officer, LeadWest
Apologies	**Ms Celia Haddock**	Chief Executive Officer, Maribyrnong City Council
Guests	**Dr John Symons**	President, Bike West
	Elie Khalil	Brimbank City Council
Minutes	Simone Kemp, Executive Officer, LeadWest	
File ref	26/343472	

Agenda items

No.	Agenda Item	
1.	**Welcome**, Acknowledgement & Apologies	LeadWest Chair, Cr Susan Yengi (the Chair), declared the meeting open at 3.04pm, welcomed committee members and provided an Acknowledgement of Country. Apologies were received from Maribyrnong CEO, Celia Haddock with Mike McIntosh attending in capacity as Acting CEO Maribyrnong City Council.
2.	**Guest presentation – BikeWest**	The committee received a presentation from Dr John Symons, President of BikeWest, on the importance and economic benefits of active transport, with a particular focus on cycling infrastructure and networks in the west.
3.	**Conflict of Interest**	Nil

4.	**Confirmation of Previous Minutes**	The minutes from the meeting held on 3 June 2026 were adopted without amendment. **Moved:** Cr Dr Phillip Zada **Seconded:** Cr Lucy Nguyen **Carried:** Yes
5.	**Actions arising** from previous meeting	Actions arising from the previous meeting were completed. There were no outstanding actions.
6.	**LeadWest Advocacy Updates** **6.1** Stakeholder engagement **6.2** State Election Campaign and action plan	**6.1 Stakeholder Engagement** The Chair provided an overview of LeadWest stakeholder engagement since the June committee meeting, including meetings with federal and state Ministers, Shadow Ministers, federal and state ministerial and department representatives; as well as speaking engagements where the Chair represented LeadWest. Cr Zada shared correspondence received from the office of the Hon. Clare O'Neil regarding Federal Government support for housing and homelessness in Melbourne's west, following LeadWest's meeting with Minister O'Neil in June. **6.2 State Election campaign and action Plan** The Executive Officer provided the committee with an update on progress against the LeadWest state election and campaign action plan.
7.	**LeadWest Final Draft Terms of Reference**	The Committee discussed the final draft Term of Reference as presented in the agenda papers. Further feedback was provided by delegates for committee consideration in relation to committee delegates, voting entitlements, employment processes for the role of Executive Officer, and appointment of proxy members. The Committee agreed to retain proxy delegates under the updated Terms of Reference. **Action:** Executive Officer to seek further advice on the final draft Terms of Reference as it relates to further feedback received on section 7.1 and section 9 and re-circulate to the committee for consideration and final endorsement once ready.
8.	**LeadWest Instrument of Delegation update**	Item deferred. Update to the Instrument of Delegation will be considered upon endorsement of the final draft Terms of Reference.
9.	**Proposal – LeadWest Project Account**	The committee discussed the options presented. Majority preferred Option 1 to be implemented for 27/28 financial year and reviewed ahead of 28/29 once a new strategic plan is in place.

		Motion: The LeadWest Committee endorses Option 1 as the preferred approach. **Moved:** Cr Peter Maynard **Seconded:** Cr Lucy Nguyen **Carried:** Yes
10.	**Reports & Quarterly Updates** **6.1** LeadWest Annual Report 2025-2026 **6.2** Media and Communications Update **6.3** Finance Update	**6.1 Annual Report** Chair presented the 2025/2026 LeadWest Annual Report to the committee which provides an overview of committee activity, achievements and governance for the previous financial year. **Action:** 2025/2026 Annual Report to be published on LeadWest website and shared with Member Councils. **6.2 Media and Communications Update** The committee received an update from the Executive Officer on media and communications activity including media activity and coverage, social media and website activity, and progress against the LeadWest Communication Strategy. **6.3 Finance Update** **Motion:** That the committee accepts the Finance report as included in agenda papers. **Moved:** Cr Peter Maynard **Seconded:** Cr Dr Phillip Zada **Carried:** Yes
11.	**Other Business** • Data Centres • Crime and Safety • Other	**Data Centres** The Chair raised data centres for committee discussion to confirm Council positions for consideration ahead of the development of next strategic plan. **Action:** CEOs to send Executive Officer their respective council positions on data centres to share with the Committee ahead of any further committee consideration. **Crime & Safety** The Chair raised this item for committee consideration ahead of the development of the next strategic plan. The committee discussed recent activity across the western region councils involving western region Mayors, and advocacy for a police academy in the west (including Hume Council). **Other items** **Superannuation and housing policies**

		Cr Zada raised concerns with Victorian Coalition and One Nation policy announcements relating to use of superannuation for housing. Cr Zada agreed to share further information outside of the meeting for consideration. **The Age Melbourne Assembly** The Chair requested committee approval to attend The Age Melbourne Assembly event in October. **Action:** A brief to be provided to the Committee, via the Executive Officer, for consideration of the Chair's request to attend The Age Melbourne Assembly in October. **Final comments from Chair** The Chair noted this meeting as her last as Chair of LeadWest and thanked the Committee for their support and engagement during her time as Chair.
12.	**Close of meeting**	The Chair closed the meeting 5.06pm.

Meeting actions summary:

Meeting Item	Action
LeadWest Final Draft Terms of Reference	Executive Officer to seek further advice on the final draft Terms of Reference as it relates to proposed clauses 7.1, 5.2.3 and 9.1.1 and re-circulate to the committee for a consideration and final endorsement once ready.
Reports & Quarterly Updates – LeadWest Annual Report 2025-2026	2025/2026 Annual Report to be published on LeadWest website and shared with Member Councils
Other Business – Data Centres	CEOs to send Executive Officer their Council's formal positions on data centres to circulate to the Committee ahead any further consideration of a LeadWest position.
Other Business – The Age Melbourne Assembly	A brief to be provided to the Committee, via the Executive Officer, for consideration of the Chair's request to attend The Age Melbourne Assembly in October.

Next Meeting Date: Wednesday 2 December, 3-4.30pm (in-person, Maribyrnong City Council)

2026 Meeting Schedule

- Wednesday 25 February, 3-4.30pm (online)
- Thursday 7 May 2026, 4-5pm (online – additional scheduled meeting)
- Wednesday 3 June, 3-4.30pm (in-person, Hobsons Bay City Council)
- Wednesday 2 September, 3-4.30pm (online)
- Wednesday 2 December, 3-4.30pm (in-person, Maribyrnong City Council)

Attachment 8

LeadWest Annual Report 2025/26

Report from the Chair

It is my pleasure to present the LeadWest Annual Report for 2025/26.

This year has been marked by strong momentum, productive collaboration and impactful advocacy for Melbourne's west. As Australia's fastest-growing region, our communities continue to experience significant growth, placing increasing pressure on transport networks, housing, community infrastructure, health services and overall liveability. In this environment, LeadWest's role as the united voice of Melbourne's west has never been more important.

Throughout the year, LeadWest brought together the councils of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton and Wyndham to advocate for the infrastructure, services and investment needed to support a growing population of about one million residents and ensure our region can continue to thrive. Through a shared vision and coordinated approach, we strengthened our influence with governments, industry and key stakeholders at both the state and national levels.

A major focus of the year was the development and delivery of our 2026 State Election advocacy program. Working collaboratively with member councils and advocacy officers, LeadWest endorsed its 2026 State Election Advocacy Priorities, establishing a unified platform of 11 regional priorities focused on creating a liveable, connected and sustainable west. This work culminated in a coordinated State Election action plan, the launch of our regional priorities at Parliament House in March 2026, and the public rollout of the *Let's Get It Done* campaign, providing a strong platform to advocate for the investment our communities need.

Throughout the year, LeadWest met with Ministers, Shadow Ministers, Members of Parliament and senior government advisers to champion priorities including transformative transport projects, major employment and innovation precincts, improved public transport, cultural investment, environmental initiatives, and greater support for homelessness and mental health services. We also led an advocacy delegation to Canberra, ensuring Melbourne's west was represented in discussions about housing, homelessness, infrastructure and arts funding.

One of our most significant achievements, was strengthening our evidence-based advocacy through targeted regional research. The findings of the homelessness research highlighted the scale of housing insecurity facing our communities and strengthened our case for greater state and federal investment in service coordination.

It was also encouraging to see a number of announcements during the year that aligned with LeadWest priorities, including funding for Melton Line electrification planning, new and expanded bus services, progress on Melbourne Airport Rail and the Sunshine Superhub, and additional homelessness support funding.

I extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Committee Members, Councillor Delegates, CEOs, Advocacy Officers and our Executive Officer for their commitment, expertise and collaboration throughout the year. Our achievements are the result of a strong partnership and a shared commitment to securing a better future for Melbourne's west.

As we navigate a state election year, LeadWest is well positioned to build on this momentum. Together, we will continue championing the infrastructure, services and opportunities required to ensure Melbourne's west remains a thriving, connected and prosperous region for current and future generations.

Cr Susan Yengi (Maribyrnong City Council)
Chair, LeadWest

Executive Summary

The 2025/26 financial year demonstrated LeadWest's growing influence as the collective voice of Melbourne's west. Through coordinated regional advocacy, evidence-based strategy development and strong stakeholder engagement, LeadWest strengthened its role as a trusted and influential advocate on behalf of the councils of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton and Wyndham.

Key achievements included the development and launch of LeadWest's 2026 State Election Advocacy Priorities, the introduction of the *Let's Get It Done* campaign, extensive engagement with state and federal decision-makers, the completion of a homelessness research project, and continued advocacy for transport, social, environmental and economic development priorities across Melbourne's west.

Committee Members 2025-2026

The LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee comprises representatives from the alliance's five member councils, including one Councillor Delegate and the Chief Executive Officer from each council. Councillor Delegates are appointed annually by their respective councils.

Councillor Delegates: July – November 2025

The following Councillor Delegates represented member councils during the first part of this reporting period:

- Cr Dr Phillip Zada (Melton City Council) – Chair
- Cr Katharine Nikolic (Brimbank City Council) – Deputy Chair
- Cr Diana Grima (Hobsons Bay City Council)
- Cr Susan Yengi (Maribyrnong City Council)
- Cr Peter Maynard (Wyndham City Council)

Councillor Delegates: December 2025 – June 2026

In November/December 2025, the following Councillor Delegates were appointed by member councils:

- Cr Lucy Nguyen (Brimbank City Council)
- Cr Rayane Hawli (Hobsons Bay City Council)
- Cr Susan Yengi (Maribyrnong City Council)
- Cr Dr Phillip Zada (Melton City Council)
- Cr Mia Shaw (Wyndham City Council) - replaced by Cr Peter Maynard from 26 May 2026.

At the Committee meeting held on 3 December 2025, Cr Susan Yengi was elected Chair of LeadWest and Cr Rayane Hawli was elected Deputy Chair for 2026.

In May 2026, Cr Mia Shaw resigned as Wyndham City Council's LeadWest Delegate. The Committee welcomed the appointment of Cr Peter Maynard as Wyndham's replacement Councillor Delegate.

LeadWest acknowledges and sincerely thanks Cr Katharine Nikolic, Cr Diana Grima and Cr Mia Shaw for their valued contributions and commitment to the alliance during their tenure on the Committee.

Chief Executive Officer Representatives

Throughout 2025/26, the Committee was supported by the Chief Executive Officers of the five member councils:

- Fiona Blair – Brimbank City Council
- Kerry Thompson (Interim CEO) and Phu Nguyen – Hobsons Bay City Council
- Celia Haddock – Maribyrnong City Council
- Roslyn Wai – Melton City Council
- Stephen Wall – Wyndham City Council

The Committee was also supported by Simone Kemp, who commenced as LeadWest Executive Officer in August 2025 and serves as a member of the Committee.

Committee Governance

The LeadWest Committee generally meets quarterly, usually in September, December, March and June.

In 2025/2026, the Committee met five times to progress committee business:

- 2 September 2025
- 3 December 2026
- 25 February 2026 (scheduled in addition to the standard meeting cycle)
- 7 May 2026
- 3 June 2026

Key governance achievements during this period included:

- Endorsement of the 2026 State Election Advocacy Priorities (September 2025)
- Endorsement of amendments to the Instrument of Delegation and Terms of Reference (September 2025)
- Commencement of a comprehensive Terms of Reference review (December 2025)
- Appointment of Cr Susan Yengi as Chair and Cr Rayane Hawli as Deputy Chair for 2026 (December 2025)
- Development of a LeadWest Communication Strategy (December 2025)
- Transition of the Executive Officer role following the retirement of Hillary Hastings, to Simone Kemp in August 2025.

Key Achievements

State Election Advocacy

A major focus of the year was the development and commencement of implementation of LeadWest's 2026 State Election advocacy program. Following collaboration between Member Councils and the Advocacy Officers Advisory Group, the Committee endorsed

the *2026 State Election Advocacy Priorities – Invest in a Liveable, Connected and Sustainable West* brochure in September 2025.

Advocacy Priorities

LeadWest advanced 11 key priorities across three themes:

A Liveable and Healthy Community
- Homelessness
- Mental health services

A Better-Connected West
- Western Rail Plan
- Melbourne Airport Rail and Sunshine Station Precinct
- Outer Metropolitan Ring (Road and Rail)
- Outer Western Roads Package
- Western Intermodal Freight Terminal
- Bus Network Reform

A Sustainable and Vibrant West
- Creative West
- Hobsons Bay Wetlands Centre
- A Cooler, Greener West

Key milestones included:

- Distribution of advocacy priorities to western region Members of Parliament and stakeholders.
- Development of a comprehensive State Election Action Plan.
- Official launch of LeadWest's advocacy priorities at Parliament House in March 2026 attended by 14 Members of Parliament, Ministers and Shadow Ministers, representing four parties.
- Preparation of supplementary advocacy papers supporting major advocacy projects and initiatives.

In June 2026, LeadWest launched *Let's Get It Done*, a public campaign focused on securing delivery of long-promised transport infrastructure projects for Melbourne's west.

Campaign achievements included:

- Endorsement of campaign branding and rollout plans.
- Publication of an open letter to Victorian political party leaders coinciding with the official campaign launch.
- Establishment of a dedicated campaign website and social media campaign.
- Significant stakeholder engagement in the lead-up to the State Election.

Government and Stakeholder Engagement

Throughout the year, LeadWest undertook an extensive program of engagement with ministers, shadow ministers, parliamentarians and government advisers.

State Government and Parliamentary Engagement

Meetings were held with:

- Hon. Gabrielle Williams MP, Minister for Transport Infrastructure and Public and Active Transport
- Hon. Melissa Horne MP, Minister for Roads and Road Safety, Ports and Freight and Health Infrastructure
- Hon. Ros Spence MP, Minister for Roads and Road Safety, Minister for Community Sport and Minister for First Peoples
- Victorian Treasurer's Office
- Office of the Premier
- Office of the Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs
- Evan Mulholland MP, Shadow Minister for Transport Infrastructure.

LeadWest also met with local Members of Parliament including:

- John Lister MP (Werribee)
- Trung Luu MP (Western Metropolitan Region)
- Steve McGhie MP (Melton)
- Luba Grigorovitch MP (Kororoit)
- Mathew Hilakari MP (Point Cook).

Advocacy discussions focused on transport infrastructure, bus reform, roads, freight, housing, homelessness, Creative West, the Wetlands Centre and urban greening initiatives.

Federal Advocacy

As part of a Canberra advocacy delegation, LeadWest met with:

- Hon. Clare O'Neil MP, Minister for Housing, Homelessness and Cities
- Cameron Caldwell MP, Shadow Assistant Minister for Housing
- Senior advisers to Ministers responsible for regional development, local government and the arts.

These engagements strengthened LeadWest's profile and influence on housing, homelessness, infrastructure and cultural investment priorities.

Members of the delegation were:

- Cr Susan Yengi, Maribyrnong City Council, Chair of LeadWest
- Cr Rayane Hawli, Hobsons Bay City Council, Deputy Chair of LeadWest
- Cr Dr Phillip Zada, LeadWest Councillor Delegate Melton City Council
- Celia Haddock, CEO Maribyrnong City Council
- Georgie Hill, Director People, Partnerships and Performance, Brimbank City Council
- Simone Kemp, Executive Officer LeadWest.

Evidence-Based Advocacy: Homelessness in Melbourne’s West

LeadWest strengthened its advocacy through the commissioning of a regional homelessness research project undertaken by the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness.

Key findings demonstrated:

- Homelessness rates in Melbourne's west are 50 per cent higher than the national average.
- More than 15,000 people sought homelessness assistance in 2024/25, the highest intake recorded by specialist homelessness services in Australia.
- Councils are increasingly responding to homelessness despite having no formal legislative responsibility for service delivery.

The research provides a strong foundation for ongoing advocacy and policy development in this critical area.

Advocacy Influence and Policy Outcomes

A number of government announcements throughout the year aligned closely with LeadWest's advocacy priorities.

Transport and Infrastructure

- Commencement of Melbourne Airport Rail Stage One works and release of Sunshine Superhub designs.
- $152 million State and Federal commitment to Melton Line electrification planning and design.
- Contract awarded for the Melton Line Upgrade (increased capacity on Vline).
- Funding to increase Vline capacity on the Wyndham Vale corridor through longer trains.

Public Transport

- New bus routes and expanded services delivered across Melbourne's western growth areas.
- $100 million State Budget commitment for new and upgraded bus services, including in Melbourne’s west.

Housing and Homelessness

- Additional funding for emergency accommodation and homelessness outreach services.
- Federal housing initiatives supporting social and affordable housing outcomes.

Raising the Profile of Melbourne's West

LeadWest continued to strengthen its role as the collective voice of Melbourne's west through collaboration and representation at key regional forums. This included participation in the 2025 West of Melbourne Economic Development Alliance (WoMEDA) Summit in September 2025.

LeadWest also represented the region speaking at:

- On the Horizon: Melbourne's West regional dialogue
- The 15th Victorian Transport Infrastructure Conference
- Ongoing media engagement across metropolitan and regional outlets.

Cr Vandenberg returned to the Chamber at 7.31pm

12.5 ADVISORY COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL - AGGREGATED MEETING MINUTES

Author: Troy Delia - Acting Manager Governance
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the aggregated minutes of Advisory Committee meetings yet to be considered by Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive the minutes of the following Advisory Committee meetings, provided as **Appendices 1 - 3** of this report, and adopt the recommendations arising within the Minutes:

1. Heritage Advisory Committee – 11 August 2026
2. Disability Advisory Committee – 20 August 2026
3. Policy Review Panel – 3 September 2026

Motion

Crs Turner/Ramsey.

That Council receive the minutes of the following Advisory Committee meetings, provided as Appendices 1 - 3 of this report, and adopt the recommendations arising within the Minutes:

1. Heritage Advisory Committee – 11 August 2026
2. Disability Advisory Committee – 20 August 2026
3. Policy Review Panel – 3 September 2026.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

Whilst not mentioned in the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Council has the power to create Advisory Committees pursuant to its general power set out in section 10 of the Act.

The minutes of the Advisory Committees attached to this report form the written record of the committee meetings, including any matters considered and any conflicts of interest disclosed.

The minutes also serve as the advice/recommendations to Council for its consideration.

2. Background/Issues

An Advisory Committee is a committee established by Council to provide advice to it or its delegate. Whilst not mentioned in the Act, Council has the power to create Advisory Committees pursuant to its general power set out in section 10 of the Act.

All Advisory Committees are subject to their individual Terms of Reference. The membership varies depending upon the committee's specific role. Committee membership will generally comprise a Councillor(s), council staff and community representatives and may include key stakeholders, subject matter experts and/or community service providers and organisations.

Councillor representation on Advisory Committees is generally for one year and is reviewed annually. The Councillor representation on Advisory Committees for the 2025/26 municipal year was approved by Council at its Scheduled Meetings on 6 and 24 November 2025.

The minutes of the following Advisory Committees, attached to this report, form the written record of the committee meetings detailing matters considered and any conflicts of interest disclosed.

The minutes also serve as the advice/recommendations to Council.

Appendix	Advisory Committee	Meeting Date
1.	Heritage Advisory Committee	11 August 2026
2.	Disability Advisory Committee	20 August 2026
3.	Policy Review Panel	3 September 2026

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A progressive and trusted Council

3.2 An organisation that prioritises good governance, integrity and accountability and is community minded in its decision-making

4. Financial Considerations

Advisory Committees are not responsible for operational expenditure and cannot direct Council officers to act without the consent of Council. Operational expenses and administrative actions arising from an Advisory Committee meeting are accommodated within Council's recurrent budgets, unless otherwise requested within the minutes of the meeting and detailed in a recommendation to Council for consideration.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

Advisory Committees are one method of Council consulting and communicating with the community. Such a committee may be established to provide strategic level input into a broad area of Council operations, such as community safety or arts and culture. An Advisory Committee may also be established for a specific time-limited project, such as a review of a Local Law.

6. Risk Analysis

With a mandatory responsibility to report to Council and being restricted to making recommendations for Council consideration, risks attached to Advisory Committee actions are substantially mitigated.

It is prudent for Council to carefully consider any and all recommendations arising from Advisory Committee minutes, as Advisory Committees may canvass significant issues and significant expenditure in their deliberations.

7. Options

Advisory Committees are a Committee of Council, therefore Council has the discretion to accept, reject, amend, or seek further information on the Committee minutes and/or recommendations.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Heritage Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - 11 August 2026
2. Disability Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - 20 August 2026
3. Policy Review Panel Minutes - 3 September 2026

CITY OF Melton

Minutes

Heritage Advisory Committee

Held on Tuesday, 11 August 2026
3.45pm – 5.45pm
Melton Library & Learning Hub,
Corr Training Room, 31 McKenzie Street
Melton

Members In Attendance:	Cr Bob Turner	Councillor
	Cr Sophie Ramsey	Councillor
	Alan Perry	Community Representative
	Frank Sultana	Community Representative
	Augustine Udeagha	Community Representative
	Deborah Slattery	Organisational Representative
Officers In Attendance:	Travis Conway	Manager City Strategy
	Michelle Martin	A/Coordinator Strategic Planning
	Timothy Blackie	Strategic Planner
	Lisa Brown	Executive Assistant
Guests In Attendance:	Peter Minard	Local and Family History Librarian
Quorum:	A quorum must be achieved for a meeting to commence. A quorum is at least 50% of each member category present. 2 Councillors, 3 Community Representatives and 1 Organisational Representative.	
Chairperson:	Cr Bob Turner	Councillor
Minute Taker:	Lisa Brown	Executive Assistant

1. Welcome

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 3.49pm and welcomed the Committee members and attendees.

2. Acknowledgement of Country

The Chairperson gave an Acknowledgment of Country.

3. Apologies

Cr Brandi Morris	Councillor
Samantha Corrie	Community Representative
Sasha Bryan	Community Representative
Sam Romaszko	Director City Futures

4. Declaration of Interest and/or Conflict of Interest

Nil

5. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Heritage Advisory Committee ratified the out-of-session confirmation of the Minutes of the Heritage Advisory Committee Meeting held on 12 May 2026 and received by Council at the Scheduled Meeting held 22 June 2026.

6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

6.1 Post-war Thematic Environmental History

Officers presented a project update including an overview of consultation outcomes, key themes and next steps.

A hardcopy of the 'City of Melton Post-War History Phase 1 – Consultation Summary' document was distributed.

It was noted that the project team is open to receiving further information or feedback in relation to the project, with the committee encouraged to contact the Committee Manager or Governance should they wish to provide any additional information.

6.2 Heritage Assistance Grant

Officers presented an overview of the Heritage Assistance Grant assessment procedure.

Officers provided clarification in relation to timeframes for funding and activities funded by the grant, assessment criteria, funding value and criteria for completion of works.

The committee discussed a desire to be briefed on the Heritage Assistance Grant applications, and for further clarification for potential involvement of the committee on this matter.

Actions:

Officers will advise the committee ahead of the next scheduled Heritage Advisory Committee meeting how the heritage grants are to be administered under Council's new Grants Policy and Guidelines.

6.3 Heritage Festival

Peter Minard, Local and Family History Librarian, provided an overview of the 2026 Heritage Festival, how the events were arranged and next steps for the 2027 Heritage Festival.

The committee discussed ideas for the next heritage festival and noted an interest in further participating in these discussions once the EOI process for the 2027 Heritage Festival has commenced.

7. Standing Agenda Items

7.1 Member Updates

Cr Ramsey shared an excerpt of a poem entitled 'Little Town Called Melton' by Glen R. Gash.

Action:

The committee requested a copy of the poem be circulated to members.

8. General Business

8.1 Proposed Meeting Schedule 2027

The committee discussed general timing of future meetings to assist with forward planning.

The committee identified a preference for in person meetings with hybrid availability, on Tuesday evenings from 6pm. Further, it was suggested a survey be issued to capture feedback or preference for all committee members.

Action:

Governance to issue a survey to committee members regarding meeting preferences.

9. Next Meeting

Date: 1 December 2026
Time: 3.45pm – 5.45pm
Venue: Melton Library and Learning Hub, Corr Training Room, 31 McKenzie Street Melton

10. Close of Business

The meeting closed at 4.48pm.

CITY OF Melton

Minutes

Disability Advisory Committee

Held on Thursday, 20 August 2026
12:30PM
Melton Learning and Library Hub, Grant-Pyke Room

Members In Attendance:	Cr Lara Carli	Mayor (Chair)
	Cr Juile Shannon	Councillor
	Claudine Agathe	Community Representative
	Hayley Sayers	Community Representative
	Andrew Power	Community Representative
	Linda Campbell	Community Representative
	Ravindaur Kaur	Organisational Representative
Officers In Attendance:	Aaron Tan	Coordinator Community Wellbeing & Inclusion
	Nicole Migani-Roberts	Advocacy & Inclusion Officer
	Matthew Hutchinson	Design & Investigations Coordinator
	Dominique Roberts	Executive Assistant
Guests In Attendance:	Susan Beniston	Coordinator Economic Development & Tourism
	Levi Phipps	Head of Major Project Delivery
	Jodie Walker	Project Officer
Quorum:	A quorum must be achieved for a meeting to commence. A quorum requires 2 Councillors, and 8 community representatives must be present	
Chairperson:	Cr Lara Carli	Councillor (Mayor)
Minute Taker:	Dominique Roberts	Executive Assistant

1. Welcome

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 12.35pm and welcomed the Committee members and attendees.

2. Acknowledgement of Country

The Chairperson gave an Acknowledgment of Country.

3. Apologies

Cr Kathy Majdlik	Councillor
Cr Sophie Ramsey	Councillor
Roslyn Wai	CEO
Troy Scoble	Director City Life
Coral Crameri	Manager Community Care and Active Living

4. Declaration of Interest and/or Conflict of Interest

Nil.

5. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Disability Advisory Committee ratified the out-of-session confirmation of the Minutes of the Disability Advisory Committee Meeting held on 18 June 2026 and received by Council at the Scheduled Meeting held 27 July 2026.

6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

6.1 Arts and Craft activities/Programs available in the municipality

The committee were provided an updated on a range of Arts and Craft activities within the City of Melton. Officers provided the committee with a hard copy handout of activities and informed that a digital copy will be distributed.

7. Standing Agenda Items

7.1 Accessible Melton Map

The Committee received a presentation on the updated Accessible Melton Map, delivered through the Melton Town Centre Improving Accessibility Project and funded under the Melton Revitalisation Project.

The project included accessibility assessments for participating businesses and training on accessibility, neurodiversity, and digital inclusion. The updated map, originally developed eight years ago, provides information on accessible pathways, parking, toilets (including Changing Places facilities), seating, public transport, and key services.

Promotion of the map will be supported through QR code Braille plaques, posters, shopfront decals, Council digital screens, social media, and EDMs.

The committee provided some additional items for consideration.

7.2 Nominations for Business Excellence Award – Disability inclusion Initiative

Officers provided an update on the Business Excellence Award – Disability Inclusion Initiative, advising that three finalists have been identified. The Committee was advised that an invitation to attend the award presentation will be distributed to DAC members, with additional tickets available for purchase. The award presentation will be held on 16 September at WestWaters.

7.3 Update of Sensory Space at Fraser Rise Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Officers provided an update on the sensory spaces being developed at the Fraser Rise Aquatic and Leisure Centre (working title), including an overview of the multi-use sensory space and sensory pool, which is to be the first of its kind in Australia.

The design has been developed to support a wide range of sensory needs, incorporating elements related to touch, sight, hearing, smell, vestibular and proprioceptive senses. Accessibility has been a key focus throughout the design, with DDA-friendly features, accessible parking, disability vehicle access, and pathways designed to support different levels.

The sensory pool is intended to provide a safe and supportive environment for people with additional needs. The facility will also include sensory pathways and transitional spaces to support regulation and comfort before entering the pool environment.

The Committee discussed accessibility features, including pool access, handrails, arrival experiences and safety considerations.

The Committee are excited by the project and requested that this item be included as a standing agenda item to receive ongoing updates as the project progresses.

7.4 Melton Care Expo

The Committee received an update on planning for the 2026 Melton Care Expo, including a recap of last year's event and progress on this year's expo.

Officers advised that Expressions of Interest have closed, with 35 service providers registered to participate.

Presentations from Carers Victoria, IPC Health and Services Australia are planned, with sessions of approximately 30 minutes each. Auslan interpreters and a hearing loop will be available to support accessibility.

The Committee was advised that the venue for the October meeting will be changed to Cobblebank Stadium to coincide with the CARE Expo.

8. General Business

Nil.

9. Next Meeting

Date: 15 October 2026
Time: 12:30PM – 2.30PM
Venue: Cobblebank Stadium, 14 Stadium Drive, Cobblebank.

10. Close of Business

The meeting closed at 1:40PM.

CITY OF Melton

Policy Review Panel Minutes

3 September 2026

Minutes of the Policy Review Panel
Meeting of the Melton City Council

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MELTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL MEETING OF THE
MELTON CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON
3 SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 9:30 AM

Present:	Cr Lara Carli, Mayor (Chair)	
	Cr Kathy Majdlik	
	Cr Julie Shannon	
	Cr Sophie Ramsey	
In Attendance:	Roslyn Wai	Chief Executive Officer
	Emily Keogh	Head of Governance
	Renee Hodgson	Manager Governance
	Lauren Wall	Manager Communications
	Troy Delia	Senior Coordinator Governance

1. WELCOME

The Chair, Cr Carli, opened the meeting at 9.34am and welcomed the Panel Members.

2. APOLOGIES

Nil.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND / OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Policy Review Panel noted the Minutes of the Policy Review Panel meeting held on 6 August 2026 and adopted by Council at the Scheduled Meeting held on 24 August 2026.

5. OTHER BUSINESS CARRIED OVER FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil.

6. PRESENTATION OF STAFF REPORTS

6.1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE - MID TERM REVIEW

Responsible Officer: **Emily Keogh - Head of Governance**

Document Author: **Troy Delia - Senior Coordinator Governance**

Recommendation:

That the Policy Review Panel recommend that Council:

1. Approve the amended Standardised Advisory Committee Terms of Reference template provided as **Appendix 1** to this report; and
2. Apply the amendments indicated in **Appendix 1**, to the existing Terms of References for the following advisory committees:
    a. Arts and Culture Advisory Committee
    b. Disability Advisory Committee
    c. Heritage Advisory Committee
    d. Intercultural Advisory Committee
    e. Melton Weir Development Committee
    f. Preventing Family Violence Advisory Committee
    g. Safe City Advisory Committee
    h. Youth Advisory Committee

Motion

Crs Majdlik/Ramsey.

That the Policy Review Panel recommend that Council:

1. Approve the amended Standardised Advisory Committee Terms of Reference template provided as **Appendix 1** to this report; and
2. Apply the amendments indicated in **Appendix 1**, to the existing Terms of References for the following advisory committees:
    a. Arts and Culture Advisory Committee
    b. Disability Advisory Committee
    c. Heritage Advisory Committee
    d. Intercultural Advisory Committee
    e. Melton Weir Development Committee
    f. Preventing Family Violence Advisory Committee
    g. Safe City Advisory Committee
    h. Youth Advisory Committee

CARRIED

1. Background

1.1 The Terms of Reference

This report recommends that the Policy Review Panel consider the proposal to amend the standardised Terms of Reference template for Council's Advisory Committees, to address several issues that have been identified during a mid-term review.

To ensure consistency, transparency, and alignment with best practices, a standardised template for Advisory Committee governance was developed and adopted by Council at its meeting of 24 March 2025.

Whilst its implementation has streamlined governance processes, promoted uniformity across advisory committees, and enhanced operational effectiveness, a mid-term review of the Advisory Committee Terms of Reference Template was undertaken in consultation with all of the relevant committee managers to ascertain if there are any improvements that can be made to improve the effectiveness of the Advisory Committees.

As part of the review process, the most significant issue that was identified is the difficulty the committees are having in achieving quorum for meetings, due to the strict quorum requirements outlined in the current Terms of Reference template.

The standardised Terms of Reference template was implemented to establish a consistent framework for Melton City Council Advisory Committees. The template aims to enhance clarity, uniformity, and best governance practices whilst aligning with widely accepted principles for structuring advisory committee documents. This approach ensures that advisory committees operate under a shared set of guidelines, fostering improved governance and efficiency.

However, since the Terms of Reference template was implemented, it has been noted that even in situations where more than 50% of the committee's membership are present for a meeting, a quorum may still not be achieved if there is not at least 50% of members from each member category present. This requirement can be even more challenging for the committees that only have 1x organisational representative appointed.

Section 2.3(e) of the current terms of reference states:

e. A quorum must be achieved for a meeting to commence. A quorum is at least 50% of each member category present, as detailed in the following table:

Total Members in a Category	Minimum Required for Quorum
e.g. 4 Councillor Representatives	2 must be present
e.g. 3 Councillor Representatives	2 must be present
e.g. 8 Community Representatives	4 must be present
e.g. 9 Community Representatives	5 must be present

The member categories that the above provision applies to include:

- Councillor representatives
- Organisational representatives
- Community representatives

There have been several instances where 50% or more of a committee's membership were either present or available to attend a scheduled meeting, but the meeting could not proceed because there was not 50% of the members from each category present. This has led to Advisory Committee meetings needing to be re-scheduled or cancelled, sometimes at the time when the meeting was scheduled to commence, with many of the members already present.

The Governance team have implemented additional processes, proactively confirming member availability and commitment to attend in the days preceding the meeting, advising the Chair of the Committee of the expected attendance, and, in cases where it appears that quorum may not be met, follow up contact with any members who have not indicated a response to the meeting invitation. Whilst this does help to ascertain if it is likely that the meeting will achieve a quorum, it does not provide a guarantee that everyone that has confirmed their attendance will be present on the day.

It has also been identified that the way the current Terms of Reference is written, the number of appointed members, not the number of current members is used to calculate the requirements for a quorum.

To address these issues, it is proposed the requirements to achieve a quorum under section 2.3(e) of the Terms of Reference as provided in **Appendix 1**, be amended to state:

e. A quorum must be achieved for a meeting to commence. A quorum is at least 1 Councillor present and at least 50% of the remaining current membership present.

For further clarification it is also proposed that section 2.3 (f) be added, which states:

f. For the purposes of achieving a quorum, current membership does not include any unfilled organisational representative positions, or member vacancies arising from member resignations or loss of eligibility to be on the committee, in accordance with section 2.3 (b) above.

There are other minor amendments which were identified during the review and have been addressed in **Appendix 1**, which include:

- **Section 2 Membership**

  Amend the table in section 2 to delete row titled Melton City Council staff members.

  This proposed amendment allows the relevant Committee Manager / Sponsoring Member to manage the attendance of officers by inviting staff to the meetings when required.

- **Section 2.3 Attendance and Quorum**

  Amend section 2.3(b) to state: If a member anticipates being absent for **two** or more consecutive meetings and wishes to retain their membership, they should request a leave of absence. If a member misses **two** or more consecutive meetings without applying for a leave of absence **or submitting apologies**, the member will be withdrawn from the committee.

  This amendment ensures that those members that have still been in contact with the Council about not being able to attend for various reasons such as medical reasons or work rostering (especially applicable to organisational representatives from the health and or emergency services sectors) are not disadvantaged.

The proposed amendment of the Terms of Reference Template has also been modified to reflect Councils new branding and logo. If adopted by Council, the amended Terms of Reference Template will enhance the operational effectiveness of the committees, ensuring that Council's Advisory Committees can convene and function in a more efficient manner.

1.2 Consultation

All relevant committee managers were consulted to ascertain if there were any improvements that can be made to the Terms of Reference to improve the effectiveness of the Advisory Committees.

1.3 Communication and Implementation

It is proposed that, if adopted by Council, the amendments to the Standardised Terms of Reference template would be applied to all future Advisory Committees established by Council. Further to this, the amendments would also be applied immediately to the existing Terms of References for the following Advisory Committees:

- Arts and Culture Advisory Committee
- Disability Advisory Committee
- Heritage Advisory Committee
- Intercultural Advisory Committee
- Melton Weir Development Committee
- Preventing Family Violence Advisory Committee
- Safe City Advisory Committee
- Youth Advisory Committee

To ensure an effective and timely rollout of the amended Terms of Reference, if adopted by Council, the relevant Terms of References will be updated on Council's website and all relevant Advisory Committee managers will be provided with a copy of their amended Terms of Reference in the days following the Council meeting.

1.4 Compliance

Under the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), councils have the authority to establish advisory committees to support decision-making. While these committees do not hold formal decision-making powers, they play a crucial advisory role in guiding Council. Although the Act does not explicitly outline governance requirements for advisory committees, they are typically governed by a Terms of Reference.

1.5 Measures of Success

The success of the implementation of the amended Advisory Committee Terms of Reference will be measured by the number of Advisory Committee Meetings being able to achieve quorum.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Advisory Committees Template 2026 - Proposed Amendments - with Policy Review Panel changes
2. Advisory Committees Template 2026 - Proposed Amendments - Tracked Changes
3. Advisory Committees Template - Original

CITY OF Melton

<Name of Committee> Terms of Reference

Date Adopted:	[insert Date]
Adopted by:	Council
Review date:	[Click to edit date – 00 Month Date]
Responsible officer:	[insert position title]
Records reference:	[insert reference]

This template contains instructions in **grey** shading to assist in its completion.

1. Purpose

<Provide a clear and concise statement of the purpose of this Terms of Reference. Describe the key objectives, scope, and expected outcomes.>

For example: The [Committee Name] serves as an advisory body to Melton City Council, providing recommendations, insights, and guidance on matters within its designated scope. The committee works to enhance community engagement, inform policy decisions, and support the Council in addressing key issues affecting residents and the community. Through research, discussion, and collaboration, the committee aims to represent diverse perspectives, promote transparency, and contribute to the overall well-being and development of the City of Melton.

a. <INSERT TEXT HERE>

2. Membership

Membership of the Committee will be composed of between *<insert member numbers e.g. 3-8>* members at any one time.

Membership of the Committee will include:

a. A minimum of two (2) Councillors
b. A minimum of three (3) and a maximum of eight (8) community representatives with a combination of relevant skills, networks and interests
c. Organisation Representatives *(delete if not applicable)*
d. The sponsoring Member of the Executive Leadership Team and/or relevant Manager or staff member/s.

Position/ Panel Member Type	No. of Positions	Type of Appointment *(Appointed, ex-officio)*	Term
Chair (Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor. Refer to section 2.2(a))	1	Appointed	Annually, as appointed by Council
Councillor (not including the Chair)	*please specify number*	Appointed	Annually, as appointed by Council
Reserve Councillor The Reserve Councillor does not hold official standing unless the Chair or nominated Councillor representative is absent or otherwise unavailable.	1	Appoint	Annually, as appointed by Council
Sponsoring Member *Executive Leadership Team Member / Manager / Staff member*	1	Ex-officio	Ongoing

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Community Representative	*(please specify)*	Appointed	In line with Council Term, concluding in June prior to Local Government Elections
Organisation Representatives *(insert position and organisation, if applicable)*	*Please specify*	Appointed	In line with Council Term, concluding in June prior to Local Government Elections

2.1 Method of Appointment

2.1.1 Recruitment of Community Representatives

a. The process for appointing community representatives will be as follows:

i. The Council will publicly advertise opportunities for community representatives to apply, requiring them to demonstrate how they meet the key selection criteria.

ii. When appropriate, the Council may invite representatives from specific organisations to join the Committee, ensuring subject matter expertise.

iii. Consideration for membership is given to individuals with relevant experience and/or interests.

iv. Consideration will be given to ensuring committee representatives are selected to reflect the geographic and demographic nature of the committee.

b. Selection of community representatives is based on the following selection criteria:

i. Reside, work, study, or volunteer in the City of Melton and be at least 16 years old (with the exception of the Youth Advisory Committee, where members must be at least 12 years old).

ii. Demonstrated leadership and relationship-building skills or a willingness to develop them.

iii. Relevant knowledge and experience in the portfolio area.

iv. Strong community connections with the ability to engage a broad range of perspectives.

v. Willingness to contribute constructively in an advisory capacity to the Council.

vi. Formal acceptance of the Terms of Reference and Confidentiality Agreement.

vii. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of the City of Melton are strongly encouraged to apply.

viii. Applications from individuals with a disability are strongly encouraged.

Once applications are received and the closing date has passed, candidates will be assessed against the selection criteria and the need for a diverse and balanced membership. Appointments will be made by Council based on the advice given by a panel composing of ~~the Chair of the Committee and~~ Council staff with expertise in the particular subject matter.

Membership is granted to individuals in their personal capacity rather than as representatives of any group or organisation unless specifically recruited for that purpose.

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2.1.2 Term of Appointment

a. The appointment aligns with each Council Term, concluding in June prior to Local Government Elections.

b. Committee members may reapply for one additional consecutive term.

c. No member can serve more than a total of two consecutive terms.

d. A Committee member may resign at any time by providing written notice to the Chair, Mayor or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

e. Council Officers may terminate a Committee member's appointment, declare the position vacant and seek a replacement if the member breaches these Terms of Reference.

f. If the number of Committee members falls below the required minimum to meet a quorum due to resignation, Council will appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term.

g. The Council may consider previous nominations from the same nomination period when filling a vacancy or re-advertise the position.

2.2 Chair

a. If the Mayor is a member of the Advisory Committee, the Mayor will automatically assume the role of the Chair. If the Mayor is not a member of the Advisory Committee and the Deputy Mayor is, the Deputy Mayor will serve as Chair. In all other cases, Council will appoint a Councillor representative as Chair. Meetings will be led by the Chair.

b. If the Chair is unable to attend a meeting, the Chair will nominate a Councillor Representative to undertake the role of the Chair.

c. The Chair is responsible for fostering a collaborative approach to discussions held throughout the meeting.

d. The Chair shall not permit any motion, question, or statement that is derogatory or defamatory toward any Councillor, Committee Member, Council staff member, or community representative.

e. The Chair has the responsibility to maintain order by addressing any individual who is disruptive or unruly during a meeting.

If a reserve Councillor has been nominated by Council, it should be noted that this is not a formally recognised role. While the reserve Councillor may attend and participate in meetings, they do not hold official standing unless the Chair or nominated Councillor representative is absent or otherwise unavailable. In the instance that the Chair is unavailable, the reserve Councillor may be required to chair committee meetings and perform other duties on behalf of the Committee as appropriate.

2.3 Attendance and Quorum

a. Members who are unable to attend a meeting ~~should~~ must submit their apologies to the Committee Chair.

b. If a member anticipates being absent for two or more consecutive meetings and wishes to retain their membership, they should request a leave of absence. If a member (including a Councillor) misses two or more consecutive meetings without applying for a leave of absence or submitting apologies, the member will be withdrawn from the committee.

c. Leave of absence requests must be submitted to the Committee Chair and will be presented to the Committee for a decision.

d. The Committee shall not unreasonably deny a leave of absence request.

e. A quorum must be achieved for a meeting to commence. A quorum is at least 1 Councillor present and at least 50% of the remaining current membership present.

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3. Meeting Guidelines

a. Meetings will be held monthly/quarterly/biannually/annually.

b. Meetings will be limited to a duration of *(insert)* hours.

c. Meetings may be conducted either in person or online.

d. The Committee will operate in an advisory capacity to Council. While the Council values the Committee's contributions and input, it is not a decision-making body. Council considers information from a broad range of stakeholders before making decisions.

e. The Committee does not have the authority to direct Council Officers in their duties.

f. Committee members shall not publicly comment on behalf of the group or advocate for the interests of individual organisations.

g. Council will provide the necessary support for the Committee's effective functioning, including maintaining member contact details, preparing and distributing agendas, minutes, and pre-meeting materials.

4. Agendas and Minutes

A standardised agenda template and minutes template must be used for all Committee meetings. These templates will be provided by Governance to ensure consistency and accuracy in meeting documentation.

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The staff member responsible for preparing agendas and minutes, in consultation with the Chair, will determine agenda items, focusing on matters relevant to Council policies, programs, and strategic objectives.

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Committee members are required to disclose any Conflict of Interest in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. If a Committee Member has a general conflict of interest *(*as defined in *Section 127 of the Act)* or a material conflict of interest (as defined in *Section 128 of the Act*) regarding an item under discussion, they must disclose it to the Chair. If a Conflict of Interest arises, the member must take the following steps:

a. Formally declare the conflict to the Chair and clearly outline the nature of their interest before the matter is discussed at the meeting.

b. Leave the room or online meeting and refrain from participating in any discussion or decision making related to the matter.

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Should the Chair declare a Conflict of Interest, a nominated Councillor Representative will assume the Chair for that item.

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7. Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed at the commencement of each Council term to ensure they remain relevant, effective, and aligned with the needs of the Committee and stakeholders. Council may also review and amend the Terms of Reference as necessary to reflect changing circumstances.

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~~Melton City Council staff members *(insert role)*~~	~~*Please specify*~~	~~Ex-officio~~	~~Ongoing~~

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Melton City Council staff members *(insert role)*	*Please specify*	Ex-officio	

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i. The Council will publicly advertise opportunities for community representatives to apply, requiring them to demonstrate how they meet the key selection criteria.

ii. When appropriate, the Council may invite representatives from specific organisations to join the Committee, ensuring subject matter expertise.

iii. Consideration for membership is given to individuals with relevant experience and/or interests.

iv. Consideration will be given to ensuring committee representatives are selected to reflect the geographic and demographic nature of the committee.

b. Selection of community representatives is based on the following selection criteria:

i. Reside, work, study, or volunteer in the City of Melton and be at least 16 years old (with the exception of the Youth Advisory Committee, where members must be at least 12 years old).

ii. Demonstrated leadership and relationship-building skills or a willingness to develop them.

iii. Relevant knowledge and experience in the portfolio area.

iv. Strong community connections with the ability to engage a broad range of perspectives.

v. Willingness to contribute constructively in an advisory capacity to the Council.

vi. Formal acceptance of the Terms of Reference and Confidentiality Agreement.

vii. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of the City of Melton are strongly encouraged to apply.

viii. Applications from individuals with a disability are strongly encouraged.

Once applications are received and the closing date has passed, candidates will be assessed against the selection criteria and the need for a diverse and balanced membership. Appointments will be made by Council based on the advice given by a panel composing of the Chair of the Committee and Council staff with expertise in the particular subject matter.

Membership is granted to individuals in their personal capacity rather than as representatives of any group or organisation unless specifically recruited for that purpose.

2.1.2. Term of Appointment

a. The appointment aligns with each Council Term, concluding in June prior to Local Government Elections.

b. Committee members may reapply for one additional consecutive term.

c. No member can serve more than a total of two consecutive terms.

d. A Committee member may resign at any time by providing written notice to the Chair, Mayor or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

e. Council Officers may terminate a Committee member's appointment, declare the position vacant and seek a replacement if the member breaches these Terms of Reference.

f. If the number of Committee members falls below the required minimum to meet a quorum due to resignation, Council will appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term.

g. The Council may consider previous nominations from the same nomination period when filling a vacancy or re-advertise the position.

2.2. Chair

a. If the Mayor is a member of the Advisory Committee, the Mayor will automatically assume the role of the Chair. If the Mayor is not a member of the Advisory Committee and the Deputy Mayor is, the Deputy Mayor will serve as Chair. In all other cases, Council will appoint a Councillor representative as Chair. Meetings will be led by the Chair.

b. If the Chair is unable to attend a meeting, the Chair will nominate a Councillor Representative to undertake the role of the Chair.

c. The Chair is responsible for fostering a collaborative approach to discussions held throughout the meeting.

d. The Chair shall not permit any motion, question, or statement that is derogatory or defamatory toward any Councillor, Committee Member, Council staff member, or community representative.

e. The Chair has the responsibility to maintain order by addressing any individual who is disruptive or unruly during a meeting.

If a reserve Councillor has been nominated by Council, it should be noted that this is not a formally recognised role. While the reserve Councillor may attend and participate in meetings, they do not hold official standing unless the Chair or nominated Councillor representative is absent or otherwise unavailable. In the instance that the Chair is unavailable, the reserve Councillor may be required to chair committee meetings and perform other duties on behalf of the Committee as appropriate.

2.3. Attendance and Quorum

a. Members who are unable to attend a meeting should submit their apologies to the Committee Chair.

b. If a member anticipates being absent for three or more consecutive meetings and wishes to retain their membership, they should request a leave of absence. If a member misses three or more consecutive meetings without applying for a leave of absence, the member will be withdrawn from the committee.

c. Leave of absence requests must be submitted to the Committee Chair and will be presented to the Committee for a decision.

d. The Committee shall not unreasonably deny a leave of absence request.

e. A quorum must be achieved for a meeting to commence. A quorum is at least 50% of each member category present, as detailed in the following table:

Total Members in a Category	Minimum Required for Quorum
e.g. 4 Councillor Representatives	2 must be present
e.g. 3 Councillor Representatives	2 must be present
e.g. 8 Community Representatives	4 must be present
e.g. 9 Community Representatives	5 must be present

3. Meeting Guidelines

a. Meetings will be held monthly/quarterly/biannually/annually.

b. Meetings will be limited to a duration of *(insert)* hours.

c. Meetings may be conducted either in person or online.

d. The Committee will operate in an advisory capacity to Council. While the Council values the Committee's contributions and input, it is not a decision-making body. Council considers information from a broad range of stakeholders before making decisions.

e. The Committee does not have the authority to direct Council Officers in their duties.

f. Committee members shall not publicly comment on behalf of the group or advocate for the interests of individual organisations.

g. Council will provide the necessary support for the Committee's effective functioning, including maintaining member contact details, preparing and distributing agendas, minutes, and pre-meeting materials.

4. Agendas and Minutes

A standardised agenda template and minutes template must be used for all Committee meetings. These templates will be provided by Governance to ensure consistency and accuracy in meeting documentation.

Each Committee must designate a dedicated Council staff member who is a part of the committee, to be responsible for preparing agendas and recording minutes. Agendas and minutes must be distributed to Committee members in a timely manner.

The staff member responsible for preparing agendas and minutes, in consultation with the Chair, will determine agenda items, focusing on matters relevant to Council policies, programs, and strategic objectives.

Minutes are presented to Council for receiving and to consider adopting any recommendations made by the committees. The dedicated person for recording minutes must ensure accuracy of minutes prior to presentation to Council.

To ensure transparency in Committee operations, Advisory Committee Minutes will be published in the Council Meeting papers.

5. Conflicts of Interest

Committee members are required to disclose any Conflict of Interest in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. If a Committee Member has a general conflict of interest *(*as defined in *Section 127 of the Act)* or a material conflict of interest (as defined in *Section 128 of the Act*) regarding an item under discussion, they must disclose it to the Chair. If a Conflict of Interest arises, the member must take the following steps:

a. Formally declare the conflict to the Chair and clearly outline the nature of their interest before the matter is discussed at the meeting.

b. Leave the room or online meeting and refrain from participating in any discussion or decision making related to the matter.

c. The disclosure and the actions taken must be recorded in the meeting minutes to ensure transparency and accountability.

Should the Chair declare a Conflict of Interest, a nominated Councillor Representative will assume the Chair for that item.

6. Confidentiality and Privacy

Any information discussed, received, used, or created by the Committee should be treated as confidential. Committee members must not disclose any information they know or should reasonably know is confidential, in accordance with *Section 125* of the *Local Government Act 2020.*

Members are also prohibited from disclosing, recording, retaining, or reproducing confidential information in any form.

If the meeting is held online, or in a hybrid format (both online and in person), the Chair must seek confirmation from online attendees that they are joining from a confidential space where no one, other than them, can see or hear proceedings of the meeting.

In cases where confidential information is recorded in the minutes and necessary to provide context for a specific component of the minutes, it must be redacted before distribution or publication to ensure privacy and compliance with confidentiality requirements.

The Council may appoint members to a Committee without publicly disclosing their names if doing so could reasonably be expected to endanger their life or physical safety. In such cases, their names will be redacted from publicly available documents, including meeting minutes.

7. Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed at the commencement of each Council term to ensure they remain relevant, effective, and aligned with the needs of the Committee and stakeholders. Council may also review and amend the Terms of Reference as necessary to reflect changing circumstances.

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Lauren Wall joined the meeting at 10.15am.

6.2 COUNCILLOR SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Responsible Officer: **Emily Keogh - Head of Governance**

Document Author: **Ness Flett - Digital Communications Specialist**

Recommendation:

That the Policy Review Panel recommend Council approve the Councillor Social Media Policy provided as **Appendix 1** and retire the Online Engagement Policy as **Appendix 4** to this report.

Motion
Crs Shannon/Ramsey.
That the Policy Review Panel recommend Council approve the Councillor Social Media Policy provided as **Appendix 1** and retire the Online Engagement Policy as **Appendix 4** to this report.
CARRIED

1. Background

The Councillor Social Media Policy has been reviewed to ensure it reflects contemporary social media practices, current governance requirements and the responsibilities of Councillors when communicating and engaging with the community online.

The review forms part of a broader update to Council's social media governance framework, alongside the development of the Corporate Social Media Policy. Together, these policies provide clearer governance for Councillor and employee use of social media and enable the superseded Online Engagement Policy **(Appendix 4)** to be retired.

1.1 The Policy

The Councillor Social Media Policy provides principles and expectations for Councillors when using social media in connection with their role as elected representatives.

The existing policy was adopted in 2021 and contained provisions that no longer fully reflected contemporary social media practices or Council's current communications and governance arrangements.

The refreshed policy has been developed as a principles-based governance document, with key changes including:

- stronger alignment with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- clearer distinction between Councillor and Council officer responsibilities
- recognition of Council's corporate communication channels as the primary source of official Council information
- a 'Council First' approach to the release of information and subsequent sharing of official Council information
- strengthened provisions relating to confidential and restricted Council information
- clearer distinction between personal social media activity and activity undertaken in a Councillor capacity

- contemporary definitions and expectations relating to online behaviours, including cyberbullying, doxing, dogpiling, impersonation and other harmful online conduct
- recognition of Council's use of approved social media management and monitoring tools to support moderation, customer service and organisational risk management
- clearer pathways for managing alleged breaches through the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and existing governance processes.

The review also considered relevant provisions of the Online Engagement Policy. Contemporary provisions have been incorporated into the Councillor Social Media Policy or Corporate Social Media Policy, while outdated, duplicated and procedural content has been removed. This enables the Online Engagement Policy to be retired following adoption of the replacement policies.

1.2 Sources/benchmarking

The policy has been developed with reference to the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) Model Councillor Social Media Policy and benchmarked against contemporary Councillor social media policies from:

- City of Port Phillip
- Banyule City Council
- City of Whittlesea
- Horsham Rural City Council.

Benchmarking common approaches to Councillor conduct, personal and Councillor social media activity, confidentiality, community engagement, operational enquiries and alignment with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

The Melton City Council Councilor Social Media Policy has been adapted to reflect Council's own communications and governance framework, including the 'Council First' approach to official Council information and clearer separation between Councillor communication and Council's responsibility for operational communication.

1.3 Consultation

The policy has been developed in consultation with Council's Communications and Governance teams.

The draft policy was presented to the Executive Leadership Team for review and feedback, with amendments incorporated to strengthen governance provisions and clarify expectations for Councillors.

Councillors were subsequently briefed on the proposed policy and provided with an opportunity to review and give feedback prior to consideration by the Policy Review Panel.

Feedback received throughout the consultation process has informed the final policy presented for endorsement.

1.4 Communication and Implementation

Following Council approval, the Councillor Social Media Policy will be communicated to all Councillors and made available through Council's established policy channels.

Communications and Governance teams will provide advice and guidance to Councillors regarding interpretation and application of the policy as required.

Implementation will occur alongside the Corporate Social Media Policy to establish a consistent social media governance framework across Council.

1.5 Compliance

Councillors are responsible for ensuring their use of social media is consistent with the Councillor Social Media Policy, the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, the Local Government Act 2020 and other relevant legislative and Council requirements.

The policy establishes clear expectations relating to conduct, confidentiality, official Council information and the respective responsibilities of Councillors and Council officers.

Alleged breaches of the policy may be managed through the processes established under the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, Governance Rules and relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 2020.

1.6 Measures of Success

Successful implementation of the policy will be demonstrated through:

- Councillors having access to clear and contemporary guidance regarding appropriate social media use
- improved clarity regarding the respective communication responsibilities of Councillors and Council officers
- consistent application of the 'Council First' approach to official Council information
- appropriate handling of confidential and restricted Council information
- reduced duplication across Council's social media governance documents
- social media matters and enquiries being appropriately referred and managed through established Council processes
- the policy remaining aligned with legislative requirements, the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and contemporary social media practices through scheduled review.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Councillor Social Media Policy 2026 - with Policy Review Panel changes
2. Councillor Social Media Poilcy 2026 - Draft tracked changes
3. Councillor Social Media Policy - Current
4. Online Engagement Policy

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Councillor Social Media Policy

Date adopted	<insert date>
Adopted by	Council
Review due	<insert date> Two years from Adoption Date if not specified in the Policy
Responsible officer	Manager Communications and Manager Governance
Records reference	9197635

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Councillor Social Media Policy is to provide guidance for Councillors on the appropriate use of social media, to enhance how Councillors communicate with our residents and stakeholders, and to support their representative role. This policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of Councillors when using social media, supports compliance with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, recognises the Mayor as Council's official spokesperson, and reinforces Council's role as the primary source of official information.

2. Application And Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors when using social media:

a. in their role as a Councillor;

b. when discussing Council business, Council decisions, Council services or Council related matters; or

c. when personal social media activity may reasonably be connected to their role as a Councillor, when using social media in a personal capacity, Councillors must make it clear that any opinions or views expressed are their own and do not represent the views, decisions or official position of Council.

This policy does not seek to limit robust public debate or a Councillor's right to express personal opinion, provided it is done consistently with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and applicable legislation.

3. General Provisions

3.1. Principles

Councillors play an important role in communicating with and engaging the community through social media. When using social media, Councillors are expected to:

a. act respectfully, professionally, and in good faith;

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b. support transparency and accountability in public communication;

c. maintain public confidence in Council and local government;

d. comply with applicable legislation, Council policies and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct;

e. exercise sound judgement when participating in online discussions;

f. amplify and support Council's opportunities, events, and initiatives that may benefit the community;

g. take reasonable steps to ensure that any information shared about Council is accurate, current and consistent with official Council information before publishing; and

h. adopt a 'Council First' approach by ensuring official Council information is communicated through Council's authorised channels in the first instance, and that any subsequent sharing or commentary aligns with Council's Communications Strategy and approved messaging.

3.2. Council communications

Council's corporate communication channels are the primary source of official Council information and announcements relating to Council decisions, services, projects, events, opportunities, programs, operational matters and emergency communications.

Official Council information and announcements must, in all circumstances, be communicated through Council's authorised corporate communication channels in the first instance to ensure communications are released at the appropriate time and in accordance with Council's planned communications approach.

Councillors are encouraged to share, repost and amplify information published through Council's corporate communication channels and may provide additional context or commentary to support community understanding.

3.3. Community enquiries and operational matters

Council officers are responsible for responding on behalf of the organisation regarding operational matters, service requests, customer enquiries, complaints, regulatory matters and emergency management information.

Councillors who receive operational enquiries through social media should refer community members to the appropriate corporate communication channels.

Councillors are encouraged not to solicit customer enquiries or otherwise encourage members of the public to bypass Council's corporate communication channels.

Councillors must not communicate on behalf of Council regarding operational matters, as responsibility for operational decisions and communications rests with the Chief Executive Officer and authorised Council officers.

3.4. Social media activity

Councillors are under no obligation to maintain a social media presence.

Councillors who choose to maintain a social media presence must clearly distinguish between any personal social media activity and content shared or published in their capacity as a Councillor.

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Where Councillors elect to have a social media presence, Councillors should be mindful that public comments may reasonably be associated with their role as an elected representative and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct applies at all times.

3.5. Confidential information

Councillors must not disclose confidential information (as defined in section 3 of the *Local Government Act 2020*), or information that should be treated as confidential as a matter of good governance, such as information that is not publicly available and has been obtained through a Councillor's role, including confidential Council reports, Councillor briefings, Councillor eNews, workshop materials and other restricted Council communications, unless authorised for release.

Where Councillors wish to publicly share Council information that has not already been communicated through Council's authorised corporate communication channels, they should first seek advice and approval from the Communications team to ensure the information is appropriate for release and aligns with Council's communications approach and timing.

The disclosure of confidential information by a Councillor can be deemed as a misuse of position in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

3.6. Standards of conduct

The Model Councillor Code of Conduct requires that Councillors act with integrity, exercise reasonable care and diligence and take reasonable steps to avoid any action which may diminish the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of local government.

This means if Councillors use social media, they must:

a. not post content which could be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of Council (noting that Councillors are free to link or re-post social media content that has been published by Council, including the addition of their own perspective or commentary);
b. not create a social media presence purporting to represent a Council auspiced entity, such as an advisory committee, steering committee or similar;
c. not use Melton City Council branding, including the Council logo, in personal social media posts unless authorised by Council.
d. not post anonymously, or by using a fake or intentionally misleading identity;
e. not engage in trolling, harassment, personal attacks or similar behaviour;
f. not intentionally publish misinformation, falsehoods or misleading material;
g. not engage in doxing;
h. not engage in bullying, harassment, discrimination, vilification or intimidation;
i. not publish any defamatory comments or material;
j. respect privacy, confidentiality and copyright obligations;
k. not solicit any gifts, benefits or financial gain;
l. not engage any social media platform tools or applications that are designed to solicit any benefits or financial gain from followers, subscribers or the like; and
m. not publish any content whatsoever, that may reasonably bring Council into disrepute.

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Councillors must not post content on any social media account held by a Councillor or in response to a post on an account owned by someone else that, if posted, would be contrary to the Model Councillor Code of Conduct in that it:

a. could reasonably be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of Council where the Councillor has not been authorised by the mayor to make such a comment;
b. is demeaning, abusive, obscene, threatening or of a sexual nature;
c. intentionally causes or perpetuates stigma, stereotyping, prejudice or aggression against a person or class of persons;
d. constitutes discrimination or vilification;
e. undermines Council when applying Council's community engagement policy to develop respectful relationships and partnerships with traditional owners, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, and the Aboriginal community;
f. undermines Council in fulfilling its obligation under the *Local Government Act 2020* or any other Act (including the *Gender Equality Act 2020*) to achieve and promote gender equality;
g. is not in line with the council's policies and procedures as a child safe organisation and obligations under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* to the extent that they apply to Councillors;
h. adversely affects the health and safety of other persons;
i. would bring discredit upon Council;
j. would deliberately mislead Council or the public about any matter related to the performance of the Councillor's public duties;
k. makes Council information publicly available, where public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest or where the information should be treated as confidential as a matter of good governance (for example, working papers or drafts of final reports);
l. expressly or impliedly requests preferential treatment for themselves or a related person or entity;
m. is otherwise contrary to the Model Councillor Code of Conduct or Council's Social Media Terms of Use.

3.7. Risk management

Risks for Councillors in relation to Councillor social media use include:

a. exposure to trolling, cyberbullying and other abusive behaviour;
b. the creation of a platform for the dissemination of misinformation;
c. the creation of an expectation of constant availability of a Councillor;
d. inadvertently disclosing confidential information;
e. an exposure to legal liability;
f. the application of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct to Councillor social media activities; and
g. the perception that Councillor comments on social media demonstrate a preconceived bias in relation to a forthcoming Council decision.

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Risks for Council in relation to Councillor social media use include:

a. reputational risk arising from inappropriate social media posts and activity of Councillors;

b. community uncertainty as to what is an official Council policy or position, and whether statements made on social media by a Councillor are made on behalf of Council or not;

c. misleading communication to the community if inaccurate statements are posted or published by a Councillor on social media; and

d. Councillors not dealing appropriately with service requests and similar received from community members via Councillor social media accounts.

3.8. Breaches

Alleged breaches of this policy may be managed through the processes outlined in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, Governance Rules and relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

3.9. Legislative and Policy Compliance

Councillors are responsible for ensuring their use of social media is consistent with:

a. the *Local Government Act 2020*;

b. the Model Councillor Code of Conduct;

c. this Policy; and

d. any other relevant Council policies and procedures.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Corporate Communication Channels	Official communication channels owned and managed by Melton City Council, including Council's website, social media channels and other authorised communication platforms.
Councillor Social Media Activity	The creation, publication, sharing, commenting on, moderation of, or interaction with, content by a Councillor on a social media platform in connection with their role as an elected representative.
Official Council Information	Information that has been authorised for public release through Council's approved communication channels.
Personal Content	Content published by a Councillor that is unrelated to Council business, Council services, Council decisions, Council activities, or their role as an elected representative.
Social Media	Online platforms and applications that enable users to create, publish, share, comment on, or interact with content and communities.

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Term	Definition
Cyberbullying	The use of digital technologies to harass, intimidate, threaten, humiliate or repeatedly target another person or group.
Doxing	Publishing or sharing another person's private or identifying information online without their consent, where it may expose them to harm, harassment or intimidation.
Harassment	Repeated or unreasonable behaviour directed towards another person that intimidates, threatens, humiliates or causes distress.
Hate Speech	Content that attacks, promotes hatred towards or encourages discrimination against a person or group based on protected attributes, including race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation or other characteristics protected by law.
Misinformation	False or misleading information shared with intent to deceive.
Disinformation	False or misleading information deliberately created or shared to deceive or influence others.
Trolling	Deliberately provoking, antagonising or disrupting users and organisations by posting inflammatory, offensive or intentionally provocative or excessive content online, including @tagging of accounts on private or public forums.
Council First	Official Council information, decisions, announcements and operational updates are communicated through Council's authorised channels before being shared through Councillors' social media channels.

5. Related Documents

Name	Location
Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)	Copyright Act 1968 - Federal Register of Legislation
Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)	Crimes Act 1958 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Defamation Act 2005 (Vic)	Defamation Act 2005 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)	Disability Discrimination Act 1992 - Federal Register of Legislation
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)	Equal Opportunity Act 2010 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Electronic Transactions (Victoria) Act 2000	Electronic Transactions (Victoria) Act 2000 | legislation.vic.gov.au

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Name	Location
Evidence Act 2008 (Vic)	Evidence Act 2008 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012 (Vic)	Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)	Fair Work Act 2009 - Federal Register of Legislation
Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)	Freedom of Information Act 1982 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)	Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 - Federal Register of Legislation
Local Government Act 2020	Local Government Act 2020 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020	Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)	Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Model Councillor Code of Conduct	Website: Model Councillor Code of Conduct
Governance Rules	Website: Governance Rules
Media Policy	Documents | Reports | Strategies Melton City Council
Social Media Terms of Use	Social Media Melton City Council
Privacy Policy	Documents | Reports | Strategies Melton City Council
Lew v Blacher [2024] VSCA 304	Supreme Court judgments

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Councillor Social Media Policy	
Date adopted	August 2026
Adopted by	Council
Review due	~~August, 2030~~ August 2028
Responsible officers	~~Digital Communications Specialist~~Manager Communications and ~~,~~Manager Governance
Records reference	9197635

1. PURPOSE

~~This policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of councillors when using social media, supports compliance with the model councillor code of conduct, and reinforces council's role as the primary source of official information.~~

The purpose of ~~this~~the~~is~~ Councillor Social Media Policy is to provide guidance for Councillors on the appropriate use of ~~using~~ social media, to enhance how Melton City Council communicates with our residents and stakeholders, and to support promotion of council projects and services.

This policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of Councillors when using social media, supports compliance with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, and reinforces Council's role as the primary source of official information.~~and to support respectful, transparent and accountable online engagement that maintains public trust and confidence in Council.~~

~~This policy clarifies the roles and responsibilities of Councillors when communicating through social media, supports compliance with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and recognises Council's role as the primary source of official organisational information.~~

2. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all Councillors when using social media:

a. ~~i~~In their role as a Councillor;~~.~~
b. ~~W~~when discussing Council business, Council decisions, Council services or Council related matters; or~~.~~
~~c.~~ when personal social media activity may reasonably be connected to their role as a Councillor~~.~~
c. ~~W~~when using social media in a personal capacity, Councillors must make it clear that any opinions or views expressed are their own and do not represent the views, decisions or official position of Council.

This policy does not seek to limit robust public debate or a Councillor's right to express personal opinion, provided it is done consistently with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and applicable legislation.

~~3. THIS POLICY DOES NOT SEEK TO LIMIT ROBUST PUBLIC DEBATE OR A COUNCILLOR'S RIGHT TO EXPRESS PERSONAL OPINION, PROVIDED IT IS DONE CONSISTENTLY WITH THE MODEL COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT AND APPLICABLE LEGISLATION.~~

4.3. GENERAL PROVISIONS

4.1.3.1. Principles

Councillors play an important role in communicating with and engaging the community through social media. When using social media, Councillors are expected to:

- a. ~~a~~act respectfully, professionally, and in good faith;
- b. ~~s~~support transparency and accountability in public communication;
- c. ~~m~~maintain public confidence in Council and local government;
- d. ~~c~~comply with applicable legislation, Council policies and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct;
- e. ~~e~~exercise sound judgement when participating in online discussions;
- f. ~~a~~amplify and support Council's opportunities, events, and initiatives that may benefit the community;~~.~~
- g. take reasonable steps to ensure that any information shared about Council is accurate, current and consistent with official Council information before publishing; and
- h. ~~a~~adopt a 'Council First' approach by ensuring official Council information is communicated through Council's authorised channels in the first instance, and that any subsequent sharing or commentary aligns with Council's Communications Strategy and approved messaging.

4.2.3.2. Council communications

Council's corporate communication channels are the primary source of official Council information and announcements relating to Council decisions, services, projects, events, opportunities, programs, operational matters and emergency communications.

Official Council information and announcements must, in all circumstances, be communicated through Council's authorised corporate communication channels in the first instance to ensure communications are released at the appropriate time and in accordance with Council's planned communications approach.

~~Under all circumstances, official Council information and announcements should be published first through the organisation's corporate communication channels to support accuracy, consistency and trust.~~

Councillors are encouraged to share, repost and amplify information published through Council's corporate communication channels and may provide additional context or commentary to support community understanding.

3.3. Community enquiries and operational matters

~~4.3.~~

Council officers are responsible for responding on behalf of the organisation regarding operational matters, service requests, customer enquiries, complaints, regulatory matters and emergency management information.

Councillors who receive operational enquiries through social media should refer community members to the appropriate ~~Council service area or official Council~~ corporate communication channels.

Councillors are encouraged not to solicit customer enquiries or otherwise encourage members of the public to bypass Council's corporate communication channels.

~~Speaking on behalf of operational matters~~

Councillors ~~should not~~must not ~~represent Council or~~ speak on ~~its~~ behalf of Council regarding operational matters, as responsibility for operational decisions and communications rests with the Chief Executive Officer and authorised Council officers.

~~Councillors must not represent themselves as speaking on behalf of Council.~~

4.4.3.4. ~~Personal and S~~Councillor ~~social~~ media activity

Councillors are under no obligation to maintain a social media presence.

Councillors who choose to maintain a social media presence ~~may use social media in both a personal capacity and in connection with their role as elected representatives.~~

~~Councillors~~ must clearly distinguish between any personal social media activity and content shared or published in their capacity as a Councillor.

Where ~~practical,~~ Councillors elect to have a ~~council related~~ social media presence, Councillors ~~are encouraged to maintain a dedicated social media presence for Councillor-related communication.~~

~~Regardless of the platform used, Councillors~~ should be mindful that public comments may reasonably be associated with their role as an elected representative and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct applies at all times.

~~4.5.~~3.5. Confidential information

Councillors must not disclose ~~c~~confidential ~~i~~information ~~obtained through their role as a Councillor.~~ (as defined in section 3 of the *Local Government Act 2020)*, or information that should be treated as confidential as a matter of good governance, such as information that is not publicly available and has been obtained through a Councillor's role, including confidential Council reports, Councillor briefings, Councillor eNews, workshop materials and other restricted Council communications, unless authorised for release.

~~Information distributed through confidential Council channels, including confidential reports, Councillor briefings, Councillor eNews, workshop materials and other restricted communications, must not be shared publicly unless authorised for release.~~

Where Councillors wish to publicly share Council information that has not already been communicated through Council's authorised corporate communication channels, they should first seek advice and approval from the Communications team to ensure the information is appropriate for release and aligns with Council's communications approach and timing.

The disclosure of confidential information by a Councillor can be deemed as a misuse of position in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020.*

~~Information distributed through confidential Council channels, including confidential reports, Councillor briefings, Councillor eNews, workshop materials and other restricted communications, must not be shared publicly unless authorised for release.~~

~~4.6.~~3.6. Standards of conduct

The Model Councillor Code of Conduct requires that Councillors act with integrity, exercise reasonable care and diligence and take reasonable steps to avoid any action which may diminish the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of local government.

This means if Councillors use social media, they must:

a. not post content which could be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of Council (noting that Councillors are free to link or re-post social media content that has been published by Council, including the addition of their own perspective or commentary);
b. not create a social media presence purporting to represent a Council auspiced entity, such as an advisory committee, steering committee or similar;

c. not post anonymously, or by using a fake or intentionally misleading identity;
d. not engage in trolling, harassment, personal attacks or similar behaviour;
e. not intentionally publish misinformation, falsehoods or misleading material;
f. not engage in doxing;
g. not engage in bullying, harassment, discrimination, vilification or intimidation;
h. not publish any defamatory comments or material;
i. respect privacy, confidentiality and copyright obligations;
j. not solicit any gifts, benefits or financial gain;
k. not engage any social media platform tools or applications that are designed to solicit any benefits or financial gain from followers, subscribers or the like; and
l. not publish any content whatsoever, that may reasonably bring Council into disrepute.

Councillors must not post content on any social media account held by a Councillor or in response to a post on an account owned by someone else that, if posted, would be contrary to the Model Councillor Code of Conduct in that it:

a. could reasonably be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of Council where the Councillor has not been authorised by the mayor to make such a comment;
b. is demeaning, abusive, obscene, threatening or of a sexual nature;
c. intentionally causes or perpetuates stigma, stereotyping, prejudice or aggression against a person or class of persons;
d. constitutes discrimination or vilification;
e. undermines Council when applying Council's community engagement policy to develop respectful relationships and partnerships with traditional owners, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, and the Aboriginal community;
f. undermines Council in fulfilling its obligation under the *Local Government Act 2020* or any other Act (including the *Gender Equality Act 2020*) to achieve and promote gender equality;
g. is not in line with the council's policies and procedures as a child safe organisation and obligations under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* to the extent that they apply to Councillors;
h. adversely affects the health and safety of other persons;
i. would bring discredit upon Council;
j. would deliberately mislead Council or the public about any matter related to the performance of the Councillor's public duties;
a.k. makes Council information publicly available, where public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest or where the information should be treated as confidential as a matter of good governance (for example, working papers or drafts of final reports);
l. expressly or impliedly requests preferential treatment for themselves or a related person or entity;
m. is otherwise contrary to the Model Councillor Code of Conduct or Council's Social Media Terms of Use.

Risk management and ~~When using social media, Councillors must:~~

- ~~comply with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct~~
- ~~comply with Council's Social Media Terms of Use~~
- ~~communicate respectfully with community members, Councillors and Council staff~~

- ~~not engage in bullying, harassment, discrimination, vilification or intimidation~~
- ~~not knowingly publish false, misleading or deceptive information~~
- ~~respect privacy, confidentiality and copyright obligations~~
- ~~not publish content that may reasonably bring Council into disrepute.~~

~~4.7.~~3.7. Risk Management

Risks for Councillors in relation to Councillor social media use include:

a. exposure to trolling, cyberbullying and other abusive behaviour;
b. the creation of a platform for the dissemination of misinformation;
c. the creation of an expectation of constant availability of a Councillor;
d. inadvertently disclosing confidential information;
e. an exposure to legal liability;
f. the application of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct to Councillor social media activities; and
g. the perception that Councillor comments on social media demonstrate a preconceived bias in relation to a forthcoming Council decision.

Risks for Council in relation to Councillor social media use include:

a. reputational risk arising from inappropriate social media posts and activity of Councillors;
b. community uncertainty as to what is an official Council policy or position, and whether statements made on social media by a Councillor are made on behalf of Council or not;
c. misleading communication to the community if inaccurate statements are posted or published by a Councillor on social media; and
d. Councillors not dealing appropriately with service requests and similar received from community members via Councillor social media accounts.

~~Council may utilise social media management tools to support publishing, analytics and reporting, moderation and customer enquiriesy and community sentiment, reputation management and organisational risk management.~~

~~Council may monitor publicly available social media content to identify and respond to matters that may affect the organisation, the community, or Council's reputation. Monitoring is limited to information that has been made publicly available and is undertaken using approved social media monitoring software that complies with applicable privacy legislation, Council's privacy obligatins and information security requirements. Where required, a Privacy Impact Assessment will be completed prior to the implementation of new monitoring technologies or significant changes to monitoring practices.~~

~~Monitoring activities may include identifying references to:~~

- ~~Council and related key words;~~
- ~~Councillors;~~
- ~~Council staff;~~
- ~~emerging community concerns; or~~
- ~~potential safety, legal or reputational risks.may ;~~

~~Monitoring activities may include identifying references to:~~

- ~~Council and related key words;~~
- ~~Councillors;~~
- ~~Council staff; and leadership~~
- ~~emerging community concerns; or~~
- ~~potential safety, legal or reputational risks.~~

~~4.8. Breaches~~

3.8 Breaches

Alleged breaches of this policy may be managed through the processes outlined in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, Governance Rules and relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

~~4.9.~~3.8. Legislative and Policy Compliance

Councillors are responsible for ensuring their use of social media is consistent with:

a. the *Local Government Act 2020*;
~~a.~~b. the Model Councillor Code of Conduct;
~~b.~~ this Ppolicy; and
c.
~~b.~~ any other relevant Council policies and procedures.

~~3.10. Purpose of Social Media or Community Engagement~~
~~Social media provides an important channel for Councillors to communicate and engage with the community. Councillors are encouraged to participate in online discussions in a manner that is respectful, transparent and consistent with their role as elected representatives.~~
~~3.11. Council as the Primary Communication Source~~

~~Council's corporate communication channels are the primary source of official Council information. Councillors are encouraged to share and amplify information published through Council's official channels and may provide additional context or commentary to support community understanding.~~
~~3.12. Roles and Responsibilities~~
~~Council officers are responsible for communicating and responding on behalf of the organisation regarding operational matters, service requests, complaints, customer enquiries and other matters relating to Council administration.~~
~~3.13. Confidential Information~~
~~Councillors must not disclose confidential information obtained through their role as a Councillor, including information distributed through confidential reports, briefings, workshops, Councillor eNews or other restricted Council communications.~~
~~3.14. Personal and Councillor Social Media Use~~
~~Councillors are encouraged to clearly distinguish between personal content and content shared in connection with their role as a Councillor. Where practical, Councillors should consider maintaining a dedicated social media presence for Councillor-related communication.~~

d.

~~5.~~

6.4. DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
~~Confidential Information~~	~~*Information* that is not publicly available and has been obtained through a Councillor's role, including confidential Council reports, Councillor briefings, Councillor eNews, workshop materials and other restricted Council communications.~~
~~Council~~ Corporate Communication Channels	Official communication channels owned and managed by Melton City Council, including Council's website, social media channels and other authorised communication platforms.

Councillor Social Media Activity	The creation, publication, sharing, commenting on, moderation of, or interaction with, content by a Councillor on a social media platform in connection with their role as an elected representative.
Official Council Information	Information that has been authorised for public release through Council's approved communication channels.
Personal Content	Content published by a Councillor that is unrelated to Council business, Council services, Council decisions, Council activities, or their role as an elected representative.
Social Media	Online platforms and applications that enable users to create, publish, share, comment on, or interact with content and communities.
Cyberbullying	The use of digital technologies to harass, intimidate, threaten, humiliate or repeatedly target another person or group.
Doxing	Publishing or sharing another person's private or identifying information online without their consent, where it may expose them to harm, harassment or intimidation.
Harassment	Repeated or unreasonable behaviour directed towards another person that intimidates, threatens, humiliates or causes distress.
Hate Speech	Content that attacks, promotes hatred towards or encourages discrimination against a person or group based on protected attributes, including race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation or other characteristics protected by law.
Misinformation	False or misleading information shared without intent to deceive.
Disinformation	False or misleading information deliberately created or shared to deceive or influence others.
Trolling	Deliberately provoking, antagonising or disrupting users and organisations by posting inflammatory, offensive or intentionally provocative or excessive content online, including @tagging of accounts on private or public forums.

~~7.~~5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Name	Location
Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)	~~www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act~~ Copyright Act 1968 - Federal Register of Legislation
Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)	~~CRIMES ACT 1958~~Crimes Act 1958 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Defamation Act 2005 (Vic)	~~DEFAMATION ACT 2005~~Defamation Act 2005 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)	~~DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1992 - SECT 1 Short title~~Disability Discrimination Act 1992 - Federal Register of Legislation
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)	Equal Opportunity Act 2010 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Electronic Transactions (Victoria) Act 2000 ~~(Vic)~~	Electronic Transactions (Victoria) Act 2000 | legislation.vic.gov.au

Evidence Act 2008 (Vic)	Evidence Act 2008 | legislation.vic.gov.au
~~*Fair Trading Act 1999*~~*Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012 (Vic)*	~~Fair Trading Act 1999 | legislation.vic.gov.au~~Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)	~~https://www.austlii.edu.au/~~ Fair Work Act 2009 - Federal Register of Legislation
Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)	Freedom of Information Act 1982 | legislation.vic.gov.au
~~*Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission*~~*Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)*	~~https://www.austlii.edu.au/~~ Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 - Federal Register of Legislation
Local Government Act 2020	Local Government Act 2020 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020	Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 | legislation.vic.gov.au
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014~~*Information Privacy Act 2000*~~ *(Vic)*	~~Information Privacy Act 2000 | legislation.vic.gov.au~~Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 | legislation.vic.gov.au
~~Media Policy~~	~~Policy and Procedures Intranet~~
~~Code of Conduct (Councillors)~~	~~Policy and Procedures Intranet~~
Model Councillor Code of Conduct	Website: Model Councillor Code of Conduct
Governance Rules	Website: Governance Rules~~Policy and Procedures Intranet https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/5/council/about-council/council-meetingsminutes/governance-rules.pdf~~
Media Policy	~~Policy and Procedures Intranet~~ Documents | Reports | Strategies Melton City Council
Social Media Terms of Use	~~Policy and Procedures Intranet~~ Social Media Melton City Council
Privacy Policy	~~Policy and Procedures Intranet~~ Documents | Reports | Strategies Melton City Council

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Councillors Social Media Policy

Version No.	Version 1.0 December 2021
Endorsement	General Manager Corporate Services
Authorisation	Council
Review date	December 2025
Responsible officer	Manager Engagement and Advocacy
Policy owner	Communications Coordinator

1. Purpose

The Councillors Social Media Policy sets out protocols for use of social media by the elected Councillors of Melton City Council.

This Policy is intended to assist Councillors to use social media in a way that encourages two-way engagement with the community and minimises exposure of Council and Councillors to legal and reputational risk.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to use of social media by Melton City Councillors when used in their:

- Professional capacity, in the course of fulfilling their functions and duties to Council; and
- Personal capacity, where that use is connected with, or might otherwise impact on, Council, its reputation and/or its effectiveness.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies and procedures of Melton City Council including the Media Policy and Code of Conduct (Councillors).

The policy applies to digital spaces where people may comment, contribute, create, forward, post, upload and/or share content.

3. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Digital spaces	Digital spaces describe any online platform where people may interact with the author and/or others, including commenting, contributing, creating, forwarding, posting, uploading and/or sharing content.
Personal use	Personal use is defined as using social media privately, whether during business hours or outside of business hours.
Professional use	Professional use is defined as using social media when acting as a representative of Melton City Council, whether during business hours or outside of business hours.
Social media	Social media describes the tools/platforms that people use to build online profiles, share content and participate in social networking

4. Policy

Melton City Council recognises that social media provides opportunities for dynamic and interactive two-way engagement with our community.

Nothing in this Policy is intended to limit, restrict or detract from robust public debate in a democracy.

4.1 Councillors must:

- Adhere to codes of conduct, policies and procedures
- Behave with courtesy, honesty and respect
- Comply with relevant laws and regulations and ensure confidentiality of Council information
- Not mislead the public or community or misrepresent the views of Councillor colleagues

A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action through Councillor Code of Conduct.

4.2 Social media use and expectations

- Councillors should keep the Mayor informed of any relevant social media content or Councillor contact with organisations, resident groups or others that could foreseeably escalate into adverse media or social media attention and which might negatively impact or compromise Council.
- It is Councillors' responsibility to manage their social media accounts including creating and sharing content, gaining permissions for the use of images and other materials if required and monitoring comments.
- Councillors should identify and separate personal opinions from Council position. When contributing to public comment on social media, Councillors should act in accordance with the principles of the Councillor Code of Conduct and the Media Policy when discussing Council matters.
- Councillors are strongly encouraged to have a dedicated Councillor account separate to any other personal or business accounts they might hold for the purpose of Council related activity.
- Councillors should ensure that they have appropriate privacy settings on all social media sites moderated, managed or operated by them, bearing in mind that all social media posts are public to some degree.
- Councillors should ensure they do not post, like or comment on abusive or inappropriate content, or materials that would breach applicable laws
- Councillors should uphold a positive public image of, and confidence in, the Council at all times as per Councillor Code of Conduct.
- A breach of these uses and expectations may result in disciplinary action under the Councillors Code of Conduct.

4.3 Content not permitted

The following content is not permitted:

- Offensive or inappropriate language or material (such as profanity, inappropriate sexual language, pornography, depictions of extreme violence, racial or other vilification or hatred)
- Content which is false or misleading including having or interacting with a social media account a Councillor knows to be false.
- Confidential information about Council or third parties
- Statements that breach human rights
- Discriminatory material in relation to a person or group based protected attributes in the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- Statements which may be considered to be bullying or harassment
- Illegal material or materials designed to encourage law breaking
- Materials that could compromise Council, employee or system safety
- Materials which would breach applicable laws (defamation, privacy, trade practices, financial rules and regulations, fair use, copyright, trademarks)
- Material which would bring the Council or individual Councillors into disrepute
- Personal details or references to Councillors, Council staff or third parties, which may breach privacy laws
- Spam, meaning the distribution of unsolicited bulk electronic messages as defined by the *Spam Act 2003 (Commonwealth)*.

Monitoring

Councillors must actively monitor their social media accounts and moderate comments that are in breach of the above content.

Breaches

A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action under the Councillors Code of Conduct.

If a Councillor suspects a breach of this policy, they must bring it to the attention of the Manager Legal, Governance and Risk or the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Mayor.

4.4 Local Government Act 2020 policy alignment

This policy aligns with the overarching governance principles and five supporting principles in the Local Government Act 2020, in particular, the following public transparency principles:

(b) Council information must be publicly available unless:
  (i) the information is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act; or
  (ii) public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest;
(c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to all;
(d) public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated.

4.5 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

This policy has been assessed against the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 as being consistent with that Act and, in particular, as promoting the rights of members of the community to have access to Council and Council information.

5. Responsibility/Accountability

5.1	**Councillors** • Seek advice from the Communications unit on using social media • Register social media accounts/tools/site with the Communications unit • Understand and comply with the provisions in this policy • Seek training and development for using social media • Seek advice from Legal and Governance or the Communications unit if unsure about applying the provisions of this policy
5.2	**Executive** Promotion of adherence of this policy to Councillors
5.3	**Communications unit** • Provide advice to Councillors on the use of social media • Educate Councillors about this policy and their responsibilities when using social media • Keep a register of Councillor social media accounts • Monitor social media channels for conducting Council business • Monitor online for references to Melton City Council

6. References and links to legislation and other documents

Name	Location
Media Policy	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Code of Conduct (Councillors)	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Defamation Act 2005 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Electronic Transactions Act 2000 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Evidence Act 2008 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Fair Trading Act 1999 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Spam Act 2003 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au

CITY OF MELTON	**Online Engagement Policy**
Version No.	V1.0, 20 March 2015 *Revised Web Policy and Social Media Policy*
Endorsement	General Manager Corporate Services, 8 April 2015 Policy Review Panel, 4 May 2015
Authorisation	Council, 26 May 2015
Expiry date	1 March 2017
Responsible officer	Manager Customer Engagement
Policy owner	Communications Coordinator

1. Purpose

The intent of this policy is to provide understanding, guidance and acceptable standards to ensure a consistent approach to online engagement including appropriate use of websites and social media tools.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors, employees, contractors, sub-contractors, agents, consultants and volunteers engaged specifically to represent Council, who engage online through websites and/or social media on behalf of, and for the purpose of, conducting Council business.

The policy outlines requirements for compliance with accessibility, usability, responsiveness, confidentiality, governance, legal, privacy and regulatory parameters.

It aims to:

- address appropriate use of Council's web content management system, other websites created to conduct Council business and social media tools for Melton City Council
- promote effective and productive online community engagement through websites and social media
- minimise miscommunication or mischievous communications
- help Melton City Council manage the inherent challenges of speed and immediacy.

The policy applies to those digital spaces where people may comment, contribute, create, forward, post, upload and share content, including:

- Apps
- Blogs
- Bulletin boards
- Citizen journalism and news sites
- Forums and discussion boards
- Instant messaging facilities
- Micro blogging sites (e.g. Twitter)

- Online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia)
- Podcasts
- QR codes
- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster, LinkedIn)
- Video and photo sharing sites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube)
- Video podcasts
- Websites
- Wikis
- Any other websites that allow individuals to use simple publishing tools or new technologies emerging from the digital environment.

As it is not possible to expressly refer to or list the specific sites or kinds of social media outlets, the absence of a reference to a particular site or kind of social media activity does not limit the application of this policy.

This policy is not intended to cover personal use of social media where:

- the author publishes information in their personal capacity and not on behalf of, or in association with Melton City Council; and
- no reference is made to Melton City Council, its Councillors, staff, policies and services, suppliers or other stakeholders or Council related issues.

Notwithstanding, any personal use of social media during work hours should be kept to a minimum and not impede or interfere with work.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies and procedures of Melton City Council.

3. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
App	Software program designed to run on a mobile device
Authorised User	Council staff member authorised to use social media or create website content on behalf of Council or a Councillor
Blog	A blog is a personal journal published online consisting of individual entries ('posts') typically displayed in reverse chronological order so the most recent post appears first.
CMS	Content Management System used to create and manage content for a website
Offensive material	Any content that could be reasonably considered unacceptable for public consumption, as determined by a Council officer. This may include but is not limited to: • Pornography or implied sexual activity, child abuse material, depictions of bestiality, material containing excessive violence or sexual violence, drug use. • Material that advocates the doing of a terrorist act or detailed instruction in crime.

Word/Term	Definition
	• Material that has a strong impact on or may upset someone in terms of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, culture, age and physical appearance. • Material that causes or promotes any form of harassment. Material that uses frequent or very strong coarse language.
Podcast	A podcast is a type of digital media consisting of an episodic series of files (either audio or video) subscribed to and downloaded through web syndication.
Smart phone	A smart phone is a mobile phone able to perform many functions of a computer, usually with a large touch screen.
Social media	Social media describes the tools/platforms that people use to build online profiles, share content and participate in social networking
WCAG 2.0	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 lists recommendations for making web content more accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these. Following these guidelines will often make the web content more usable to users in general.
Web Accessibility National Transition Strategy	The Australian Government's adoption and implementation of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0 (WCAG 2.0).
Wiki	A website or database developed collaboratively by a community of users who can add or edit content.

4. Policy

The Council Plan 2013-2017 states that 'Council wants to support transparency through public access to relevant information, decision making and strategic documents'. Council also aims to facilitate community engagement in planning and decision making by providing information about Council services and associated activities through a range of communication tools and providing the community with balanced and objective information, to assist them in understanding Council's direction and decisions.

Melton City Council recognises that online user needs are changing and social media provides new opportunities for dynamic and interactive two-way engagement with our community, which can complement existing communication and further improve information, access and delivery of key services.

Council's online presence aims to:

- enable people to conduct their Council business online 24/7
- provide customer service
- distribute positive news, events and information of interest to residents
- engage in conversation

- establish greater responsiveness from and engagement with the City of Melton community
- establish trust in Melton City Council
- humanise and bring personality to the City of Melton brand
- drive corporate, unit or service KPIs and objectives

Council's online presence is NOT intended to:

- provide a comprehensive resource for all Council documents, except as required by law or deemed important to customer service
- be a reference for all Council business, except as required by law or deemed important to customer service

4.1 Website

In order to create a better website for everyone, Council's website should adhere to the following requirements:

4.1.1 Authorisation

Authorised Users only are permitted to contribute to Council's website on behalf of Council. Authorisation is granted through the Communications unit in coordination with the relevant service unit Manager. Training in the web content management system by the provider or the Communications unit is mandatory.

4.1.2 Accessibility

The Web Accessibility National Transition Strategy sets a course for improved web services, paving the way for a more accessible and usable web environment that will more fully engage with, and allow participation from, all people within our society.

It states that Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 is applicable to all online government information and services. Conformance is required on all government websites owned and/or operated by government under any domain. This includes external (public-facing or private) and internal (closed community) sites.

The WCAG 2.0 guidelines have been developed with a goal of proving a single shared standard for web content accessibility that meets the needs of individuals, organisations, and governments internationally.

Melton City Council must meet the legislative requirements under the:

- *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992.*

4.1.3 Accuracy

The website must be updated as often as needed, with a minimum of every three months to ensure the information is timely and correct. See online engagement procedures document for updating schedule applicable to information that rotates frequently (e.g. media releases and events).

4.1.4 Responsiveness

The website must be accessible through desktop, mobile phone and tablet. The layout should automatically adjust based on the user's screen size. This is now an expected feature in websites.

4.1.5 Usability

User 'needs' should be the guiding principle for government websites.
Users come to the site to accomplish tasks and to fulfil needs. It is Council's responsibility to make sure they can complete the top tasks easily and efficiently. The website should be simple and approachable and focussed on Council's core services and users 'top tasks'.

The information presented should be necessary, useful, understandable and presented in a clear, concise and accessible manner. The pages should contain plain clear language using active voice and avoiding jargon.

4.1.6 Content included

- The Communications Coordinator retains the right to amend, delete, add content on an as-needs basis
- Information included on the site should
  - Inform and provide access to Council's programs and services, or provide relevant links to information from other stakeholders and/or
  - Engage the community and/or
  - Allow stakeholders to conduct Council business
- The website is not a reference for information that does not pertain to Council business

For more information see Website Content Management Plan.

4.2 Sub sites

Melton City Council only has one main website. However, if service units have specific needs in website functionality or branding that can't be met by Council's main website they can create a sub site.

4.2.1 Authorisation

Service units need to provide a business case and get authorisation from Communications to create a sub site. Unless there is a demonstrable reason why the Council brand should not take precedence, all sub sites will be so branded.

To protect the reputation and image of Council, authorisation will depend on:

- Specify aim and target group and functionality needs
- Quality assurance
- Resources to start and maintain the sub site
- Hosting facilities
- Branding
- Temporary or permanent sub site

- Risk management strategy

4.2.2 Requirements for sub sites

4.2.2.1 Branding

All temporary and permanent sub sites can have individual branding but they need to conform to the range of options presented in Council's style guide.

In exceptional circumstances, by request of the business/service unit manager, Communications reserves the right to approve design outside of the style guide; however, there is no compromise on Council's logo under any circumstance.

4.2.2.2 Accessibility

- All temporary and permanent sub sites need to be compliant with the WACG 2.0 accessibility guidelines.
- All temporary sub sites should be accessible from Council's website through a friendly URL.
- All permanent sub sites should be accessible from the home page of Council's website.

4.2.2.3 Usability

- All permanent sub sites should have similar layout and navigation styles to Council's main website so that the user can have a consistent experience in online engagement with Council.
- The information presented should be necessary, useful, understandable and presented in a clear, concise and accessible manner. The pages should contain plain clear language using active voice and avoiding jargon.

4.2.2.4 Accuracy

All sub sites must be updated as often as needed, with a minimum of every three months to ensure the information is timely and correct.

4.2.2.5 Responsiveness

All permanent sub sites must be accessible through desktop, mobile phones and tablets. The layout should automatically adjust based on the user's screen size. This is now an expected feature in websites.

4.3 Social media

4.3.1 Authorisation

If service units want to create a social media presence for a certain program, target group or issue, they need to develop a business case and risk management strategy and get authorisation from the Communications unit.

Authorisation will depend on the following:

- Specify the aim and target group of the social media tool
- Social media tool needs to provide two-way communication
- Specifying how the social media tool will be branded and linked back to Council and how it will be linked to other Council communication materials

- Project duration
- Specifications on quality insurance regarding content production and timing, monitoring, effectiveness measurement, response strategy, accessibility, usability, content permission, copyright, content optimisation and promotion
- Specifications on resourcing (budget and staff)
- Risk management strategy
- Data management and record keeping
- Social media tool look/brand will need be professionally designed and approved by Communications

Only Authorised Users are permitted to use social media for professional reasons or on behalf of Council.

If a service unit wants to advertise on social media, this does not need authorisation by the Communications unit. However, any branding for this advertising needs to be signed off by the Communications unit in accordance with Council's Corporate Style Guide.

A social media presence always needs to be linked to a profile and for this a mock profile to which more than one staff member has access (e.g. Melton libraries) should be set up instead of using a personal profile.

Authorisation is granted through a signed and completed Social Media Authorised User Application Form available from Communications. Social media use is restricted to the application, purpose and/or objectives defined.

Communications will undertake six-monthly reviews of social media tools to monitor quality assurance.

Authorised User status can be revoked without prior notice by Communications, service unit manager or Executive and is revoked immediately after leaving the organisation or termination of employment.

An intermediate proficiency level for each requested social media tool is a prerequisite for Authorised Users, as understood by Communications.

Any required social media training to reach the minimum standard is the responsibility of the relevant service unit.

When using social media Councillors, staff and contractors are required to:

- adhere to Melton City Council codes of conduct, policies and procedures
- behave with caution, courtesy, honesty and respect
- comply with relevant laws and regulations
- reinforce the integrity, reputation and values of Melton City Council.

If you have any doubt about applying the provisions of this policy, check with the Communications unit before using social media to communicate.

4.3.2 Disclaimer

Rules of engagement and disclaimers should always be included in the profile section of the social media tool or be available in a clearly obvious and discoverable way.

4.3.3 Expectations, behaviours and principles

Council staff should adhere at all times to the Melton City Council Staff Code of Conduct.

Councillors should adhere at all times to the Melton City Council Councillor Code of Conduct.

4.3.3.1 Subject matter expertise

Do not comment outside your area of expertise. Do not commit Council to actions or undertakings.

4.3.3.2 Disclosure

Only discuss publicly available information. Do not disclosure confidential information, internal discussions or decisions of council, employees or third parties. This includes publishing confidential, personal or private information where there is sufficient detail for potential identification of councillors, Council staff or third parties.

4.3.3.3 Accuracy

Be accurate, constructive, helpful and informative. Correct any errors as soon as practicable. Do not publish information or make statements which you know are false or may reasonably be taken to be misleading or deceptive.

4.3.3.4 Identity

Be clear about professional identity or any vested interests. Do not use fictitious names or identities that deliberately intend to deceive, mislead or lie. Do not participate anonymously or covertly via a third party or agency.

4.3.3.5 Opinion

Clearly separate personal opinions from professional ones. In general, don't express personal opinions using Council # tags or other identifications. Only where this is not possible, consider using a formal disclaimer to separate official Council positions from personal opinions and distance Council from comments made by public and other interests.

4.3.3.6 Defamation

Do not comment, contribute, create, forward, post, upload or share content that is malicious or defamatory. This includes statements which may negatively impact the reputation of another.

4.3.3.7 Reward

Do not publish content in exchange of reward of any kind.

4.3.3.8 Transparency

Do not seek to buy or recompense favourable social media commentary or 'likes'. Encourage online publishers to be open and transparent in how they engage with, or review Council personnel, services or wares.

4.3.3.9 Political bias

Do not endorse any political affinity or allegiance (not applicable for Councillors).

4.3.3.10 Respect

Social media is a communication tool that encourages discussions and free and frank contributions. Always be courteous, patient and respectful of others' opinions, including detractors. (See also Definitions, 4.3.2 and 4.3.3.18).

4.3.3.11 Language

Be mindful of language and expression. Keep your communications clear, positive, polite and professional. Avoid being ironic or sarcastic, it can be misinterpreted.

4.3.3.12 State of Mind

Do not use social media when inebriated, irritated, upset or tired.

4.3.3.13 Be Safe

Protect your personal privacy and guard against identity theft.

4.3.3.14 Media

Do not use statements or make announcements through social media channels unless authorised. Do not respond directly if approached by media for comment through social media. Refer the enquiry to the Communications unit as per Council's Media Policy.

4.3.3.15 Modification and Moderation

Ensure that any social media sites created or contributed to can be readily edited, improved or removed and appropriately moderated.

4.3.3.16 Accessibility

Research shows that all of the popular social media tools remain inaccessible to some degree. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, blogging websites and the emerging Google+ all feature limited accessibly, denying many consumers with disabilities the opportunity to participate in social media. The accessibility standards of the social media tool are the responsibility of the vendor. Council's responsibility is to make our social media content as accessible as possible from our end. Information made available via non compliant platforms should be made accessible in another form where practical.

4.3.3.17 Be responsive

Specify the type of comments and feedback that will receive a response and clearly communicate a target response time. Make it easy for audiences to reach Council via other methods by publishing Council's phone number, generic email and website.

4.3.3.18 Contributions

Social media is a communication tool that encourages discussions and free and frank contributions; however, these contributions should always be respectful. You will need to monitor and, if necessary, censor contributions that other people make to your site, especially Facebook. Delete them if they don't match the above standards of behaviour or language and if needed block repeat offenders. Defamatory and offensive language will be attributed to the publisher as well as the original author. (See also Definitions, 4.3.2 and 4.3.3.10).

4.3.4 Enforcement

Melton City Council actively monitors social media for relevant contributions that impact on the municipality, its operations and reputation. Melton City Council will be able to find – and act upon – contributions made by Councillors and staff if deemed necessary.

This policy will be published and promoted to Councillors and staff of Melton City Council. Breaching this policy may result in disciplinary action, performance management and review. Serious breaches may result in suspension or termination of employment or association.

Melton City Council reserves the right to remove, where possible, content that violates this policy or any associated policies.

4.3.5 Record keeping

Staff must maintain full, accurate and reliable records of their official use of social media as social media records made or received by public officers are dealt with in the same way as other records in accordance with Information Management principles.

Records should be recorded in a timely manner, as it may not be guaranteed that they will remain online. Both the content (including the format) and the context of the post need to be captured.

For more details on the content to be captured, see the Online Engagement Procedures document.

4.4 Privacy

Be sensitive to the privacy of others. Follow the photo permission requirements in Council's photography policy regarding anyone who appears in any photographs, video or other footage before sharing these via any form of social media. If asked to remove materials do so as soon as practicable.

4.5 Intellectual property

Seek permission from the creator or copyright owner, to use or reproduce copyright material including applications, audio tracks (speeches, songs), footage (video), graphics (graphs, charts and logos), images, artwork, photographers, publications or music. Also seek permission before publishing or uploading material in which the intellectual property rights, such as Trade Marks, are owned by a third party, e.g. company logos. Seek permission from the website's owner wherever possible before linking to another site (including a social media application).

4.6 Content not permitted

The following content is not permitted under any circumstances:

- Offensive or inappropriate language or material (such as pornography, depictions of extreme violence, racial or other vilification or hatred)
- Content which is false or misleading
- Confidential information about Council or third parties
- Copyright or Trade mark protected materials
- Discriminatory material in relation to a person or group based on age, breastfeeding, employment activity, gender identity, impairment (also known as 'disability'), industrial activity, lawful sexual activity, marital status, parental status or status as a carer, physical features, political belief or activity, pregnancy, race, religious belief or activity, sex, sexual orientation or personal association (weather as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the listed attributes
- Illegal material or materials designed to encourage law breaking
- Materials that could compromise Council, employee or system safety
- Materials which would breach applicable laws (defamation, privacy, trade practices, financial rules and regulations, fair use, trademarks)
- Material that would offend contemporary standards of taste and decency
- Material which would bring the Council into disrepute
- Personal details or references to Councillors, Council staff or third parties, which may breach privacy laws
- Spam, meaning the distribution of unsolicited bulk electronic messages
- Statements which may be considered to be bullying or harassment
- Content not relating to the subject matter of that blog, board, forum or site.

5. Responsibility /Accountability

5.1	**Councillors** • Seek advice from the Communications Unit on using social media • Seek approval for Council branding of social media • Register social media accounts/tools/site with the Communications Unit • Understand and comply with the provisions in this policy • Seek training and development for using social media • Seek advice from the Legal Officer or the Communications Unit if unsure about applying the provisions of this policy
5.2	**Executive** • Promotion of adherence of this policy to Management team and Staff
5.3	**Staff and Contractors** • Seek approval from relevant manager for business case for social media or sub site

	• Seek authorisation from Communications Unit on social media tool and users list and creating a sub site • Seek approval for Council branding of social media or sub site • Seek training and development for using social media or sub site content management system • Understand and comply with the provisions of this policy • Maintain records of email addresses, comments, 'friends', followers and printed copies of electronic 'screen grabs' when using externally hosted sites to the extent practicable • Maintain records of URLs, logins, passwords and content management training manuals • Seek advice from the Legal Officer or the Communications Unit if unsure about applying the provisions of this policy • Ensure contractors are provided with a copy of this policy • Familiarise self with the End User Licence Agreements of any external social media tools being used
5.3	**Business Unit Managers** • Approve business case for social media or sub site • Ensure staff obtain authorisation from the Communications unit on their planned use of social media or creation of sub site • Identify authorised users for Council's website, social media or sub sites • Ensure contractors and staff are aware of this policy and comply with its requirements • Offer training to staff using social media or sub sites
5.4	**Information Services Unit** • Facilitate secure access to support delivery of Council business via social media • Provide technical support and solutions to assist regular back-up and archiving of internally hosted social media sites as practicable
5.5	**Communications Unit** • Protect the reputation and image of Council • Authorise use of social media tools or creation of sub sites for conducting Council business • Identify (in cooperation with service unit Manager), authorise and train users to maintain Council's main website • Nominate agencies and individuals who provide services to Melton City Council who are required to comply with this policy • Provide advice on development and use of social media tools and sub sites • Assist with communication plans to promote social media tools and sub sites • Educate Councillors, staff and contractors about this policy and their responsibilities when using social media • Advise appropriate precautions, e.g. disclaimers

	• Maintain a register of social media and sub sites being used for conducting Council business including records of business cases for using social media or creating sub sites and the intended administrators • Monitor social media accounts / tools / sites and sub sites for conducting Council business • Monitor online for references to Melton City Council • Seek legal advice as appropriate where an issue is likely to be contentious or may create legal risk for Council • Keep abreast of developments in the field of online engagement

6. References and links to legislation and other document

Name	Location
Council Plan 2013-2017	www.melton.vic.gov.au
Code of Conduct (Councillors)	Policy and Procedures Intranet www.melton.vic.gov.au
Code of Conduct (Staff)	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Council Employment Contracts	
Internet, Intranet & Email Usage Policy	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Media Policy	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Corporate Style Guide	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Photography Policy	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Information Technology Mobile Device Policy	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Information Management Policy	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Enterprise Risk Management Policy	Policy and Procedures Intranet
Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Defamation Act 2005 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Electronic Translations Act 2000 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Evidence Act 2008 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Fair Trading Act 1999 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act

Name	Location
Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Spam Act 2003 (Cth)	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act
Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Lauren Wall departed the meeting at 11.06am.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

Nil.

8. NEXT MEETING

Thursday 1 October 2026 at 9.30am online.

9. CLOSE OF BUSINESS

The meeting closed at 11.07am.

Confirmed

Date:

.....CHAIRPERSON

13. REPORTS FROM DELEGATES APPOINTED TO OTHER BODIES AND COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A report was received from Cr Dr Zada.

Condolence Motion

Crs Abboushi/Shannon.

Cr Abboushi moved a Motion of Condolence to Elias Boutros Zada on behalf of the Melton City Council.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Reports were received from Cr Turner, Cr Vandenberg, Cr Verdon Cr Majdlik and Cr Abboushi.

Cr Dr Zada departed the Chamber at 7:47pm and returned to the Chamber at 7:50pm.

A report was received from Cr Morris.

Cr Vandenberg departed the Chamber at 7.50pm and returned to the Chamber at 7.51pm.

A report was received from Cr Ramsey.

Condolence Motion

Crs Ramsey/Verdon.

Cr Ramsey moved a Motion of Condolences for Syd Elliott from the Melton City Council.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

A report was received from Cr Shannon.

Cr Shannon departed the Chamber at 7.59pm and returned to the Chamber at 8.01pm.

A report was received from Cr Carli.

14. NOTICES OF MOTION

Cr Morris departed the Chamber at 8.06pm.

14.1 NOTICE OF MOTION 1007 (CR RAMSEY) - ELECTION COMMITMENTS

Councillor: Sophie Ramsey

NOTICE:

That Council receives a report, prior to the Victorian State Election, outlining election commitments and timelines, made by the major parties that align with Melton City Council's endorsed advocacy priorities.

Motion

Crs Ramsey/Majdlik.

That Council receives a report, prior to the Victorian State Election, outlining election commitments and timelines, made by the major parties that align with Melton City Council's endorsed advocacy priorities.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED

14.2 NOTICE OF MOTION 1008 (CR DR ZADA) - PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR THORNHILL PARK AND MOUNT ATKINSON TRAIN STATIONS

Councillor: Phillip Zada

NOTICE:

That Council requests Officers to:

1. Undertake preliminary discussions with the Victorian Government, using existing resources, to establish its willingness to consider a partnership, including a potential public-private partnership, to deliver these stations and whether ongoing revenue opportunities for Council could form part of such an arrangement.
2. If the Victorian Government is supportive of considering a partnership, seek written in principle confirmation of that willingness.
3. Provide Council with a brief update on whether the concept may be possible and any suggested next steps, without undertaking detailed feasibility work or committing Council to project funding or a partnership.

Motion

Crs Zada/Shannon.

That Council requests Officers to:

1. Undertake preliminary discussions with the Victorian Government following the State election outcome, using existing resources, to establish its willingness to consider a partnership, including a potential public-private partnership, to deliver these stations and whether ongoing revenue opportunities for Council could form part of such an arrangement.
2. If the Victorian Government is supportive of considering a partnership, seek written in principle confirmation of that willingness.
3. Provide Council with a brief update on whether the concept may be possible and any suggested next steps, without undertaking detailed feasibility work or committing Council to project funding or a partnership.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg and Zada

Against: Cr Verdon

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED

Cr Morris returned to the Chamber to the Chamber at 8.08pm.

Cr Ramsey called for a division thereby setting aside the vote.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg and Zada

Against: Cr Verdon

Abstained: Nil

The Mayor declared the Motion CARRIED

14.4 NOTICE OF MOTION 1011 (CR SHANNON) - MASTER PLAN REVIEW MACPHERSON PARK RECREATION RESERVE

Councillor: Julie Shannon

NOTICE:

That Officers provide a report to a future meeting of Council regarding the status of the existing MacPherson Park Master Plan that outlines:

1. Projects completed to date included cost of completion.
2. Status of any current projects of the plan being delivered.
3. Projects that remain outstanding and the forecast year for implementation consistent with Council's infrastructure pipeline.
4. Where there is land with no future identified activation, clarification provided on options for future consideration to activate this land.
5. Opportunity for a user group stakeholder workshop on the status of the plan and how user groups can input future projects / development of the reserve for consideration.

Motion

Crs Shannon/Ramsey.

That That Officers provide a report to a future meeting of Council regarding the status of the existing MacPherson Park Master Plan that outlines:

1. Projects completed to date included cost of completion.
2. Status of any current projects of the plan being delivered.
3. Projects that remain outstanding and the forecast year for implementation consistent with Council's infrastructure pipeline.
4. Where there is land with no future identified activation, clarification provided on options for future consideration to activate this land.
5. Opportunity for a user group stakeholder workshop on the status of the plan and how user groups can input future projects / development of the reserve for consideration.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Cr Carli advised the meeting of her intention to vacate the Chair for Items 14.5 and 14.8 and asked Cr Dr Zada as Deputy Mayor, if he would like to take the Chair for those items. Cr Dr Zada confirmed that he did not wish to assume the Chair. The Mayor then called for a motion nominating a Councillor to assume the Chair Items 14.5 and 14.8.

Motion

Crs Majdlik/Ramsey.

Nominate Cr Abboushi to assume the Chair for Items 14.5 and 14.8.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Cr Vandenberg

CARRIED

Cr Carli vacated the Chair and departed the Chamber at 8.12pm due to a General Conflict of Interest in Item 14.5 and Cr Abboushi assumed the Chair.

Cr Ramsey departed the Chamber at 8.15pm and returned to the Chamber at 8.18pm.

14.5 NOTICE OF MOTION 1012 (CR VANDENBERG) - VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE

Councillor: Ashleigh Vandenberg

NOTICE:

I hereby move the following Notice of Motion:

For a vote of no confidence in Mayor Lara Carli.

Motion

Crs Vandenberg/Verdon.

I hereby move the following Notice of Motion:

For a vote of no confidence in Mayor Lara Carli.

Procedural Motion

Crs Majdlik/Ramsey.

That the Motion be now put.

For: Crs Abboushi, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Cr Vandenberg

CARRIED

The substantive motion was put to the vote:

For: Cr Vandenberg

Against: Crs Abboushi, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner and Zada

Abstained: Cr Verdon

LOST

Cr Majdlik called for a division thereby setting aside the vote.

For: Cr Vandenberg

Against: Crs Abboushi, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner and Zada

Abstained: Cr Verdon

The Chair declared the Motion LOST

Cr Carli returned to the Chamber and resumed the Chair at 8.39pm.

14.6 NOTICE OF MOTION 1013 (CR VANDENBERG) - WESTERN FREEWAY UPGRADE

Councillor: Ashleigh Vandenberg

NOTICE:

That Council writes to the Victorian Government's Department of Transport and Planning to:

1. Seek confirmation of firm timelines on when the Western Freeway upgrade will commence; and
2. Seek clarification as to why Active Transport connections from Melton to Caroline Springs do not form part of the project scope in accordance with Department of Transport and Planning Guidelines and request that Active Transport connections be included in the scope of works to provide the opportunity for integrated walking and cycling opportunities along the Western Highway.

Motion

Crs Vandenberg/Shannon.

That Council writes to the Victorian Government's Department of Transport and Planning to:

1. Seek confirmation of firm timelines on when the Western Freeway upgrade will commence; and
2. Seek clarification as to why Active Transport connections from Melton to Caroline Springs do not form part of the project scope in accordance with Department of Transport and Planning Guidelines and request that Active Transport connections be included in the scope of works to provide the opportunity for integrated walking and cycling opportunities along the Western Highway.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

14.7 NOTICE OF MOTION 1014 (CR VANDENBERG) - BARNARDS ROAD

Councillor: Ashleigh Vandenberg

Cr Verdon departed the Chamber at 8:46pm and returned to the Chamber at 8:47pm.

NOTICE:

That Council officers provide an explanation on the reasoning behind not including Barnards Road with a roundabout, including information on any changes to original plans for a roundabout, and resident complaints.

Motion

Crs Vandenberg/Majdlik.

That Council officers provide an explanation on the reasoning behind not including Barnards Road with a roundabout, including information on any changes to original plans for a roundabout, and resident complaints.

For: Crs Majdlik, Turner, Vandenberg and Verdon

Against: Crs Abboushi, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon and Zada

Abstained: Cr Carli

The Mayor declared the Motion LOST

Cr Carli vacated the Chair and Cr Abboushi assumed the Chair at 8.49pm.

14.8 NOTICE OF MOTION 1015 (CR CARLI) - COUNCILLOR CONDUCT FRAMEWORK

Councillor: Lara Carli

NOTICE:

That Council writes to Victorian Local Government Minister and Shadow Local Government Minister seeking a review of the Councillor Conduct framework, including:

1. The delays associated with the hearing and determination of applications of Internal Arbitration and Councillor Conduct Panels.
2. The use of rate payer funded insurance premiums to provide legal representation to Councillors defending applications through the Councillor Conduct processes.
3. Legislative gaps which may allow parties to avoid or delay participation in Councillor Conduct Processes.
4. Reforms directed at removing the ability of VCAT, on review of any subsequent finding of misconduct or serious misconduct, to stay any sanction imposed as a result of that subsequent finding.

Motion

Crs Carli/Zada.

That Council writes to Victorian Local Government Minister and Shadow Local Government Minister seeking a review of the Councillor Conduct framework, including:

1. The delays associated with the hearing and determination of applications of Internal Arbitration and Councillor Conduct Panels.
2. The use of rate payer funded insurance premiums to provide legal representation to Councillors defending applications through the Councillor Conduct processes.
3. Legislative gaps which may allow parties to avoid or delay participation in Councillor Conduct Processes.
4. Reforms directed at removing the ability of VCAT, on review of any subsequent finding of misconduct or serious misconduct, to stay any sanction imposed as a result of that subsequent finding.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED

Cr Carli called for a division thereby setting aside the vote.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Cr Abboushi vacated the Chair and Cr Carli resumed the Chair at 9.15pm.

15. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

16. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Recommended Procedural Motion

That pursuant to section 66(1) and (2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the meeting be closed to the public to consider the following reports that are considered to contain **confidential information** on the grounds provided in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as indicated:

16.1 Major Maintenance Contracts - Performance Report 2025/26
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.2 Contract No. 26-108 - Weir Views Pedestrian Bridge No. 2 - Design & Construct
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.3 Contract No. 26-176 - Civil Works Design Panel
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.4 Contract No. 26-177 - Parks Contractor Panel
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.5 Contract No. 26-369 - Annual Sealed Road Renewal (Asphalt) Program
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.6 Contract No. 26-393 - Annual Un-Sealed Road Re-sheeting Program
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Motion

Crs Ramsey/Abboushi.

That pursuant to section 66(1) and (2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the meeting be closed to the public to consider the following reports that are considered to contain **confidential information** on the grounds provided in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as indicated:

16.1 Major Maintenance Contracts - Performance Report 2025/26
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.2 Contract No. 26-108 - Weir Views Pedestrian Bridge No. 2 - Design & Construct
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.3 Contract No. 26-176 - Civil Works Design Panel
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.4 Contract No. 26-177 - Parks Contractor Panel
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.5 Contract No. 26-369 - Annual Sealed Road Renewal (Asphalt) Program
(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.6 Contract No. 26-393 - Annual Un-Sealed Road Re-sheeting Program

(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
(i) relates to trade secrets; or
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

For: Crs Abboushi, Carli, Majdlik, Morris, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner, Vandenberg, Verdon and Zada

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

CARRIED

Cr Ramsey returned to the Chamber to the Chamber at 9.21pm.

17. CLOSE OF BUSINESS

The meeting closed at 9.22pm.

Confirmed

Dated this

.....CHAIRPERSON