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# AGENDA

Ordinary Council Meeting to be held at  
Preston Town Hall  
284 Gower Street, Preston  
on Monday 27 April 2020 at 6.00 pm.

**Due to the current COVID-19 health crisis and associated requirements residents and interested persons are strongly encouraged to view this Council meeting online. Any person attending this meeting will be accommodated in an adjacent room with access to the online stream of the meeting and adequate space to adhere to the social distancing requirements. Any person attending the meeting who wishes to ask a question in person or make a submission on an item on the agenda will be escorted into the meeting for this purpose.**



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES IN DAREBIN**

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land we now call Darebin and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Council pays respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Darebin.

Council recognises, and pays tribute to, the diverse culture, resilience and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We acknowledge the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the right to self-determination in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect.



(2)

### English

This is the Agenda for the Council Meeting. For assistance with any of the agenda items, please telephone 8470 8888.

### Arabic

هذا هو جدول اعمال اجتماع المجلس. للحصول على المساعدة في أي من بنود جدول الاعمال، يرجى الاتصال بالهاتف 8888 8470.

### Chinese

这是市议会会议议程。如需协助了解任何议项，请致电8470 8888。

### Greek

Αυτή είναι η Ημερήσια Διάταξη για τη συνεδρίαση του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου. Για βοήθεια με οποιαδήποτε θέματα της ημερήσιας διάταξης, παρακαλείστε να καλέσετε το 8470 8888.

### Hindi

यह काउंसिल की बैठक के लिए एजेंडा है। एजेंडा के किसी भी आइटम में सहायता के लिए, कृपया 8470 8888 पर टेलीफोन करें।

### Italian

Questo è l'ordine del giorno della riunione del Comune. Per assistenza con qualsiasi punto all'ordine del giorno, si prega di chiamare il numero 8470 8888.

### Macedonian

Ова е Дневниот ред за состанокот на Општинскиот одбор. За помош во врска со која и да било точка од дневниот ред, ве молиме телефонирајте на 8470 8888.

### Nepali

यो परिषद्को बैठकको एजेन्डा हो। एजेन्डाका कुनै पनि वस्तुसम्बन्धी सहायताका लागि कृपया 8470 8888 मा कल गर्नुहोस्।

### Punjabi

ਇਹ ਵੈੱਸਲ ਦੀ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਏਜੰਡਾ ਹੈ। ਏਜੰਡੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਆਈਟਮਾਂ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਵਾਸਤੇ, ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 8470 8888 ਨੂੰ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

### Somali

Kani waa Ajandaha Kulanka Golaha. Caawimada mid kasta oo ka mid ah qodobada laga wada hadlay, fadlan la xiriir 8470 8888.

### Spanish

Este es el Orden del día de la Reunión del Concejo. Para recibir ayuda acerca de algún tema del orden del día, llame al teléfono 8470 8888.

### Urdu

یہ کاؤنسل کی میٹنگ کا ایجنڈا ہے۔ ایجنڈے کے کسی بھی حصے کے بارے میں مدد کے لیے براہ مہربانی 8470 8888 پر فون کریں۔

### Vietnamese

Đây là Chương trình Nghị sự phiên họp Hội đồng Thành phố. Muốn có người trợ giúp mình về bất kỳ mục nào trong chương trình nghị sự, xin quý vị gọi điện thoại số 8470 8888.

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# Agenda

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## 1. MEMBERSHIP

Cr. Susan Rennie (Mayor) (Chairperson)  
Cr. Susanne Newton (Deputy Mayor)  
Cr. Steph Amir  
Cr. Gaetano Greco  
Cr. Tim Laurence  
Cr. Kim Le Cerf  
Cr. Trent McCarthy  
Cr. Lina Messina  
Cr. Julie Williams

## 2. APOLOGIES

## 3. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

## 4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That** the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 6 April 2020 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

## 5. QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME

Members of the public can lodge questions for Council to answer or make a Comment or Submission prior to a specific item listed on the Agenda of an Ordinary Council meeting.

**Due to the current COVID-19 health crisis and associated requirements residents and interested persons are strongly encouraged to view this Council meeting online. Any person attending this meeting will be accommodated in an adjacent room with access to the online stream of the meeting and adequate space to adhere to the social distancing requirements. Any person attending the meeting who wishes to ask a question in person or make a submission on an item on the agenda will be escorted into the meeting for this purpose.**

### QUESTIONS

Members of the public can ask up to two (2) questions at an Ordinary Council meeting.

Questions submitted online will be responded to in the first instance. If you are not present at the meeting, the Chairperson will read the question and provide a response. The Chairperson may then take questions from members in the gallery.

Any question not answered at the meeting will be taken on notice and a written response will be provided to the person asking the question.

In accordance with the Darebin Governance Local Law, the Chairperson may disallow a question if it:

- is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance; or
- deals with a subject matter already answered; or
- is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or an officer.

If you are unable to submit your question prior to the Ordinary Council meeting, the Chairperson may take questions from the floor.

### SUBMISSIONS OR COMMENTS

Members of the public may make a comment or 2 minute submission on a matter listed on the Agenda prior to the item being debated.

A person who is unable to stay at the meeting until the Agenda item is heard, may make their comment or submission during Question Time.

### HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION OR MAKE A COMMENT OR SUBMISSION

Members of the public who wish to ask a question, or make a comment or submission to an agenda item, at an Ordinary Council meeting are encouraged to do so in one of the following ways:

- (a) online at [darebin.vic.gov.au/questionsandsubmissions](https://darebin.vic.gov.au/questionsandsubmissions) by 3pm on the day of the meeting; or
- (b) by email to [Q&S@darebin.vic.gov.au](mailto:Q&S@darebin.vic.gov.au); by 3pm on the day of the meeting; or
- (c) in person at the Preston Customer Service Centre, 274 Gower Street, Preston; or
- (d) by mail to PO Box 91, Preston 3072; or
- (e) with a Council officer prior to a Council meeting.

Council meetings can be viewed at the Watch Council and Planning Committee meetings page.

Agenda's will be available for viewing on Council's website at the 'Meeting Agendas and Minutes' page by 5pm, up to 6 days prior to the date of the meeting. Copies are also available at Customer Service centres and libraries.

## **6. PETITIONS**

## **7. URGENT BUSINESS**

## 8. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

### 8.1 DECLARATION OF SPECIAL CHARGES: SOLAR SAVER - RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL

**Author:** Commercial Solar Officer

**Reviewed By:** General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

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#### PURPOSE

To consider the declaration of two Special Charge schemes in relation to the Solar Saver program (one residential and one non-residential scheme) and provide an update on the impact of COVID-19 outbreak on the Solar Saver program.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Solar Saver program is a key action of the Council Plan and Council's *Climate Emergency Plan*.

The report considers the declaration of a non-residential Special Charge Scheme and a residential Special Charge Scheme. These schemes include:

- Non-residential batch 3, including 2 installations, adding 14.5kW of solar capacity to Darebin.
- Residential batch 1, including 11 installations, adding 50.16kW of solar capacity to Darebin.

The value of the proposed Special Charge scheme is:

- \$22,407.04 (\$31,678.95 gross including GST and pre Small-scale Technology Certificate [STC] claim) for the non-residential installations and
- \$59,614.45 (\$89,134.60 gross including GST and pre STC claim) for the residential installations.

These costs will be paid back to Council through the Special Charge scheme over 10 years. No interest is charged. Annual repayments are more than offset by participants' savings on their energy bills, and therefore the program provides financial and environmental benefits to participants.

This report recommends that Council declare a Special Charge Scheme under section 163 of the Local Government Act 1989 for the purposes of defraying expenses relating to the provision of solar energy systems on non-residential properties participating in the Solar Saver scheme.

No objections were received in response to the public notification process.

This report also provides an update on risk management during the COVID-19 outbreak.



<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That Council:**

- (1) Having complied with the requirements of sections 163A, 163B and 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* ("Act"), and otherwise according to law, declares a Special Charge ("Special Charge") under section 163 of the Act as follows:
  - a) A Special Charge is declared for the period commencing on the day on which Council issues a notice levying payment of the special rate and concluding on the tenth anniversary of that day.
  - b) The Special Charge is declared for the purpose of defraying any expense incurred by Council in relation to the provision of solar energy systems on properties participating in the Solar Saver scheme, which:
    - i. Council considers is or will be a special benefit to those persons required to pay the Special Charge (and who are described in succeeding parts of this resolution); and
    - ii. Arises out of Council's functions of advocating and promoting proposals which are in the best interests of the community and ensuring the peace, order and good government of Council's municipal district.
  - c) The total:
    - i. Cost of performing the function described in paragraph 1(b) of this resolution be recorded as \$22,407.04 for the non-residential batch and \$59,614.45 for the residential batch;
    - ii. Amount for the Special Charge to be levied be recorded as \$22,407.04 for the non-residential batch and \$59,614.45 for the residential batch, or such other amount as is lawfully levied as a consequence of this resolution.
  - d) The Special Charge is declared in relation to all rateable land described in the table included as **Appendix A** to this report, in the amount specified in the table as applying to each piece of rateable land.
  - e) The following list is specified as the criteria that form the basis of the Special Charge so declared:
    - Ownership of any land described in paragraph 1(d) of this resolution.
  - f) The following is specified as the manner in which the Special Charge so declared will be assessed and levied:
    - i. A Special Charge calculated by reference to the size of the solar energy system being installed and the particular costs of installation at each property participating in the Solar Saver scheme, in respect of which an Agreement has been executed, totalling \$22,407.04 for the non-residential batch and \$59,614.45 for the residential batch, being the total cost of the scheme to Council
    - ii. To be levied each year for a period of 10 years.
  - g) Having regard to the preceding paragraphs of this resolution and subject to section 166(1) of the Act, let it be recorded that the owners of the land described in paragraph 1(d) of this resolution will pay the Special Charge in the amount set out in paragraph 1(f) of this resolution in the following manner:

- i. Payment annually by a lump sum on or before one month following the issue by Council of a notice levying payment under section 163(4) of the Act; or
    - ii. Payment annually by four instalments to be paid by the dates which are fixed by Council in a notice levying payment under section 163(4) of the Act.
  - (2) Considers that there will be a special benefit to those required to pay the Special Charge *because* there will be a benefit to them that is over and above, or greater than, the benefit that is available to those who are not subject to the proposed Special Charge, as a result of the expenditure proposed by the Special Charge, in that the properties will have the benefit of a solar energy system being installed.
  - (3) For the *purposes* of having determined the total amount of the Special Charge to be levied:
    - a) Considers and formally records that only those rateable properties included in the Solar Saver scheme as proposed will derive a special benefit from the imposition of the Special Charge, and there are no community benefits to be paid by Council; and
    - b) Formally determines for the purposes of section 163(2)(a), (2A) and (2B) of the Act that the estimated proportion of the total benefits of the Special Charge to which the performance of the function or the exercise of the power relates (including all special benefits and community benefits) that will accrue as special benefits to those who are liable to pay the Special Charge is 100%.
  - (4) Directs that notice be given to all owners and occupiers of properties included in the Scheme in writing of the decision of Council to declare and levy the Special Charge, and the reasons for the decision. For the purposes of this paragraph, the reasons for the decision of Council to declare the Special Charge are that:
    - a) There is no objection to the Scheme and it is otherwise considered that there is a broad level of support for the Special Charge from all property owners and occupiers.
    - b) Council considers that it is acting in accordance with the functions and powers conferred on it under the *Local Government Act 1989*, having regard to its role, purposes and objectives under the Act, particularly in relation to its functions of advocating and promoting proposals which are in the best interests of the community and ensuring the peace, order and good government of Council's municipal district.
    - c) All those who are liable or required to pay the Special Charge and the properties respectively owned or occupied by them will receive a special benefit of a solar energy system being installed at the property.
  - (5) Where a participant wishes to withdraw from the Scheme, agrees to such withdrawal where the participant has given written notice of their desire to withdraw from the Scheme before Council has incurred any expenditure in relation to the participant's solar system.
- 

## BACKGROUND

In the Council Plan 2017-2021 and the Climate Emergency Plan, Council decided to actively engage the community to double the amount of solar PV in Darebin from 18,000 kW to 36,000 kW.

Key aspects of the program include:

- Council undertakes procurement of good value solar systems and installation with 10-year warranties.
- Non-residential Solar Saver participants register interest, receive quotes and the property owners have signed an owner agreement.
- Council declares a Special Charge and pays the upfront cost of the solar system and installation for participants.
- Solar Saver participants pay the Special Charge over a 10-year period to reimburse Council's upfront payment – which is more than offset by their energy bill savings.
- As detailed below Council has resolved that interest is not charged to participants and that the program will be funded through Council's existing budget.

Two companies (EnviroGroup and Solargain) have been engaged by Council to provide and install solar for this batch of the non-residential stream of the Solar Saver program.

This is the third Special Charge to be declared for the non-residential stream of the Solar Saver program in 2020, and the first Special Charge for the residential stream for 2020.

### Previous Council Resolutions

At the **13 August 2018** meeting it was resolved that Council:

- (1) *Offers the Darebin Solar Saver Program to all residential properties, with no interest charged as part of the special charge scheme for the contract period.*
- (2) *Authorises inclusion in the Darebin Solar Saver Program of non-residential properties up to 30kW in size, with no interest charged as part of the special charge scheme for the contract period.*
- (3) *Awards the appointment of Solargain, Enviro Group and Energy Matters as supply panel membership of contract number CT201842 for the supply and installation of Solar PV Systems for the Darebin Solar Saver Program for Supply Panel 1 - residential and small, non-residential installations: 1.5-10kW systems. The contract terms are to commence on 20 August 2018 and conclude on 30 June 2021 with a contract sum of \$16,134,030 GST inclusive.*
- (4) *Awards the appointment of Solargain, Enviro Group and Energy Matters as supply panel membership of contract number CT201842 for the supply and installation of Solar PV Systems for the Darebin Solar Saver Program for Supply Panel 2 - non-residential installations: 10-30kW systems. The contract terms are to commence on 20 August 2018 and conclude on 30 June 2021 with a total contract sum of \$1,980,000 GST inclusive.*
- (5) *Approves the award of Stage 1 of implementation for Supply Panel 1 – residential and small non-residential Solar PV Systems to Solargain to deliver the supply and installation of solar PV systems between 1 January 2019 and 30 June 2019 with a total contract sum of \$2,406,030 GST inclusive.*
- (6) *Authorises the Chief Executive to finalise and execute the supply panel membership contracts on behalf of Darebin Council, and Stage 1 of implementation for Supply Panel 1 - Residential and Small, non-residential Solar PV systems.*

Further, permitting the expansion of the range of system sizes offered in the non-residential stream to 2-99kW in order to better serve the needs of businesses, on **16 December 2019** Council resolved to:

- 1) *Increase the range of permitted solar installations for the non-residential stream of the program from the current 10-30kW to an expanded 2-99kW.*

At the same meeting on **16 December 2019** Council appointed Enviro Group as the provider for this round of the residential program:

- 9) [Council] *Awards Contract CT2019140A for the supply and installation of solar PV Systems for the Darebin Solar Saver Residential Program (Second Installation Period) with a contract sum of \$5,830,000 including GST to The Environment Shop Pty Ltd as the trustee for Environment Futures Trust, trading as Enviro Group for the period 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2021, with the possibility of extension to September 30 2021.*

At its meeting held on 16 March 2020, Council resolved that:

1. Council hereby gives notice of its intention to declare a Special Charge in accordance with section 163 of the Local Government Act 1989 (Act) as follows:
  - a) Council declares a Special Charge for the period commencing on the day on which Council issues a notice levying payment of the special rate and concluding on the tenth anniversary of that day.
  - b) We declare this Special Charge for the purpose of defraying any expense incurred by Council in relation to the provision of solar energy systems on residential properties participating in the Solar Saver scheme, which:
    - i. Council considers is or will be a special benefit to those persons or organisations required to pay the Special Charge (and who are described in succeeding parts of this resolution); and
    - ii. Arises out of Council's functions of advocating and promoting proposals which are in the best interests of the community and ensuring the peace, order and good government of Council's municipal district.
  - c) The total:
    - i. Costs of performing the function described in paragraph 1(b) of this resolution are: \$187,772.85 (non-residential) and \$59,614.45 (residential).
    - ii. Amount for the Special Charge to be levied is \$187,772.85 (non-residential) and \$59,614.45 (residential), or such other amount as is lawfully levied as a consequence of this resolution
  - d) We declare the Special Charge in relation to all rateable land described in the table included as Appendix B to this report, in the amount specified in the table as applying to each piece of rateable land.
  - e) Ownership of any land described in paragraph 1(d) of this resolution is the basis of the Special Charge.
  - f) The Special Charge will be assessed and levied as follows:
    - i. Each Special Charge is calculated by reference to the size of the solar energy system being installed and the particular costs of installation at each property participating in the Solar Saver scheme, in respect of which an Owner Agreement has been executed, totalling \$187,772.85 (non-residential) and \$59,614.45 (residential), being the total cost of the scheme to Council;
    - ii. The Special Charge will be levied each year for a period of 10 years.

- g) Having regard to the preceding paragraphs of this resolution and subject to section 166(1) of the Act, it is recorded that the owners of the land described in paragraph 1(d) of this resolution will, subject to a further resolution of Council, pay the Special Charge in the amount set out in paragraph 1(f) of this resolution in the following manner:
- i. Payment annually by a lump sum on or before one month following the issue by Council of a notice levying payment under section 163(4) of the Act; or
  - ii. Payment annually by four instalments to be paid by the dates which are fixed by Council in a notice levying payment under section 163(4) of the Act.
- 2) Council considers that there will be a special benefit to the persons or organisations required to pay the Special Charge because there will be a benefit to those persons or organisations that is over and above, or greater than, the benefit that is available to persons or organisations who are not subject to the proposed Special Charge, as a result of the expenditure proposed by the Special Charge, in that the properties will have the benefit of a solar energy system being installed.
- 3) For the purposes of having determined the total amount of the Special Charge to be levied:
- (a) Council considers and formally records that only those rateable properties included in the Solar Saver scheme as proposed will derive a special benefit from the imposition of the Special Charge, and there are no community benefits to be paid by Council; and
  - (b) Formally determines for the purposes of section 163(2) (a), (2A) and (2B) of the Act that the estimated proportion of the total benefits of the Special Charge to which the performance of the function or the exercise of the power relates (including all special benefits and community benefits) that will accrue as special benefits to the persons who are liable to pay the Special Charge is 100%.
- 4) Council will give public notice in the *Northcote Leader* and *Preston Leader* newspapers of Council's intention to declare, at its ordinary meeting to be held on 27 April 2020, the Special Charge in the form set out above.
- 5) Council will send separate letters, enclosing a copy of: this resolution; **Appendix A** to this report; and the public notice referred to in Paragraph 4 of this resolution, to the owners of the properties included in the scheme, advising of Council's intention to levy the Special Charge, the amount for which the property owner will be liable, the basis of calculation of the Special Charge, and notification that submissions and/or objections in relation to the proposal will be considered by Council in accordance with sections 163A, 163B and 223 of the Act.
- 6) Council will convene a meeting of the Hearing of Submissions Committee, at a date and time to be fixed, to hear persons or organisations who, in their written submissions made under section 223 of the Act, advise that they wish to appear in person, or to be represented by a person specified in the submission, at a meeting in support of their submission.
- 7) Council authorises the Manager Climate Emergency and Sustainable Transport to carry out any and all other administrative procedures necessary to enable Council to carry out its functions under sections 163A, 163(1A), (1B) and (1C), 163B and 223 of the Act.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

### Consultation

All participating organisations and households have received a site visit and quotations to participate in the program.

Internal consultation has occurred with the Sustainable Business Officer, Economic Development Coordinator and Interfaith Development Officer.

Council gave public notice and notified the participating ratepayers as per the resolutions made on the 16 March 2020 above at 4 and 5.

### Communications

Organisations and households on Council's waiting list were contacted directly. No broad promotional activity was engaged in given that there are still many households and organisations on the waiting list. In the future the program may be advertised on the Council website, through Darebin News, newsletters and through networks, as required to gain more participants.

COVID-19 safety measures are being communicated to households who are currently progressing through the quotation process.

## ANALYSIS

### Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

Goal 1 - A sustainable city

Climate Emergency Plan

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations – Climate Emergency

This project is a key action in the *Darebin Climate Emergency Plan 2017*. The current non-residential batch of Darebin Solar Saver is expected to install 14.5kW (two installations), with an estimated equivalent annual greenhouse gas saving of 22.7tCO<sub>2</sub>-e and the residential batch is expected to see the installation of 50.16kW across 11 installations and an estimated equivalent annual greenhouse gas saving of 73.8tCO<sub>2</sub>-e.

### Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations

The residential batch is primarily made up of high priority households (i.e. those who are pensioners, on a low income, or have specific communications needs) or who have missed out on previous rounds.

### Cultural Considerations

There are no particular cultural considerations, other than that households who need interpreters or other communication support are prioritised.

## Economic Development Considerations

This batch of the non-residential Solar Saver program includes only two businesses. This is lower than expected and is due to economic disruption and uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hoped that many more businesses who have been quoted through this program will progress once their confidence in their business sustainability recovers.

Non-residential installations tend to have very good payback times (3-5 years) because most of the power generated by the solar systems will be used on-site. Participating organisations will be saving between around \$1,000 to \$2,000 annually per 10kW installed, even during the ten-year repayment period. Once they take ownership their savings will increase to around \$2,000 to \$3,000 per year. This will help these local businesses thrive into the future.

For individual households participating, the program is designed so that they will save more on their energy bills than they will be paying back to Council so that they are financially better off from the outset.

## Financial and Resource Implications

Should the proposed Special Charge scheme proceed, Council will pay **\$22,407.04** (including GST and pre STC claim), for the supply and installation of the solar PV systems on the non-residential properties and **\$59,614.45** (including GST and pre STC claim) for the residential properties listed in **Appendix A**. Note that for the residential properties, rebates have not yet been applied for or approved. In order to achieve the installation timelines required as a condition of the Solar Homes rebates, it is important that rebate applications are made only after the Intention to Declare a Special Charge has been completed. Once rebate applications have been made and approved, it is anticipated that rebates will be applied to approximately 75% of households in any Special Charge batch (before Council is invoiced). For this batch, we anticipated all eleven households will be eligible, resulting in a reduction of approximately \$18,880.

In accordance with their respective Owner Agreements Property owners will pay for the cost of the solar energy system (less any approved Solar Homes rebates), listed in confidential **Appendix B**, by equal instalments apportioned over a 10-year period, commencing from September 2020.

Council is expected to receive **\$2,240.70** (non-residential) and **\$5,961.44** (residential) in Special Charge repayments annually for this scheme over the 10-year period. Some organisations and households may pay the total amount in the first year. The Special Charge scheme is effectively an interest free loan to these organisations and households.

Payments to Council by property owners for works via Special Charge schemes are GST exempt. Should a property be sold during the 10-year period in which the Special Charge scheme applies, the amount outstanding on the Special Charge scheme at the time of the property sale will be paid in full to Council.

The administrative, contract management, community engagement and communications and compliance costs associated with administration of the Solar Saver program is provided for within the 2019-20 budget. Implications for the 2020-2021 if a variation to the contract is authorised are detailed in **Appendix E**.

## Legal and Risk Implications

A risk analysis has been undertaken for the program. Solar installations are electrical works and are required by law to be signed off by an authorised electrician through a certificate of electrical safety.

Random independent audits of the work will also be undertaken by Council to ensure installations comply with Council specifications. Occupational Health and Safety processes have been assessed and will be audited on site. Ten-year warranties are required on panels, inverters and installation.

A separate risk assessment has been completed in light of the recent COVID-19 outbreak, and adjustments have been made to work practices such that contact between the solar provider and households and businesses is avoided wherever possible and minimised where necessary, and in line with Victorian and Australian Government guidelines, as approved by the Darebin Council Incident Control Team for COVID-19. Council continues to monitor the outbreak and changing guidelines.

## DISCUSSION

### COVID-19 outbreak and impacts on the Solar Saver program

A separate risk assessment has been completed in light of the recent COVID-19 outbreak, and adjustments have been made to work practices (see risk section above).

Both residential and especially non-residential uptake has slowed due to uncertainty and other factors related to the coronavirus pandemic. Solar Saver households and businesses who have chosen to proceed at this time are well-informed, understanding, and cooperative in assisting Council and the solar providers to manage risks carefully while conducting site assessments and installations.

The solar industry can keep operating during the shutdown as part of the wider construction industry.

Of the 20 businesses currently in the pipeline, six have specifically requested their solar project be put on hold (one of them, a medical supplier, because they have become too busy). Those businesses currently on hold will likely want to complete the projects once the shut-down eases. The Solar Saver program may become an even more important avenue for businesses to cut their energy costs and emissions in the economic recovery phase after the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

### Proposed Special Charge declaration

Under Section 163 of the *Local Government Act 1989 (Act)*, Council is empowered to declare a Special Charge for the purposes of defraying any expenses in relation to the performance of a function or the exercise of a power of Council, if Council considers that the performance of the function or the exercise of the power is, or will be, of special benefit to the persons or organisations required to pay the special rate or Special Charge.

In this case, the installation of solar energy systems on properties as part of the Solar Saver scheme arises out of Council's functions of advocating and promoting proposals which are in the best interests of the community and ensuring the peace, order and good government of Council's municipal district and promotes the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district. Each participating property has signed an Owner Agreement with Council to participate in the scheme, which includes the overall cost and



repayments which would be paid by the property should the scheme be approved (see **Appendix A**).

In September 2004, the Minister for Local Government issued a guideline for the preparation of Special Charge schemes. The guideline specifically deals with the calculation of the maximum total amount that a council may levy as a Special Charge.

The guideline requires that Council identify the following:

- A. Purpose of the works
- B. Ensure coherence
- C. Calculate total cost
- D. Identify special beneficiaries
- E. Determine the properties to include
- F. Estimate total special benefits
- G. Estimate community benefits
- H. Calculate the benefit ratio
- I. Calculate the maximum total levy

#### **A. Purpose of the Works**

The purpose of the works is to supply and install solar energy systems on properties to reduce energy costs and encourage and increase the use of renewable energy in Darebin.

#### **B. Ensure Coherence**

The proposed works have a natural coherence with the proposed beneficiaries, as the properties proposed to be included in the scheme are receiving solar energy systems to the value of their participation.

#### **C. Calculate the Total Cost**

The proposed solar system installation includes the following items:

- Assessment and administration costs
- Supply and installation of solar energy systems

For the purposes of section 163(1) of the Act, the total cost of the works is calculated at \$22,407.04 for the non-residential batch and \$59,614.45 for the residential batch based on signed agreements.

The expenses in the estimate of works are consistent with the allowable expenses listed in section 163(6) of the Act.

#### **D. Identify the Special Beneficiaries**

Council is required to identify those properties that would receive a special benefit from the proposed works. A special benefit is received by a property if the proposed works or services will provide a benefit that is additional to or greater than the benefit to other properties.

The Ministerial Guideline notes that a special benefit is considered to exist if it could reasonably be expected to benefit the owners or occupiers of the property. It is not necessary for the benefit to be used by the particular owners or occupiers of a specified property at a particular time in order for a special benefit to be attributed to the property.

Property owners participating in the Solar Saver scheme are considered to receive special benefit from the proposed supply and installation of solar PV systems by means of:

- Reduced energy costs over the life of the solar PV system
- Ownership of the solar PV system after the special rate repayments are paid in full
- Increased property value

The proposed properties taking part in the scheme, the owners of which have signed an Owner Agreement with Council to participate in the scheme, are listed in **Appendix A**.

#### **E. Determine Properties to Include**

Once the properties that receive special benefit are identified, Council must decide which properties to include in the scheme. If a property will receive a special benefit but is not included in the scheme, the calculation of the benefit ratio will result in Council paying the share of costs related to the special benefits for that property.

It is accepted that only those properties at which the solar energy systems are installed will receive a special benefit from the scheme. Accordingly, it is proposed to include only those properties whose owners have signed Owner Agreements in the scheme. Council will not, then, be required to pay a share of costs related to special benefits for any property that is not included in the scheme.

#### **F. Estimate Total Special Benefits**

As per the Ministerial Guideline for Special Rates and Charges, total special benefits are defined according to the formula below:

$$\mathbf{TSB} = \mathbf{TSB}_{(in)} + \mathbf{TSB}_{(out)}$$

- **TSB** is the estimated total special benefit for all properties that have been identified to receive a special benefit
- **TSB<sub>(in)</sub>** is the estimated total special benefit for those properties that are included in the scheme
- **TSB<sub>(out)</sub>** is the estimated total special benefit for those properties with an identified special benefit that are not included in the scheme

For the purposes of the proposed scheme, total special benefits have been calculated as follows:

- **TSB<sub>(in)</sub>** – The estimated total special benefit is based on the quoted cost of the solar PV system to be installed (which has been included in the Owner Agreement signed by the property owner). It is expected that the benefit in reduced energy costs will exceed this special benefit.
- **TSB<sub>(out)</sub>** – This is not applicable as all participating properties are included.

#### **G. Estimate Community Benefits**

Whilst the reduction of energy use, greenhouse emissions and increase of renewable energy is considered a community benefit there are no direct quantifiable costs.

- **TCB** – Total Community Benefit is assessed to be 0 benefit units

**H. Calculate the Benefit Ratio**

The benefit ratio is calculated as:

$$R = \frac{\text{TSB}_{(\text{in})}}{\text{TSB}_{(\text{in})} + \text{TSB}_{(\text{out})} + \text{TCB}}$$

Where:

$\text{TSB}_{(\text{in})}$  = \$22,407.04 for the non-residential batch and \$59,614.45 for the residential batch;

$$\text{TSB}_{(\text{out})} = 0$$

$$\text{TCB} = 0$$

$$R = 1$$

**I. Calculate the Maximum Total Levy**

In order to calculate the maximum total levy **S**, the following formula is used:

$$S = R \times C$$

Where **R** is the benefit ratio and **C** is the cost of all works

Therefore **S** = 1 \* \$22,407.04 for the non-residential batch and \$59,614.45 for the residential batch = \$22,407.04 for the non-residential batch and \$59,614.45 for the residential batch.

Note there is no community benefit amount payable by Council.

**Apportionment of Costs**

Once the maximum levy amount has been calculated, it is necessary to establish an appropriate way to distribute these costs to all affected landowners.

As the properties have all received individual quotations based on the solar system and work required, it is proposed to apportion the costs based on these quotes. It is noted that the participants have been notified and signed agreements on the basis of these costs for the purpose of declaring this scheme.

It is proposed to distribute the costs as shown in **Appendix B**.

**Statutory Process**

The Act requires Council to give public notice of its proposed declaration of the special charge and write to all people who will be liable to contribute. The proposed declaration of the special charge has been prepared in accordance with the Act. Public notice has been issued in accordance with the Act and no objections have been received.

**OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

This report recommends proceeding with declaration of the Special Charge Schemes. This is supported by all the property owners that are proposed to be levied.

Council could also decide not to proceed with declaration of the Special Charge Scheme or seek further information to make a decision.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### Details

The next step would be the installation phase of this batch of solar installations. The solar providers will manage the physical installations themselves, in communication with Council and the participants.

Independent auditors will be used to audit the safe work procedures of the installations as they occur real time, as well as the electrical safety of the work, post-installation.

### Timeline

Property owners will be contacted following Council's decision.

Installation of this round of Solar Saver will commence soon after Council's declaration of the Special Charge and conclude before 30 June 2020.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Local Government Act 1989*
- Community Climate Change Action Plan
- The Macquarie Special Rates and Charges Manual 2012

### Attachments

- Solar Saver - Property Addresses - April 2020 (**Appendix A**)
- CONFIDENTIAL - Property list including prices - Solar Saver - April 2020 (**Appendix B**) Confidential - enclosed under separate cover
- Owner Agreement - Non-residential Solar Saver (**Appendix C**)
- Owner Agreement - Solar Saver Residential - Round 3.3 (**Appendix D**)

## DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

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## 8.2 CROXTON WEST PLACE-MAKING PROJECT ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

**Author:** Senior Transport Planner & Urban Designer

**Reviewed By:** General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Draft concept designs for the Croxton West Place-making Project have been developed and were released for public consultation between 31 January and 16 February 2020.

The draft concept designs that were consulted on proposed area-based interventions that aimed to meet the Project's vision "*The Croxton West Local Area will become an inviting and safe place for pedestrians and cyclists, where vehicle volumes and speed are reduced, where improved street tree planting provides amenity value and where spaces are created for passive recreation.*"

Based on community and stakeholder feedback, officers propose progressing with some, but not all of the interventions. In particular officers propose that Council proceed with a number of safety improvements focused around the School and Mayer Park, but that Council not proceed with the larger interventions (such as creation of a pocket park).

The main reason for this is that community feedback didn't demonstrate significant support for creation closure of a road and creation of the pocket park because of the changes to local vehicle movements that would result. While not proceeding with the road closure and pocket park will not change how residents access their local street, it also means that overall there isn't expected to be a significant reduction in use of local streets by through traffic. The safety interventions will improve safety near the park and the school and generally are expected to ensure low speeds.

The interventions would be constructed over time and Council would advocate to the Department of Transport on critical items adjoining the Croxton West area, which would dramatically affect how the area is accessed and used.

Opportunities for external funding would be explored, and construction would be planned for future years.

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That Council:**

- (1) Endorses the Croxton West Place-making Project Concept Designs attached as **Appendix A**, to progress to design and implementation over years subject to funding availability.
- (2) Thanks community members for their feedback and participation throughout.
- (3) Notes that a number of local issues identified in community engagement are currently being addressed such as visibility of signage in some locations.
- (4) Notes the Croxton West Place-making Project Round 2 Engagement Summary document will be made publicly available via the Darebin website, following finalisation of the document.

**BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION**

**Feasibility Study**

In 2018, Council developed a corridor framework plan for 8 cycling corridors across the municipality – the Streets for People Feasibility Study (Study). The Study used the State Government Movement and Place approach to redesign the corridors giving priority to the use of active transport, along with maintaining the streets as destinations and increasing greening. The Study was endorsed by Council in October 2018, which included feasibility of treatments for the Northcote Green Link, and the Great Western Shimmy corridors.

**Croxton West Place-making Project Development**

The Croxton West Local Area Place Making (LAPM) precinct brings together the Streets for People and LAPM programs in the area between Arthurton Road in the south and Normanby Avenue in the north, and Merri Creek in the west to St Georges Road towards the east.

This precinct has a history of receiving a lot of community attention due to recent changes to walking and cycling access near Croxton School, Council’s commitment to the Beavers Road bridge (currently under construction) connecting Darebin to Moreland and use of local streets by non-local vehicle traffic for ‘rat-running’. This precinct also includes parts of two Streets for People corridors – the Great Western Shimmy along Woolhouse Street and Leinster Grove, and the Northcote Green Link along Beavers Road.



**Figure 1: Map of Study Area**

Close consultation with local stakeholders that identified the issues and opportunities in the area was completed through the first round of community engagement in October 2019 to guide the development of draft concept designs. From what we heard from our community and reflecting on the Feasibility Study and drawing on best practice experience from Australia and overseas, the designs would seek to:

- Prioritise road safety;
- Reduce vehicle speed and improve driver behaviour;
- Develop high-quality places for people walking, wheeling and cycling; and
- Deliver functional and inviting streetscapes for those who live, work or study in the local areas.

Following the first round of community engagement, at the Council Meeting on 16 December 2019, Council endorsed the public consultation of the draft concept designs for the Croxton West Place-making Project.

The draft concept designs were released for community feedback as part of the second round of community engagement between 31 January and 16 February 2020 (and can be found as part of **Appendix B**).

The resulting concept designs and recommendations are detailed in the 'Discussion' section of this report which address the key issues, project vision and objectives for the area.

### **Previous Council Resolution**

At its meeting held on day month year, Council resolved:

*'That Council:*

- (1) Notes the community consultation summary report for the Croxton West Place-making project.*
- (2) Endorses the draft concept design as included in the community consultation summary report to be used in the next round of community engagement.'*

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT**

### **Consultation**

#### **Consultation Results**

A summary of the Round 1 consultation findings was presented to Council on 16 December 2019. A summary of the second round of engagement will be discussed in the 'Discussion' section of this report and made publicly available when finalised. There have been two rounds of community and stakeholder engagement, with the following stages and a mix of methods used to understand community views:

#### **Round 1 - Communications and Engagement Activities**

1. A whole of area letterbox drop and local advertising to promote the various engagement activities;
2. A community survey (in the form of an interactive map) receiving input from local residents, businesses and stakeholders in order to understand how the area is performing now and what the priorities for change are;

3. Consultation with community reference groups to gather further local knowledge and strategic context;
4. A community information workshop session for locals to engage with the project and provide further input on local issues and directions for change;

### **Round 2 - Communications and Engagement Activities**

1. A whole of area letterbox drop and local advertising to promote the various engagement activities;
2. A community survey to test the draft concept designs and invite feedback;
3. A community drop-in session for locals to engage with the proposed concepts and ask questions about any changes;
4. A street champion workshop for local residents from a variety of backgrounds and road user types to confirm the approach to addressing key issues and achieving the vision and objectives of the project.

### **Whole of Project Engagement Summary**

Communication and consultation were planned and delivered throughout the course of the project as follows:

- Through a dedicated project page located on Darebin's Your Say website: [Croxton West Place-making Project](#)
- Two separate mail-outs to some 1,600 households and businesses in the area occurring in September 2019 and January 2020
- Advertisements in the Northcote Leader in September 2019 and January 2020.
- Through Darebin's website and via social media. Social media posts are automatically translated to suit the language in the browser settings of the individual. In total, there were four Facebook posts and two Instagram posts over the course of the engagement.
- Feedback for the project was collected through online surveys, direct emails, hard copies of surveys at the drop-in sessions, face-to face feedback at the drop-in sessions and street champion workshops, and via the Q&A function of the Your Say page.
- Face-to-face engagement sessions had copies of the translation services available for attendees to take away if needed, and materials on display were visual diagrammatic A1/A3-sized posters for ease of communicating the project
- Presentations at Darebin Reference Groups including the Darebin Bicycle Advisory Committee and Darebin Environmental Reference Group, as well as via email to the Darebin Disability Advisory Committee, Community Safety Reference Group and Active and Healthy Ageing Advisory Board.
- Local schools and businesses were contacted and provided feedback.
- Advertisements were also placed in Councillor e-bulletins, Sustainability News, Disability Access Newsletter, Green Travel, and "*What's On for Families*" Newsletter.
- Signs were also installed at six key entry points to the area advertising the engagement



*Reaching diverse communities*

The consultation was designed to be accessible for our diverse community including people not proficient in English or with other communication barriers. In this local area approximately 96% of residents identify as proficient in English and the main non-English languages spoken are Greek and Italian.

Consultation sought to make information accessible and create opportunities for all residents to take part. This was achieved by:

- All information mailed out included information in 12 languages about how to access translation services as well as information about how to access the national relay service
- Social media promotion ensured that residents could quickly access translated information about the project through online translations that are available in social media platforms
- Diagrams were an important part of project communications materials and designed to communicate universally.
- The drop-in session was centrally located. Materials were visual and designed to communicate universally. Spoken language translation was also available in Greek.

From the survey responses, the following diverse groups were reached:

- Italian – 4, Greek – 7, Other – 12 (13%)
- Identify as having a disability – 8 (4.5% just below the Darebin figure of 6% - ABS Census 2016)

*Overall level of responses and engagement*

The Your Say page received over 1,400 visits during the second round of engagement with over 2,300 visits to date. There were 86 participants placing 323 pins with comments on the map (Round 1), and 215 completed surveys recorded in response to the draft concept designs (Round 2). Approximately 100 people attended the drop-in sessions and provided face-to-face feedback during Round 1 and 2. The street champions workshop hosted twelve local residents who provided further insights and feedback.

**Communications**

A detailed communications and engagement plan was prepared for the Croxton West Place-making Project in consultation with Communications and Engagement Team. Councillors were advised of forthcoming engagement efforts through e-Bulletins in January and February 2020. The ultimate visions and objectives for this project that were described in the communications are to:

1. Create a street environment where priority is given to people walking, wheeling and riding, and vehicles travel slower
2. Discourage vehicular volumes by introducing traffic calming measures that deter vehicles from using the route as an alternative to major roads
3. Create a safe and inviting environment for pedestrians by providing treatments for improving pedestrian safety and comfort
4. Create a low speed environment that enables bike riders to integrate with lower volume and slower vehicle traffic
5. Improve connections for people walking, wheeling and riding, including safer east-west connections across Leinster Grove and Woolhouse Street through dedicated pedestrian crossings

6. Create greenery and shade for streets through the planting of canopy trees that integrate with traffic calming measures
7. Identify opportunities for passive recreation, including through the provision of seating and shade at key pedestrian crossings

## ANALYSIS

### Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

#### Goal 3 - A liveable city

The Council Plan 2017-2021 sets the overarching vision for “a greener, bolder, more connected city.” The Croxton West Place-making Project aligns with this overarching vision, as well as Council Plan Goal 1, 2, 3 and 5.

- Goal 1 - A sustainable city
- Goal 2 - Opportunities to live well
- Goal 3 - A liveable city

Goal 5 - Involving our diverse community

The Project also aligns with the expected outcomes of several Council endorsed policies/strategies, including the Darebin Transport Strategy, Walking Strategy, Safe Travel Strategy, Cycling Strategy, Open Space Strategy – Breathing Space, and Climate Emergency Plan.

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

The Streets for People and Local Area Place Making programs focus on vulnerable road users and improving conditions in the street environment to increase the number of participants in active travel, while minimising the use and impact of vehicles. Where possible, passive irrigation and water sensitive urban design principles will be applied to road safety treatments, along with landscaping. The Parks and Open Space team have been consulted regarding opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

#### Climate Emergency

This program has a clear alignment with Key direction 4 of the Climate Emergency Plan 2017-2022, in particular Objective 1 “Reduce the number of private vehicle kilometres travelled in Darebin by increasing the share of public transport use, walking and cycling” and Key direction 7 to reduce the heat island effect, by increasing tree cover.

### Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations

An Equity and Inclusion Assessment was completed for the Croxton West project, through which it was recognised that the project has key outcomes for Darebin’s diverse community including:

- Accessibility compliance through design (DDA).
- Designing of facilities for all ages and abilities.
- Outcomes that encourage more physical activity, general wellbeing & health through walking and cycling.
- Streets becoming safer and less intimidating for local communities to use.

- Providing spaces for people to gather and be socially connected to their neighbourhoods.

### **COVID-19**

By the time this project is constructed the current restrictions may be lifted. However, the infrastructure will improve safety and access to low cost options for community members facing financial hardship and overall improve the resilience of both the transport network and community.

### **Cultural Considerations**

Given the project's proximity to Merri Creek, there are opportunities to reference the local indigenous flora and fauna in the design of wayfinding treatments, as well as through landscaping in infrastructure designs where appropriate.

### **Economic Development Considerations**

There are increasing demands on our public space, and in particular roads and parking. By improving the quality of cycling and walking routes to access our activity and neighbourhood centres, it makes it easier for residents and visitors using any mode of transport to work, shop, and visit local centres which supports thriving local economies. This is because it increases pedestrian users in activity centres, which activates these centres and means that people are more likely to do multiple activities in the one visit, and it also reduces road congestion and parking pressure which are expected to increase over time with Melbourne's population growth.

The Streets for People corridors are designed to provide high-quality connections between key destinations within the municipality, increasing their catchment potential by providing easy to use and safe solutions. This is combined with the LAPM approach to support local communities in delivering places to pause and dwell in when using sustainable modes of transport.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

Through the annual budget process, under the Safe Travel program budget line that was adopted by Council, \$37,000 has been allocated for investigation and engagement for the Croxton West Place-making Project, including concept level design of the treatments in the precinct in 2019/20.

Additional functional and detailed design, and delivery of projects within the Croxton West Place-making Project will be referred to future budget processes and would need to be considered against priorities for investment across the City and across a range of services. Construction of treatments in the precinct could be delivered over many years and/or works can be prioritised within the precinct. Opportunities for attracting external funding will be investigated.

### **Legal and Risk Implications**

Overall this project is designed to reduce risk by improving both road safety and by making it easier, safer and more enjoyable for people to walk or cycle, and also to reduce the amount of vehicle emissions contributing to the long-term risk associated with climate change. Making it easier for people to walk and cycle also contributes to lower community health risks associated with inactivity, isolation and local air pollution.

## DISCUSSION

The concept designs in **Appendix A** identify a range of measures to be implemented to improve safety, and make the corridor more attractive for walking, wheeling and cycling. These include:

- Creation of 3 raised zebra crossing points (wombat crossings);
- Road markings (sharrows) on Woolhouse Street and Leinster Grove to identify it as a local bike route;
- Improved signage for No Standing near intersections and locations of No Right Turn signs to improve their visibility;
- Widened footpath on the northern side of Beavers Road to create a shared path and a new footpath on the northern side of Gadd Street;
- Landscaped pinch-point on Leinster Grove near Gadd Street;
- Raised pedestrian crossing on Emmaline Street at Leinster Grove;
- Fully accessible disabled parking space near the community centre and a 5-minute drop-off zone for Mayer Park;
- Painted crossing treatment at the intersection traffic signals of Normanby Avenue and Leinster Grove;
- Opportunities to plant more street trees.

### Engagement has found mixed support overall

Feedback from Round 1 of engagement was reported at the Council meeting of 16 December 2019, and is attached to this report in **Appendix C**. This feedback informed the proposed recommendations presented for feedback in Round 2 of engagement.

215 responses were recorded to the survey in Round 2 of engagement. 82% of responses were from residents who lived within the study area. There was a mix of preferences regarding preferred primary mode of transport, with 31% representing motorists, 26% representing bike riders, 17% representing pedestrians, and 11% representing public transport users. This represents a good mix of road user types.

For the overall future vision of the Croxton West Place-making Project, 53% of respondents agreed with the statement “The Croxton West Local Area will become an inviting and safe place for pedestrians and cyclists, where vehicle volumes and speed are reduced, where improved street tree planting provides amenity value and where spaces are created for passive recreation.” Comments received indicate the lack of support was for particular proposals within the plan, rather than the overall vision itself. For each of the corridor ambitions, between 59% and 77% of respondents supported the statements. For reference the guiding principles are included in the on-line survey response summary in **Appendix D**.

The level of support for the draft concept designs for each of the 4 areas, and additional feedback was as follows:

#### Area 1 (Normanby Avenue to Bradley Avenue) – Access to Mayer Park

64% - 83% of respondents supported each of the proposed concept plans. Some issues were raised regarding the loss of on-street parking through the delivery of road safety treatments as there is already pressure on parking due to the intensive use of Mayer Park.

Concerns were also raised regarding cyclist safety at pinch points, and issues with sight lines at intersections due to motorists parking too close to corners.

Officer response: The total reduction of on-street parking due to proposals in this area is equal to four spaces. There is potential for parking at the Northcote Golf Course to be used by the public in future negotiations with the lease holder, however this won't occur in the short term. The addition of safe crossing points for pedestrians is a valuable reallocation of this road space, however during Stage 1 it is recommended to construct one raised zebra (wombat) crossing with road narrowing to support safe access to Mayer Park near Woolton Avenue, and to revisit the other pinch points and crossing in a later stage. The proposed wombat crossing can accommodate separate bike lanes in the available road space. Officers are currently investigating improved signage in 'No Standing' zones near intersection corners.

### **Area 2 (Bird Street to Beaconsfield Parade) – Access to Croxton School**

The level of support ranged from 53% to 84% for each of the proposed treatments. There was a high level of support for retaining the existing speed hump north of Bird Avenue and constructing a new footpath on the northern side of Gadd Street. As with Area 1, there were concerns regarding loss of parking, though comments were also provided supporting removal of parking to allow for easier vehicle movement. There were also competing concerns regarding speed humps, where some respondents supported their replacement with pinch points, and others thought they were already effective enough.

Officer response: The total reduction of on-street parking due to proposals in this area is equal to two parking spaces. Given the low level of support for the three pinch points (57% - 59%), it is recommended that only one pinch point is constructed during Stage 1, and the existing speed humps remain to encourage lower vehicle speeds. Officers also recommend construction of the new footpath on Gadd Street to support pedestrian movement.

### **Area 3 (Gladstone Avenue to Beavers Road) – Access to Croxton School, proposed road closure and pocket park.**

Support for the treatments in this area varied greatly, from 34% to 79%. The road closure and pocket park received the greatest level of criticism regarding the impacts of displaced traffic and limited ability to move around the neighbourhood by car with only 34% support. The 'left out only' treatment at St Georges Road and Beavers Road only received 46% support. The pinch points and proposed streets for people route were also contentious due to the already narrow space on Beavers Road between Woolhouse Street and St Georges Road, as well as due to loss of on-street parking (approximately 10-12 in total). Other feedback included concerns regarding the impact of developments (198 Beavers Road, and 195-209 St Georges Road) on local traffic and parking, especially along Beavers Road.

#### Officer response:

While there have been previously strong requests for solutions that cut rat running, feedback showed that these interventions, weren't supported by local residents. The feedback showed that a significant proportion of local residents didn't think the benefits outweighed the drawbacks. Therefore, officers don't recommend proceeding with these treatments. Officers noted that from a technical perspective, it is the road closure and 'left out only' treatment on Beavers Road that would have the greatest impact on discouraging non-local traffic within the area and that not proceeding means that discouraging non-local traffic would not be achieved to a significant degree.

As it is still important to support safe pedestrian movement across Woolhouse Street to the Beavers Road Bridge and Croxton School in the west, and to public transport connections in

the east, it is recommended that a wombat crossing is constructed to the north of Beavers Road in place of the road closure.

It is also recommended that the pinch points are removed from the plans in Stage 1. These could be revisited in future if need changes further as the area develops.

#### **Area 4 (Bent Street to Arthurton Road) – Local access to east-west streets**

As with Area 3, support varied greatly for the proposed treatments in this area, from 39% for the removal of an existing speed hump, to 77% for maintaining a different speed hump and improving it with planting. New treatments, including two pinch points with wombat crossings received 55% and 70% support. Additional feedback from residents in this area included a high level of concern over displaced traffic using Bent Street and Beavers Road to avoid the intersection of St Georges Road and Arthurton Road, as well as the inconvenience caused to locals in accessing their own homes. There was a substantial amount of feedback that supported improvements to the intersection of St Georges Road and Arthurton Road before making changes to this area.

Officer response: Although the wombat crossings received an average level of support, they would require the removal of existing speed humps, which was not supported. Officers recommend that the entry to Woolhouse Street at Arthurton Road is instead upgraded to a wombat crossing, and that existing speed humps remain. Officers also recognise that local residents would prefer to see changes to Arthurton Road outside the scope of this project before making changes to the east west streets in Area 4. As a result, it is recommended to continue advocacy to the Department of Transport for improvement to St Georges Road intersections surrounding the study area at this time. Potential change in this area could be revisited in future.

#### **Next steps - detailed design and construction**

It is recommended for Council to endorse the proposed concept designs. The next steps would be detailed design and construction of three priority treatments, which would be referred to consideration for funding as part of Council's normal budget process.

The identified priority treatments are:

- A wombat (raised zebra crossing) on Leinster Grove near Woolton Avenue
- A wombat (raised zebra crossing) on Woolhouse Street north of Beavers Road
- A wombat (raised zebra crossing) on Woolhouse Street at Arthurton Road

These treatments have been identified as priorities because they are effective in creating a safer environment for people of all ages and abilities to walk, wheel and cycle. Together these three treatments will have a bigger overall change towards achieving the objectives of the area, rather than focusing on a single location. The wombat crossings set the expectation to road users that it is a local space for local road users, while also signalling the requirement for a reduction in vehicle speed and a reduction in traffic volumes.

#### **Next steps - Road user information changes to support improved safety**

Recommendations for sharrow line-marking, safety at intersections and improved signage would be implemented as part of Council's operating budgets and will further improve road safety and the road user experience.

#### **Next steps - Advocacy**

It is recommended to advocate to the Department of Transport:

- for improvement to the intersection at St Georges Road and Arthurton Road

- to recommence their project to improve safety for trams, motorists and people walking, wheeling and riding along and across the St Georges Road median.

## OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

### Option 1 (recommended):

That Council endorses the Stage 1 concept designs for the Croxton West Place-making Project and refers consideration of funding for design and construction to future year's budget process.

### Option 2

Council could progress the road closure and creation of a pocket park. Officers don't recommend this given the feedback from the community however it would be expected to reduce rat running. If council were to consider this option, officers would recommend running it as a 12 month trial closure first, which is a best practice approach to obtain further community feedback on how it works in practice.

### Option 3 (not recommended)

Council could leave the current streetscape as-is on a long - term basis, which would not achieve valuable pedestrian and safety improvements.

### Option 4 (not recommended)

Council could seek further information to make a decision about how to progress with this project in future. There is good information on which to make a decision and this isn't regarded as necessary. This would add cost and effort that could otherwise be spent on other activities.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### Details

- Public release of the endorsed concept designs – Croxton West Place-making Project (May 2020)
- Functional design of at least three priority treatments (July-August 2020 – subject to funding)
- Detailed design and installation of three priority treatments (soonest possible early 2021 – subject to funding)
- Advocacy to VicRoads

### Communication

The final Croxton West Place-making Project Stage 1 Concept Designs, and Round 2 Engagement Summary will be made available via the project page on 'Your Say', shared with internal and external stakeholders, and those that have contributed or expressed interest will be notified.

**Timeline**

Refer to details section above.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Safe Travel Strategy 2018-2028
- Streets for People Feasibility Study (2018)

**Attachments**

- Croxton West Place Making Project Concept Design (**Appendix A**)
- Croxton West Place Making Summary for Round 2 Engagement (**Appendix B**)
- Croxton West Round 1 Community Engagement Feedback (**Appendix C**)
- Croxton West Place Making Round 2 Survey Results (**Appendix D**)

**DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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



**8.3 STREETS FOR PEOPLE PRESTON ACTIVITY LINK (WEST)****Author:** Senior Transport Planner & Urban Designer**Reviewed By:** General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A draft concept design for the Preston Activity Link (West) 'Streets for People' Corridor has been developed and was released for public consultation between 31 January and 16 February 2020.

The draft concept designs that were consulted on proposed corridor interventions to reduce vehicle speeds and better manage traffic volume; make it easier to walk, wheel and ride; and make streets greener. It aimed to meet the Streets for People Project's vision "The Streets for People Preston Activity Link will prioritise sustainable transport that provides a seamless, safe and inviting pedestrian and cyclist connection to Preston market, Darebin Civic Precinct, schools and parks."

Using a significant level of input from the community and key stakeholders, including two stages of consultation, the concept designs have now been finalised for most of the western section of the corridor, and a final round of engagement is proposed to take place during May for the James Street road closure / pocket park trial.

The final concept designs propose interventions that would be constructed over time. Opportunities for external funding will be explored with funding for further design stages and construction of most of the proposals being referred for consideration in future years budgets along with priorities across the City.

Four street improvements along the Preston Activity Link (West) in 2020-21 have been referred to the Council budget process for consideration. If council endorses the concept designs proposed in this report and funding is allocated, construction is expected to start in early 2021.

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That Council:**

- (1) Endorses the 'Streets for People' Preston Activity Link (West) concept designs for St Georges Road to James Street attached as **Appendix A**.
  - (2) Makes the 'Streets for People' Preston Activity Link (West) Round 2 Engagement Summary document (**Appendix B**) publicly available via the Darebin website
  - (3) Endorses a third round of direct community engagement for the James Street closure pocket park and Hope Street (**Appendix C**)
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**BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION**

Community consultation has now been completed and feedback incorporated into proposed designs, with the exception of the section between James Street and Elizabeth Street that

includes a road closure / pocket park at James Street, which will go to a third round of direct engagement.

The study area for the Preston Activity Link (West) was identified from the Feasibility Study and forms part of the local street network linking the Elizabeth Street in the west, following Cramer Street to St Georges Road. The initial plan included Eric Street (between Elizabeth Street and James Street), however the new proposed link is Hope Street to the south, to connect better with the Merri Creek trail in Moreland.

Council officers have been working with the local community through community engagement activities to develop concept level designs that:

- Prioritise road safety;
- Reduce vehicle speeds and improve driver behaviour;
- Develop high-quality places for people walking, wheeling and cycling;
- Deliver functional and inviting streetscape for those who live, work or study in the local areas.

Draft concept designs of the Preston Activity Link (West) were prepared based on an extensive study of the local area, drawing on best practice experience from Australia and overseas, and through listening to the issues, needs and ideas from the local community. The draft concept designs were released for community feedback in March 2019, then again in February 2020, which has fed into the development of the final concept designs (**Appendix A**) which address the key issues, project vision and objectives.

### Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 2 December 2019, Council resolved:

*'That Council endorse for public consultation of the Preston Activity Link (West and Chifley Drive) draft concept designs, as attached in **Appendix C**.'*

And on 15 October 2018, Council resolved:

*'That Council: Adopts the Gower Street/Cramer Street corridor and Northern Reservoir corridor for the Streets for People project and requests that officers proceed with community and stakeholder engagement and further design during the 2018-19 financial year.'*

## COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

### Consultation

A summary of the Round 1 consultation findings were presented to Council on 2 December 2019, and a detailed overview of the communications and engagement activities undertaken is included in **Appendix D**. A summary of the second round of engagement can be found in the discussion section of this report, and **Appendix B**.

There have been two rounds of community and stakeholder engagement, with the following stages and a mix of methods used to understand community views:

#### Round 1 - Communications and Engagement Activities

5. A whole of area letterbox drop and local advertising to promote the various engagement activities.
6. A community survey receiving input from local residents, businesses and stakeholders in order to understand how the area is performing now and what the priorities for change are.

7. Meetings with state government agencies and community reference groups to gather further local knowledge and strategic context.
8. A community drop-in session for locals to engage with the draft concept plans and provide further input on local issues and directions for change.
9. A street champion workshop for local residents from a variety of backgrounds and road user types to provide input into the draft concept designs.

### **Round 2 - Communications and Engagement Activities**

5. A whole of area letter-box drop and local advertising to promote the various engagement activities.
6. A community survey to test the draft concept designs and invite feedback.
7. A community drop-in session for locals to engage with the proposed concepts and ask questions about any changes.
8. A street champion workshop for local residents from a variety of backgrounds and road user types to confirm the approach to addressing key issues and achieving the vision and objectives of the project.

### **Whole of Project Engagement Summary**

Communication and consultation were planned and delivered throughout the course of the project as follows:

- Through a dedicated project page located on Darebin's Your Say website: [Preston Activity Link](#)
- Two separate mail-outs to some 1,700 households and businesses in the area occurring in March 2019 and January 2020
- Advertisements in the Preston Leader in March 2019 and January 2020.
- Through Darebin's website and via social media. Social media posts are automatically translated to suit the language in the browser settings of the individual. In total, there were six Facebook posts and two Instagram posts over the course of the engagement.
- Feedback for the project was collected through online surveys, direct emails, hard copies of surveys at the drop-in sessions, face-to face feedback at the drop-in sessions and street champion workshops, and via the Q&A function of the Your Say page.
- Face-to-face engagement sessions had copies of the translation services available for attendees to take away if needed, and materials on display were visual diagrammatic A1-sized posters for ease of communicating the project
- Presentations at Darebin Reference Groups including the Darebin Bicycle Advisory Committee and Darebin Environmental Reference Group, as well as via email to the Darebin Disability Advisory Committee, Community Safety Reference Group and Active and Healthy Ageing Advisory Board.
- Local schools including Preston west Primary School and Melbourne Polytechnic were contacted and provided feedback in meetings.
- Advertisements were also placed in Councillor e-bulletins, Sustainability News, Disability Access Newsletter, Green Travel, and "*What's On for Families*" Newsletter.

*Reaching diverse communities*

The consultation was designed to be accessible for our diverse community including people not proficient in English or with other communication barriers. In this local area approximately 90% of residents identify as proficient in English and the main non-English languages spoken are Arabic, Greek and Italian.

Consultation sought to make information accessible and create opportunities for all residents to take part. This was achieved by:

- All information mailed out included information in 12 languages about how to access translation services as well as information about how to access the national relay service.
- Social media promotion ensured that residents could quickly access translated information about the project through online translations that are available in social media platforms.
- Diagrams were an important part of project communications materials and designed to communicate universally.
- The drop-in session was centrally located. Materials were visual and designed to communicate universally. Spoken language translation was also available in Arabic and Greek.

From the survey responses, the following diverse groups were reached:

- Italian – 5, Greek – 2, Arabic – 1, Other – 10 (17% of survey respondents, higher than the 10% identified as living in the area – ABS Census 2016).
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders – 2 (2% of survey respondents, higher than the 0.3% identified as living in the area – ABS Census 2016).
- Identify as having a disability - 4 (4% of survey respondents, just below the Darebin figure of 6% - ABS Census 2016).

*Overall level of responses and engagement*

The Your Say page received over 780 visits during the second round of engagement with over 1,600 visits to date. There were 92 completions of the initial community survey (Round 1), and 105 recorded in response to the draft concept designs (Round 2 – West only). Approximately 45 people attended the drop-in sessions and provided face-to-face feedback during Round 1 and 2. The street champions workshops hosted approximately 10 local residents who provided further insights and feedback.

**Communications**

A detailed communications and engagement plan was prepared for the Streets for People Preston Activity Link (West) in consultation with Hansen Partnership. The ultimate visions and objectives for this project that were described in the communications are to:

- Redefine part of the local street network to prioritise sustainable transport modes; and to be safe, functional and inviting to those who live, work or study in the local area.
- Ensure that roads are designed for low vehicle speeds by introducing street-scaping and landscaping design elements.
- Provide a high - quality east-west corridor for people walking and cycling with convenient connections to public transport and supporting access across busy roads.

- Provide opportunities for increased open space and biodiversity through street greening and landscaping.
- Create a leading example in Melbourne of how, working closely with the community, neighbourhoods can be transformed to respond to local issues, which can then be promoted as a “best practice” example for further expansion of the program to other neighbourhoods and corridors.

## ANALYSIS

### Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

The Council Plan 2017-2021 sets the overarching vision for “a greener, bolder, more connected city.” The Streets for People program aligns with this overarching vision, as well as Council Plan Goal 1, 2, 3 and 5.

- Goal 1 - A sustainable city
- Goal 2 - Opportunities to live well
- Goal 3 - A liveable city

Goal 5 - Involving our diverse community

The Streets for People program also aligns with the expected outcomes of several Council endorsed policies/strategies, including the Darebin Transport Strategy, Walking Strategy, Safe Travel Strategy, Cycling Strategy, Greenstreets Streetscape Strategy, and Climate Emergency Plan.

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

The Streets for People program focuses on vulnerable road users and improving conditions in the street environment to increase the number of participants in active travel, while minimising the use and impact of vehicles. Where possible, passive irrigation and water sensitive urban design principles will be applied to road safety treatments, along with landscaping. The Parks and Open Space team have been consulted regarding opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

### Climate Emergency

This program has a clear alignment with Key direction 4 of the Climate Emergency Plan 2017-2022, in particular Objective 1 “Reduce the number of private vehicle kilometres travelled in Darebin by increasing the share of public transport use, walking and cycling” and Key direction 7 to reduce the heat island effect, by increasing tree cover.

### Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations

An Equity and Inclusion Assessment was completed for the Streets for People project, through which it was recognised that the project has key outcomes for Darebin’s diverse community including:

- Accessibility compliance through design (Disability Discrimination Act 1992).
- Designing of facilities for all ages and abilities.
- Outcomes that encourage more physical activity, general wellbeing and health through walking and cycling.

- Streets becoming safer and less intimidating for local communities to use.
- Providing spaces for people to gather and be socially connected to their neighbourhoods.

### **Cultural Considerations**

We heard from the community that the HP Zwar Park was an opportunity for providing local art and greening that incorporates a response to the cultural aspects of the corridor. Although HP Zwar Park is out the scope of this project this feedback will be shared with Council's open space management and design teams for consideration in other work.

### **Economic Development Considerations**

There are increasing demands on our public space, and in particular roads and parking. By improving the quality of walking, wheeling and cycling routes to access our activity and neighbourhood centres, it makes it easier for residents and visitors using any mode of transport to work, shop, and visit local centres which supports thriving local economies. This is because it increases pedestrian users in activity centres, which activates these centres and means that people are more likely to do multiple activities in the one visit, and it also reduces road congestion and parking pressure which are expected to increase over time with Melbourne's population growth.

The Streets for People corridors are designed to provide high-quality connections between key destinations within the municipality, increasing their catchment potential by providing easy to use and safe solutions.

This project is being considered in the context of the Future Preston program and is expected to help contribute to overall improvements in the Preston area.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

#### Functional design for the priority projects would be completed this financial year

The consultation and functional design work discussed in this report is provided for within the 19/20 budget that was adopted.

The highest community benefit from improvements along the Preston Activity Link corridor is expected to be the road closure at James Street between Cramer Street and Hope Street in combination with, pinch points on Cramer Street and on James Street near Eric Street. The closure coupled with the pinch points with raised tables will reduce the amount of non-local traffic using Cramer Street resulting in improved safety outcomes for more vulnerable road users along the corridor.

Due to the expected benefit for the community of the projects above, officers are proposing to complete functional design in time for the detailed design and construction of the priority projects in 2020/21 if funding is allocated to this project. Further design work will be planned in preparation for the next construction priorities along the corridor in future years.

The next priority along this corridor is the Jessie Street roundabout and protected bike lanes. This section of the project will be prioritised to be progressed in future years, dependant on funding availability. Officers will also seek opportunities to apply for grant funding for the Jessie Street to St Georges Road section of the corridor, which is also the most cost intensive part of the project.

Further functional and detailed design, and delivery of projects along the Preston Activity Link will be referred to future budget processes and would need to be considered against priorities for investment across the City and across a range of services. Construction of treatments in the precinct could be staged over many years and/or works can be prioritised within the precinct. Opportunities for attracting external funding will be investigated.

### **Legal and Risk Implications**

Overall this project is designed to reduce risk by improving both road safety and by making it easier, safer and more enjoyable for people to walk, wheel or cycle, and also to reduce the amount of vehicle emissions contributing to the long-term risk associated with climate change. Making it easier for people to walk, wheel and cycle also contributes to lower community health risks associated with inactivity, isolation and local air pollution.

### **DISCUSSION**

The concept designs in **Appendix A** identify a range of measures to be implemented over time to improve safety, make the corridor more attractive for walking, wheeling and cycling, etc. These include:

- Landscaped kerb build outs to reduce road widths and help to slow vehicles.
- Creation of raised and at-grade crossing points for safer pedestrian movements, including at the Jessie Street roundabout.
- Road markings and different types of bike lanes (including protected) to highlight the Preston Activity Link as a local bike route.
- Opportunities to plant more street trees, potentially combined with measures to sustainably manage stormwater.

### **Engagement has found strong support overall**

Feedback from Round 1 of engagement was reported at the Council meeting of 2 December 2019, and is attached to this report in **Appendix D**. This feedback informed the changes and proposed recommendations presented for feedback in Round 2 of engagement.

105 responses were recorded to the survey in Round 2 of engagement. 30% of responses were from residents who lived along the corridor, and a further 34% from residents in the broader Preston precinct. There was a mix of preferences in regard to preferred primary mode of transport, with 33% representing bike riders, 23% representing pedestrians, 22% representing motorists, and 15% representing public transport users. This represents a good mix of road user types.

For the overall future vision of the Preston Activity Link, 85% of respondents agreed with the statement “The Streets for People Preston Activity Link (West) Corridor will prioritise sustainable transport that provides a seamless, safe and inviting pedestrian and cyclist connection to Preston Market, Darebin Civic Precinct, schools and parks.” For each of the corridor ambitions, between 83% and 93% of respondents agreed with the statements. For reference the guiding principles are included in the on-line survey response summary in **Appendix A**.

Support for the concept designs for each of the areas, and additional feedback was as follows:



**Area 1 (Elizabeth Street to Gilbert Road) – Road closure and pocket park**

81% - 94% of respondents supported each of the proposed concept plans. There was a high level of support for a road closure / pocket park treatment, however some issues were raised regarding the location around local accessibility as a result of existing traffic conditions.

In addition, although a crossing at Elizabeth Street was supported, the location of the crossing at Eric Street was highlighted as 'not the ideal location' for access to destinations west of Elizabeth Street. In 2019 a petition was received by Council from local residents requesting a pedestrian crossing near Raymond Street, and from meeting with officers from Moreland Council, it is also their preferred location.

Officer response: Considering the feedback from the community, a review was undertaken and an alternative pocket park with road closure location has been identified. This offers similar benefit with fewer drawbacks. The pocket park and road closure can be moved south of Cramer Street on James Street (between Hope Street and Cramer Street). A draft concept layout of the location and treatment is attached as **Appendix C**.

As this is a significant change to what was take to the community in round 2 of community engagement, it is proposed to seek further community feedback on this adjustment separately to the remainder of the treatments which are included in this report for endorsement. This would involve contacting directly impacted households (approximately 700).

In considering the feedback regarding the crossing location of Elizabeth Street and proposed changes to the road closure / pocket park above, the proposed preferred bicycle route is now recommended to follow James Street and Raymond Street, connecting to a crossing point of Elizabeth Street near Raymond Street.

**Area 2 (Gilbert Road to St Georges Road) – Roundabout, protected bike lanes and reduction in on-street parking**

83% - 98% of respondents supported each of the proposed concept plans. There was a high level of support for improvements to the Jessie Street roundabout that benefit walking, wheeling and riding.

Through the community consultation and the drop-in session, some participants made suggestions outside the scope of this project including for improvements to HP Zwar Park. Although such work sits outside of this particular project, some of the aspirational ideas have been documented and shared with open space management and design teams in council to contribute to future work.

Feedback from stakeholders: Preston West Primary School were very supportive of the changes to the area surrounding. They did not request any changes to the current draft plans.

No direct feedback has been received from the Preston Mosque, following Darebin's Coordinator of Equity and Diversity speaking with the Project Officer, emailing and directly mailing translated information to display in the Mosque.

Melbourne Polytechnic supported improved access for sustainable modes of transport, however had concerns about student feedback as a result of the reduction in car parking on the south side of Cramer Street.

Officer response: See 'Area 1 and Area 2 – Reallocation of on-street parking' below.

### **Area 1 and Area 2 – Reallocation of on-street parking**

There were specific requests in the survey feedback around; accessibility requirements for residents with a disability, concerns about on street parking due to the increasing number of townhouses and requests to go even further by removing parking on both sides of the road to further improve safety for vulnerable road users.

Some of the treatments in the draft concept designs would involve reductions in on-street parking as follows:

- James Street road closure and pocket park – approximately 5 spaces (all adjacent households have access to off-street parking)
- James Street pinch point – 2 parking spaces (all adjacent households have access to off-street parking)
- Four pinch points between James Street and Gilbert Road – 2-3 parking spaces each (a measured average parking occupancy confirmed that between 23% and 44% of available spaces has cars stored in them)
- Two pinch points between Gilbert Road and Jessie Street – 2-3 parking spaces each (a measured average parking occupancy confirmed that between 41% and 45% of available spaces has cars stored in them)
- Protected bike lane between Jessie Street and St Georges Road – 26 parking spaces (a measured average parking occupancy confirmed that between 67% and 77% of available spaces has cars stored in them)

Officer response: Parking data has been collected and reviewed to identify parking occupancy trends in the precinct, and it shows that the average occupancy across Cramer Street is 41% - 45% on weekdays, and 26% - 45% on Saturdays. Parking data is from the year 2019. Officers are comfortable that the removal of on-street parking can be accommodated within the existing on-street parking that will remain on Cramer Street and in surrounding streets, which includes 241 parking spaces within a 5-minute walk of Cramer Street.

### **Construction of priority treatments in 2020-21**

If the final round of engagement on the location of the pocket park goes well, Council endorses the proposed concept designs and budget is available for the project, detailed design and construction of 4 priority treatments will take place in 2020-21.

The identified priority treatments are:

- A road closure / pocket park on James Street between Cramer Street and Hope Street
- A raised platform pinch point on James Street between Cramer Street and Eric Street
- Two pinch points with speed cushion and bicycle bypass areas on Cramer Street between James Street and Gilbert Road

These treatments have been identified as priorities because they are priority next steps for creating a safer environment for people of all ages and abilities to walk, wheel and cycle. Together these four treatments will have a bigger overall change towards achieving the objectives of the corridor, rather than focusing on a single location. The road closure / pocket park sets the expectation to road users that it is for local road users, while the pinch points signals the requirement for a reduction in vehicle speed and a reduction in traffic volumes.

Residents directly benefiting or impacted by the proposed road closure / pocket park (approximately 700 households) will be notified by letter of the opportunity to provide feedback on the alternative proposed location for the road closure and pocket park on James Street.

Following this third round of direct engagement, it is proposed to progress with the pocket park as a 12-month trial. This approach would allow for traffic surveys before and again after the installation with an extended community feedback opportunity before refining the design to align with community needs, manage any adverse impacts and construct the final project.

The next priority along this corridor is the Jessie Street roundabout and protected bike lanes. This section of the project will be prioritised to be progressed in future years, dependant on funding availability. Officers will also seek opportunities to apply for grant funding for the Jessie Street to St Georges Road section of the corridor, which is also the most cost intensive part of the project.

## **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **Option 1 (recommended):**

That Council endorses the final concept designs for the Preston Activity Link – St Georges Road to James Street, and commences functional design of the priority treatments this financial year, in conjunction with conducting a third round of direct engagement on the proposal to move the James Street road closure / pocket park (to between Hope Street and Cramer Street).

### **Option 2 (not recommended)**

Council could leave the current streetscape as-is or seek further information to make a decision about how to progress with this project in future. This would halt or delay works to improve safety for all road users in the corridor.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

### **Details**

- Public release of the endorsed Preston Activity Link (West) concept designs – St Georges Road to James Street (April 2020)
- Communication with directly impacted residents (approximately 700 households) through a letter notifying them of the new proposal for the James Street road closure / pocket park, and associated feedback period (May 2020)
- Council briefing and report for engagement summary and endorsement of James Street road closure / pocket park (June 2020)
- Functional design of four priority treatments (May – June 2020)
- Detailed design and installation of four priority treatments and detailed design of other important locations by June 2021
- Remainder of recommended corridor treatments referred to future year budgets, with full delivery targeted by 2023.

## Communication

The final Streets for People Preston Activity Link (West) Report and designs will be made available via the project page on 'Your Say', shared with internal and external stakeholders, and those that have contributed or expressed interest in the strategies will be notified.

## Timeline

Refer to details section above.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Safe Travel Strategy 2018-2028
- Streets for People Feasibility Study (2018)

## Attachments

- Streets for People Preston Activity Link (West) Concept Designs (**Appendix A**)
- Streets for People Preston Activity Link (West) Round 2 Engagement Summary (**Appendix B**)
- Streets for People Preston Activity Link (West) Draft Concept Design for James Street (**Appendix C**)
- Streets for People Preston Activity Link Round 1 Engagement Summary (**Appendix D**)

## DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

**8.4 DRAFT MAYER PARK MASTER PLAN****Author:** Landscape Architect**Reviewed By:** General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides an update on *Future Mayer Park* draft master plan (**Appendix A**) and proposes its release for the final phase of community engagement.

The process of developing this draft master plan has trialled a process of high levels of engagement with a Project Control Group (PCG) made up of local community members and supported by officers. Over the past 18 months, officers have worked collaboratively with the PCG to understand their advice at a deeper level and this is reflected in the master plan.

The content of the draft master plan is guided by the PCG's vision for the park which focuses on the park as a welcoming and inclusive space offering a range of experiences that enables the community to come together to be happy and healthy.

Since June 2018, the PCG have had over 20 meetings. In that time, the PCG have familiarised themselves with the site context, Council's policies and demographic data, workshopped the Vision Statement, developed and led the engagement with the broader community, and summarised the engagement data, to inform the development of the draft master plan.

The draft master plan proposes improvements based on five design principles that guide the implementation of the community vision for Mayer Park:

1. **A Shared Park** – a park that hosts many activities, enabling the community to share a range of experiences while also building on the value of the existing uses.
2. **Better Park Amenity** – a park with great amenities and facilities for all to enjoy while retaining what makes it great – its open green space.
3. **An Open and Welcoming Park** – a park that is open, welcoming and draws the community in while being inclusive of all users.
4. **Nature and Environment** – a park where the community comes to have a break from urban life and to connect with nature.
5. **Better Links** - a park that plays a key role in improving links between people, flora and fauna and other open spaces in the Thornbury neighbourhood, wider Darebin area and beyond.

The improvements proposed in the master plan stem from these 5 design principles and are categorised into short, medium and long term actions to be implemented over a 10 year time frame.

Officers propose to release the *Future Mayer Park* draft master plan for a four week community consultation period. The PCG will check in with the community and officers will amend the draft master plan to reflect the feedback and prepare a report for Council seeking adoption of the master plan, anticipated to be in June 2020.

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That Council:**

- (1) Endorses the release of the *Future Mayer Park Draft Master Plan* for consultation with the broader community.
  - (2) Thanks the Project Control Group for their work and commitment through 2018 and 2019.
- 

**BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION**

- Mayer Park is located at 99 Leinster Grove (corner of Normanby Avenue and Leinster Grove), Thornbury. Approximately 3.98 hectares, the park contains two soccer pitches, a turf cricket wicket and a sport pavilion to cater for organised sport. Several community groups use the existing Leinster Grove Community Hall located at the south-east corner. The park also caters for informal recreation needs of the local community such as walking, using the outdoor gym, BBQ and picnic facilities, off lead dog play and community events including outdoor movie nights.
- Breathing Space – The Darebin Open Space Strategy determines the level of infrastructure and investment at Mayer Park and classifies the park as:
  - District Level Park - drawing visitors from the surrounding suburbs as well as people who live within walking distance.
  - Type A level of investment in the park, which suggests a level of provision that might include amenities such as a public toilet, lighting, internal walking path network, park furniture, playground, canopy trees and/or garden beds.
- At its 28 February 2018 meeting, Council resolved to support a community led design process to create a new master plan for Mayer Park and launch an Expression of Interest for a PCG. Submissions from local community members were received and evaluated by officers.
- At its 30 April 2018, Council resolved to appoint eight community members to the PCG and endorsed the PCG Terms of Reference.
- Over the past 18 months the PCG have had over 20 meetings (PCG meetings and stakeholder meetings) to develop the master plan.



Figure 1 – Mayer Park, Thornbury

## Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 28 February 2018, Council resolved:

*'That Council endorses the development of a masterplan for Mayer Park only, excluding the Northcote Golf Course.'*

## COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

### Consultation

The PCG collaborated with officers in creating the community engagement strategy for the draft master plan. The Communications and Engagement Plan outlines this strategy, taking into consideration the current COVID-19 restrictions.

### Consultation activities completed to date

The key engagement activities included a 4,000-house mail out, community drop in session, targeted discussions with key stakeholders via email, phone or in person and an online survey supported by social media posts. *The Community Engagement Summary Report Phase 1 & 2* prepared by the PCG can be found at **Appendix B**.

The top themes that emerged from the consultation were:

- Retaining open space for formal sporting and informal recreation, dog walking and open vistas.
- The need for a new playspace that caters for all ages.
- Additional native tree and shrubs planting and landscaping.
- An overall improvement to park amenities including park furniture, footpaths and walking tracks, new BBQ facilities and shelter.

These have been addressed in the draft master plan.

Phase One Council-led consultation

- Prior to the creation of the PCG, officers led the preliminary round of community consultation in March 2018 to gather initial feedback to inform the first draft of the community's vision for the park. Over 66 comments were collected, which were grouped into ten general themes. A summary of the insight is as follows:
  - The top themes were Park Amenity Improvements, Retaining Open Space, New Playspace, and Landscape Improvements.
  - Retaining Open Space and New Playspace had the greatest number of individual comments with 15 and 14 respectively, meaning that these were the two items with strongest support.
  - These were closely followed by Landscape Improvements (trees, planting) and Walking Track with 9 individual comments each.

Phase Two community consultation

- Community consultation led by the PCG took place over eight weeks in October and November 2018 to seek feedback on the master plan vision and key themes to be considered in the master plan.
- The engagement activities included a drop - in session at the park on 13 October 2018, coinciding with the Makers Market, postcards dropped to 4,000 households around the park with the option to fill out and return a comment section on the postcards, an online survey and targeted requests for comments from stakeholders. The PCG completed the analysis of the Phase Two consultation and displayed the findings at a follow up drop in session at the park on December 1.
- Feedback from the consultation indicated a very strong support for the Vision Statement.
- Findings from Phase Two community consultation confirmed some of the initial feedback trends received in Phase One. This feedback included:
  - Continuing the community movie nights
  - New playspace for children of all ages
  - Improving park amenities (e.g. BBQ, park furniture)
  - Upgrading pavilion and toilet
  - Retaining the green open space
  - Additional tree planting.
  - Other ideas included retaining off lead dog areas, providing better walking paths, bicycle infrastructure.
  - There were comments about provision of a fenced dog off lead area, or generally about fencing around the park for safety.
  - The community had mixed views about themes such as outdoor library, art and sculpture, yarnning circle, cricket nets, half - court basketball and games areas. It was suggested that some of these themes were not as clear or did not resonate with parts of the community. The PCG also noted that young people were underrepresented at the drop-in session due to the typical demographic that usually attend the Makers Market, i.e. young couples with children and people in the older demographic. Young people will be targeted in the next phase of the consultation to make sure their voices are heard in the process.



- The themes that had the most negative reactions were Skate & BMX, Games Area and Multipurpose courts. This was also again indicative of the underrepresentation of young people at the drop-in session. It is to be noted that a large proportion of the subsequent feedback received via emails and postcards noted the need to include activities for older children and teenagers, including numerous requests for a basketball half court.

#### External Stakeholder Consultation

- 28 external stakeholders were contacted directly by the PCG to seek initial comments. The stakeholders were given the option to provide feedback or comments by reply email or to complete the online survey. A list of stakeholders is included in the Summary of Consultation Report (**Appendix B**)
- Written submissions were received from Darebin United Soccer Club, Merri Creek Management Committee and The Bridge Thornbury (who manage the Leinster Grove Community Hall and the community groups that use the hall, including the Japanese Karate Association, Nick Healey Dance, Wonder Garden Dance, Italian Senior Citizens, Blossoming Head Yoga & Dance). The written submissions are included in as attachments to the Summary of Consultation Report (**Appendix B**)
- Representatives from the Open Space Unit of Moreland City Council met on site with a representative of the PCG and Darebin City Council staff to discuss the master plan process and provide comments and feedback. Notes from this meeting are included as attachments to the Summary of Consultation Report (**Appendix B**)
- A representative of the PCG and Darebin City Council staff met on site with representatives of the Wurundjeri Land Council at the early stage of the master planning process. Refer Cultural Considerations section of this report. Notes from this meeting are included as attachments to the Summary of Consultation Report (**Appendix B**)

#### Internal Stakeholder Consultation

*Future Mayer Park* was developed in consultation with the following officers:

- Aboriginal Contact Officer
- Community Safety Officer
- Coordinator Bushland Management
- Coordinator City Design
- Coordinator Community Engagement and Demographics,
- Coordinator Community Participation and Development
- Coordinator Community Wellbeing
- Coordinator Open space and Horticulture
- Coordinator Recreation and Leisure
- Coordinator Recreation Planning and Participation
- Manager Creative Culture and Events
- Manager Environment and Sustainable Transport
- Manager Equity and Wellbeing
- Manager Families, Youth and Children
- Manager Parks and Vegetation

- Senior Communications Advisor,
- Senior Transport Engineer
- Senior Transport Planner
- Team Leader Horticulture
- Team Leader Youth Services

#### Darebin Advisory Committees Consultation

- Proposed improvements at Mayer park were presented and discussed with relevant Darebin Advisory Committees including:
  - Darebin Nature Trust
  - Darebin Bicycle Advisory Committee
  - Advice from the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee has been sought at their 4 March 2020 committee meeting.

### **Communications**

A Communication and Engagement Plan was prepared to guide the communication and engagement process during the COVID-19 restrictions.

### **ANALYSIS**

#### **Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy**

Goal 1 - A sustainable city

The development of the master plan is part of Council's commitment to Goal 1.3 of the Council Plan 2017-2021 to '*expand and improve our network of open and green spaces, parks and natural environments to provide the lungs for our city and reduce the impacts of climate change*'.

#### **Environmental Sustainability Considerations**

Mayer Park has a number of canopy trees along its perimeter, mostly eucalypts and some exotic species dating back to the establishment of the park. Trees that are in good health will be retained, with additional canopy trees planted over time to aim for 25% canopy cover of the park. Succession planting of existing Desert Ash trees (classified as weeds) is recommended to be undertaken over time, as the trees mature and decline in health. The plan also proposed additional understorey planting to improve biodiversity and habitat links.

#### **Climate Emergency**

Climate Emergency has been considered in the master plan and will inform the implementation of the actions. The challenges of a warmer and drier climate and access to affordable water have been recognised and addressed in the master plan and are supported by the *Better Park Amenity* and *Nature and Environment* design principles. The actions outlined below play a role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by direct and indirect means.

- Plant new native and indigenous trees over time to double the existing canopy cover to 25% coverage.

- Perform regular tree assessment, maintenance of tree health and succession planting of trees reaching maturity and those in decline
- Mulch around existing trees and within new garden beds
- Incorporate recycled materials where it is more sustainable than natural materials
- Provide bike hoops to encourage sustainable transport modes
- Retain and protect existing trees

### **Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations**

Public open spaces enhance the social and community value of these neighbourhoods by providing important opportunities for social gathering, interaction and exercise. Intensification of local built environments and populations highlight the increased need for diverse and accessible public open spaces.

The master plan addresses these requirements by proposing good quality walking paths, accessible park amenities such as wheelchair accessible picnic tables and BBQ facilities and new playspace and active spaces for children of all age groups.

To address incident and safety concerns raised by the community, a community safety audit of the park was completed and the recommendations considered in the master plan. Some of the key recommendations were:

- Retain sightlines, activation and access to the park
- Upgrade/ construct new paths along the perimeter of the park
- Extend opening hours of the public toilet and make improvements to lighting and amenity
- Improve park signage at park entries
- Make changes to fencing, lighting and amenity of the sports clubroom and community hall
- Provide accessible car park and bicycle parking
- Improve lighting for both sports use and general use

A request for collision statistics involving pedestrians along Normanby Avenue was sent to Victoria Police. The statistics revealed that over a period of 3 years, 1 reported incident was recorded at the corner of Normanby Avenue and Leinster Grove, which had to do with non-compliance to traffic signals.

### **Cultural Considerations**

The users of Mayer Park and its facilities, including the Leinster Grove Community Hall, are from diverse communities. Consultation on the draft master plan will reach out to all residents and park users inclusive of cultural groups.

Initial consultation with traditional owners was conducted at the early stage of the master plan development. The Wurundjeri Council appreciated being consulted however, due to the early stage of the process, were not able to offer tangible recommendations. The Wurundjeri Council will be consulted further on the draft master plan. Some potential ideas to integrate a cultural layer to the master plan could include:

- Incorporate indigenous themes in the design of the new playspace.

- Incorporate local indigenous stories and place making elements within the park: e.g. through a mural.

### **Economic Development Considerations**

Great public open spaces contribute positively to the local community by being places where the community can meet, connect and build healthy relationships with each other and with nature, reinforcing the cohesiveness of the community and attracting new residents and businesses to Darebin, as well as retaining the existing.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

A number of improvements led by other Council departments were completed at Mayer Park in 2018-2019 including the sport ground levelling and returfing works to establish a second soccer pitch, installation of new drainage and irrigation, the installation of a new cricket turf pitch between the two soccer pitches and installation of a high netted fence to catch soccer balls. In 2019-2020, the existing sport lighting is currently being upgraded with six new flood lights.

The 19/20 budget allocated \$112,000 to delivering some 'easy wins' actions including new shared path, landscaping improvements and the design of a new playspace for all ages. These align with existing Council strategies and the proposed intent of the draft master plan.

Due to the current COVID-19 restrictions and potential further restrictions on construction sites, the shared path upgrade and landscaping improvements has been deferred. The design of a new playspace will go ahead as planned.

The remaining park improvements will be considered in future council budgets. If external funding opportunities arise in the form of grants, Council and the community could use the master plan as a basis for seeking grant funding for some of the initiatives.

### **Legal and Risk Implications**

An Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) applied to the whole park due to its proximity to the Merri Creek catchment. Any proposed improvements works will be referred to Council's Planning Unit to ascertain planning permit requirements.

A Special Building Overlay (SBO) applies to some areas of Mayer Park. Improvement works that occur in an SBO may trigger the requirement for a planning permit and written approval from Melbourne Water. This is addressed in the master plan by locating significant structures outside of the SBO.

The master plan will be implemented over many years and this is addressed in the master plan by prioritising of the improvements into short, medium and long term. This will be sense checked with the local community during community consultation on the draft master plan to ensure it aligns with community priorities.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Future Mayer Park Master Plan**

*Mayer Park is a welcoming and inclusive space offering a range of experiences that enables the community to come together to be happy and healthy.*

To support the community vision above, the master plan proposes a range of improvements to the amenity and quality of amenity at the park, while retaining its open character. This ensures that the needs of the current and future communities are catered for by offering for example better access to and through the park with good quality walking and cycling paths, improved park furniture and BBQ facilities, a new playspace and additional shade trees, garden beds and landscaping using a mix of native and indigenous species.

The draft master plan proposes improvements based on five design principles that guide the implementation of the community vision for Mayer Park. Some of the key actions in the master plan include:

- Upgrade existing unsealed track along the northern edge of the park to a concrete shared path to improve access for jogging, walking, wheelchairs and prams.
- Provide a new unsealed gravel walking track around the perimeter of the park suitable for jogging, walking, wheelchairs and prams.
- Upgrade existing park furniture within the park, including seats and picnic settings that are also wheelchair accessible.
- Design and deliver a playspace that caters for children of all age groups.
- Design and deliver a new intergenerational space for all ages connected to the new playspace. The space is to include new BBQ facilities, shelter and seating.
- Installation of new cycle facilities such as bike hoops and bike repair station to promote active transport to the park.
- Trial extension of the opening hours of the existing toilets, including maintenance and cleaning.
- Plant new native canopy trees to improve canopy cover to 25%, improve biodiversity values and provide additional shade along walking paths. Continue to perform regular tree assessment and maintenance of tree health and conduct succession planting to gradually replace existing ageing Desert Ashes (environmental weed).
- Plant shrubs and understorey based on the Plains Grassy Woodlands EVC to enhance habitat and biodiversity values.
- Relocate existing cricket nets to open up the space adjacent to the Leinster Grove community hall for community activation.
- Investigate and implement improved and safer access for pedestrians and cyclists to the park along Leinster Grove as part of Council's Streets For people project. Improvements could include a review of the intersection of Normanby Avenue and Leinster Grove and installation of new 'wombat crossings' at the intersection of Leinster Grove with Shaftesbury Parade and Woolton Avenue.
- In consultation with the Northcote Golf Course, investigate the establishment of an off-street walking trail connection from Mayer Park through to the new footbridge across Merri Creek at Beavers Road. The trail alignment to follow the eastern boundary of the golf course and use existing maintenance tracks to minimise impact on golfing activities.
- Continue to advocate for a new pedestrian crossing point on Normanby Road at the north-west end of the park to improve access to this entry point, subject to VicRoads approval.
- Long term when the existing sports pavilion is due for an upgrade, investigate feasibility of a new multi-purpose facility on the western boundary, shared between the park and the golf course. The new multi-purpose building is to include a sports pavilion, community facilities, upgraded golf course facilities and public toilets.

- Following consolidation of buildings into a multi-purpose facility on the western boundary, remove the sports pavilion and return the footprint to open space. Continue to make Leinster Grove Community Hall available to community groups.

## OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Option One: Endorse the release of the Future Mayer Park Draft Master Plan for the final phase of consultation with the broader community. **Recommended**

Option two: Refer the Future Mayer Park Draft Master Plan to additional revisions

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### Details

#### Next steps

- **April** – Council to consider endorsing the release of the draft master plan for community engagement.
- **May** – Community and stakeholder engagement period.
- **Early June** – Final PCG meeting to discuss submissions and final changes. Officers to finalise master plan.
- **Late June** – Final Master plan goes to Council to consider adopting.
- **July** – Notify the community about the adoption of the master plan and continue its implementation.

### Communication

A Communication and Engagement Plan was prepared to guide the communication and engagement process during the COVID-19 restrictions.

### Timeline

Consultation period will be open for 4 weeks and currently planned for May 2020.

### Attachments

- Draft Future Mayer Park Master Plan (**Appendix A**)
- Mayer Park Community Engagement Report (**Appendix B**)
- Community Engagement Plan for Draft Mayer Park Master Plan (**Appendix C**)

## DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

**9. CONSIDERATION OF RESPONSES TO PETITIONS, NOTICES OF MOTION AND GENERAL BUSINESS**

Nil

**10. NOTICES OF MOTION****10.1 RECOGNISING ANGELO TROMBINO****Councillor:** Gaetano GRECO**NoM No.:** 471

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Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 April 2020, it is my intention to move:

*'That Council Officially expresses its sincere condolences for the sad passing of Mr Angelo Trombino and work with his family to consider an appropriate way (in the vicinity of his corner store) to recognise his significant contribution to the Edwards Street Reservoir shopping precinct and if required a report be presented to a further Council Meeting.'*

**Notice Received:** 13 April 2020**Notice Given to Councillors** 22 April 2020**Date of Meeting:** 27 April 2020**Attachments**

Nil



**11. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Nil

## 12. RECORDS OF ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS

### 12.1 ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS HELD

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An Assembly of Councillors is defined in section 3 of the *Local Government Act 1989* to include Advisory Committees of Council if at least one Councillor is present or, a planned or scheduled meeting attended by at least half of the Councillors and one Council Officer that considers matters intended or likely to be the subject of a Council decision.

Written records of Assemblies of Councillors must be kept and include the names of all Councillors and members of Council staff attending, the matters considered, any conflict of interest disclosures made by a Councillor attending, and whether a Councillor who has disclosed a conflict of interest leaves the assembly.

Pursuant to section 80A (2) of the Act, these records must be, as soon as practicable, reported at an ordinary meeting of the Council and incorporated in the minutes of that meeting.

An Assembly of Councillors record was kept for:

- Councillor Briefing – 3 April 2020
- Briefing of Rucker Ward Councillors on Planning Committee Items – 8 April 2020
- Councillor Briefing – 14 April 2020
- Councillor Briefing – 20 April 2020

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That** the record of the Assembly of Councillors held on 3, 8, 14 and 20 April 2020 and attached as **Appendix A** to this report, be noted and incorporated in the minutes of this meeting.

#### Attachments

- Assembly of Councillors - 27 April 2020 (**Appendix A**)

**13. REPORTS BY MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS**

**Recommendation**

**That** Council note the Reports by Mayor and Councillors.

**14. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL**


**15. CLOSE OF MEETING**

**CITY OF  
DAREBIN**

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