

# AGENDA



Meeting of Council

To be held at the

Civic Centre

511 Burwood Highway

Wantirna South

On

Monday 28 April 2025 at 7:00 PM

This meeting will be conducted as a hybrid meeting

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Bruce Dobson

Chief Executive Officer

1      Apologies And Requests For Leaves Of Absence

2      Declarations Of Conflict Of Interest

3      Confirmation Of Minutes

Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Council held on Monday 24 March 2025.

4      Presentations, Petitions And Memorials

5      Reports By Councillors

## 6 Planning Matters

### 6.1 Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 March 2025 to 31 March 2025

**Final Report Destination:** Council  
**Paper Type:** For Noting  
**Author:** Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie  
**Manager:** Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie  
**Executive:** Director, City Liveability, Matt Kelleher

#### SUMMARY

Details of planning applications considered under delegation are referred for information. It is recommended that the items be noted.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the planning applications decided under delegation 1 March 2025 to 31 March 2025 as set out in the officers' report.

#### 1. REPORT

Details of planning applications decided under delegation from 1 March 2025 to 31 March 2025 are attached. The applications are summarised as follows:

Application Type	No.
Building & Works: Residential	4
Other	3
Subdivision	13
Units	8
Tree Removal / Pruning	17
Single Dwelling	2
Change of Use	2
Small Second Dwelling	1
Medical Centre	1
Liquor Licence	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>

#### 2. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

#### ATTACHMENTS

Nil

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## Knox City Council

### Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation

1 March 2025 and 31 March 2025

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Baird	2025/6020	39 Western Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus obliqua (Messmate) and pruning of three (3) Eucalyptus obliqua (Messmate)	3/03/2025 Approved
Baird	2025/6072	9 Malvern Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Buildings and Works (construction of a mezzanine floor)	3/03/2025 Approved
Baird	2025/6026	9 Conway Court BORONIA VIC 3155	Eight (8) lot subdivision (approved development site)	12/03/2025 Approved
Baird	2025/6031	29 Stradbroke Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Four (4) lot subdivision (approved development site)	31/03/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6028	402 Dorset Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Dead Eucalyptus radiata (Narrow Leaved Peppermint)	5/03/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6047	2 Marie Street BORONIA VIC 3155	Remove of One (1) Eucalyptus leucoxydon (Yellow Gum)	11/03/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6057	48 Democrat Drive THE BASIN VIC 3154	Removal of one (1) at-risk tree identified as Tree # 1 in front yard	13/03/2025 Approved
Chandler	2024/6524	21 Toorak Avenue THE BASIN VIC 3154	Buildings and works (extension to an existing dwelling)	13/03/2025 Notice of Decision
Chandler	2025/6069	28 McDonald Crescent BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus obliqua (Messmate) and one (1) Eucalyptus cypellocarpa (Mountain Grey Gum)	17/03/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6050	1/31 McDonald Crescent BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus rubida (Candlebark)	18/03/2025 Approved
Chandler	2024/6563	13 Norman Street THE BASIN VIC 3154	Construction of a single storey dwelling, including a shed and associated vegetation removal	18/03/2025 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Chandler	2025/6054	5 Tarakan Street BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus radiata (Narrow Leaved Peppermint) and one (1) Eucalyptus obliqua (Messmate)	21/03/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6095	1/102 Albert Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus ovata (Swamp Gum) and one (1) Liquidambar styraciflua (Sweetgum)	25/03/2025 Approved
Chandler	2023/6580	3/20 Olive Grove BORONIA VIC 3155	The construction of a dwelling on the land	27/03/2025 Notice of Decision
Chandler	2025/9033	9 Sycamore Crescent BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Grevillea robusta (Silky Oak)	31/03/2025 Approved
Collier	2024/6291	9 Freshfield Avenue WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Construction of two double storey dwellings on a lot	7/03/2025 Notice of Decision
Collier	2024/6339	17 Milan Street WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Construction of two (2) double storey dwellings	19/03/2025 Notice of Decision
Collier	2024/6135	1 & 2/117 Mountain Highway WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Liquor Licence (restaurant and cafe) and Buildings and Works for a Verandah	26/03/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/6023	205/7 Birch Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Removal of two (2) Eucalyptus mannifera (Brittle Gum)	3/03/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/9019	55 Ireland Avenue WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Two lot subdivision (approved development site)	5/03/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2024/6531	4 Wendy Court BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of a double storey dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling	12/03/2025 Notice of Decision
Dinsdale	2025/9015	153 Kanooka Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Two Lot Subdivision (approved development site)	12/03/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/9021	11 Warrawee Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Two Lot Subdivision (approved development site)	13/03/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/6060	43 Kleinert Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Pruning of one (1) Eucalyptus radiata (Narrow Leaved Peppermint)	13/03/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2024/6213	4 Arbroath Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Development of the land for two (2) double storey dwellings and one (1) single storey dwelling	13/03/2025 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Dinsdale	2024/6207	1 View Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of five (5) dwellings and waiver of one (1) visitor car space	15/03/2025 Notice of Decision
Dinsdale	2025/6029	89 Lewis Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	114 lot Subdivision (Approved Industrial development)	24/03/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/9032	13 Pine Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Two lot Subdivision (approved development site)	26/03/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2024/6558	33 Arbroath Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Construction of a double storey dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling	31/03/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6019	17 Lane Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) <i>Hesperocyparis arizonica</i> (Arizona Cypress)	3/03/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6040	1/42 Hutton Avenue FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) <i>Corymbia ficifolia</i> (Flowering Gum)	4/03/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6044	9 Station Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Pruning of two (2) <i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> (Sweetgum)	5/03/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6034	13 Hillcrest Avenue FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Habitat Pruning of one (1) <i>Eucalyptus maidenii</i> (Maiden's gum)	12/03/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/9022	1/73 Forest Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Replacement of 1.8m high front fence	13/03/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6066	64 McIver Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) <i>Eucalyptus bicostata</i> (Southern Blue Gum)	25/03/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/9003	1/10 Warrabel Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of a Small Second Dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling	27/03/2025 Approved
Friberg	2025/9025	150 Taylors Lane ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Two-lot subdivision (approved development site)	17/03/2025 Approved
Friberg	2025/9024	24 Renwick Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Two Lot Subdivision (approved development site)	25/03/2025 Approved
Friberg	2024/6382	47 Elton Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Development of the land for two (2) double storey dwellings	31/03/2025 Notice of Decision
Scott	2025/6038	8 Bunnett Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Two lot subdivision (approved development site)	3/03/2025 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Scott	2024/6315	510 Burwood Highway WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Use land for additional car parking and vehicle queueing for adjacent education centre (St Andrews Christian College)	4/03/2025 Approved
Scott	2025/9028	14 Ridge Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Buildings and Works (Additions to existing retirement unit)	21/03/2025 Approved
Scott	2025/9031	9 Rebecca Court WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Two lot subdivision (approved development site)	25/03/2025 Approved
Scott	2024/6483	384 Burwood Highway WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Use of the land for a Medical Centre	26/03/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2025/6018	650 Stud Road SCORESBY VIC 3179	Six lot subdivision (approved development site)	6/03/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2025/6087	PEPPERTREE HILL 133/15 Fulham Road ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Construction of a verandah associated with a Residential Aged Care Facility	6/03/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2024/6484	T02-7/1464 Ferntree Gully Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Use of the land for the purpose of a Restricted Recreation Facility (Gymnasium) and for the construction and display of Internally Illuminated Business Identification Signage and Business Identification Signage at Tenancy T6	13/03/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2025/6108	79 Grayson Drive SCORESBY VIC 3179	Two lot Subdivision (approved development site)	14/03/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2023/6501	715 Stud Road SCORESBY VIC 3179	Construct six (6) double storey dwellings and create access to a road in a Transport Zone 2	21/03/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2025/9030	10 Macro Court ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Buildings and Works (Mezzanine) and Reduction in Car Parking	21/03/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2024/6303	887 Wellington Road ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Use and Development of the land for a Store (Self Storage Facility), and alterations to an existing access in a Transport 2 Zone	26/03/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2025/6049	1/42 Seebeck Road ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Removal of T1: One (1) Corymbia citriodora (Lemon Scented Gum)	31/03/2025 Approved

## 6.2 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Decision
<b>Author:</b>	Principal Planner, Francis Wong
<b>Manager:</b>	Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie
<b>Executive:</b>	Director, City Liveability, Matt Kelleher

### SUMMARY

This report considers Planning Application P/2023/6476 for the construction of 24 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna.

### RECOMMENDATION (SUMMARY)

That Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for the construction of 24 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna, subject to the conditions detailed in the full recommendation in section 10 below.

### 1. DISCUSSION

Application P/2023/6476 has been lodged with Council for the construction of 24 dwellings and alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 (TRZ2) at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna.

This application is being reported to Council as it has received a total of 246 objections.

The application was advertised twice as it was amended from only providing access via Bellbird Drive, to then include additional direct access to Wantirna Road.

The proposed development generally complies with the purpose of the Residential Growth Zone (RGZ) and is consistent with the Planning Policy Framework policy directions for neighbourhood character, managing growth, and addressing housing supply in Knox.

The development will provide an appropriate balance between the need for additional housing within a well-serviced area and the amenity of occupants and adjoining residents.

The detailed Officer's Report is provided with Attachment 1, along with relevant plans and documents at Attachment 2.

### 2. ENGAGEMENT

The application was advertised twice, both times by way of two (2) signs on the site and notices were sent to adjoining property owners and occupiers (and during the second round of advertising, all previous objectors were also sent a notice). In total, 246 objections were received. A Planning Consultative Committee (PCC) meeting was held with the objectors and applicant as part of the application process.

The application was referred externally to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP, which manages Wantirna Road) and internally to Council's Building, Assets, Stormwater, Parks Services, Arborist, Traffic & Transport, ESD, City Futures, Waste Services, and Landscape Teams. No major



concerns were raised with the application. Any conditions from referral authorities have been included in the Conditions within the Recommendations.

### **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no significant social implications associated with the proposed development. A thorough assessment of the application against all relevant considerations of the Knox Planning Scheme can be found in the Officer's Report at Attachment 1.

### **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

In response to the Community Net Zero 2040 target and exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation, the Knox Planning Scheme does not currently require planning applications to achieve net zero emissions, nor has this proposal been required to achieve this.

### **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no significant environmental impacts or amenity issues associated with the proposed development. A thorough assessment of the application against environmental and amenity considerations can be found in the Officer's Report at Attachment 1.

### **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial or economic implications associated with the proposed development for Council.

### **7. RISKS**

There are no major risks to Council associated with the proposal.

### **8. KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025**

#### **Neighbourhoods, Housing & Infrastructure**

Strategy 2.1 - Plan for and support diverse housing to meet changing community needs.

Strategy 2.2 - Create, enhance and maintain places and spaces for people to live, work, play and connect.

Strategy 2.3 - Provide, maintain and advocate for accessible and sustainable ways to move around Knox.

### **9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

### **10. RECOMMENDATION**

That Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for the construction of 24 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna, subject to the following conditions:

### **Amended Development Plans**

1. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, amended development plans to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. The development plans must be approved prior to other plans required by this permit. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions. The plans must be generally in accordance with the plans submitted with the application but modified to show:
  - 1.1 Rainwater tanks for TH18 to TH23 inclusive to be relocated to the rear (adjacent to the rear tandem car spaces; but not to be shown on the plans as per Condition 1.11 of this Planning Permit), with the resulting empty nook to be used as the entry porch for the relocated front entry door, and the front window to be widened at least to the extent of the previous location of the front entry door, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Responsible Authority.
  - 1.2 Balcony area measurements to be updated to match their respective dimensions.
  - 1.3 Elevation cardinal directions corrected on Sheet Nos. TPA12 and TPA13.
  - 1.4 The following modifications so that they do not encroach into the garage parking spaces:
    - 1.4.1 Access doors to garages.
    - 1.4.2 Steps leading into the garages.
  - 1.5 A notation that the bike space within the garages must be designed to allow a bicycle to be placed at least 1.1m above the floor level of the garage.
  - 1.6 A notation that the dwellings TH12 and TH13 must have a stepless front entry and footpath, to allow convenient access for people with limited mobility.
  - 1.7 All internal footpath gates must have a minimum opening of 900mm.
  - 1.8 Annotation stating, 'all structures (including fences, letterboxes and meter boxes) must be constructed to a maximum height of 900mm or relocated clear of a splayed area near the access way to ensure safe sight distances.'
  - 1.9 The height, location and design of fencing, letterboxes and electricity supply structures to comply with Condition 1.8 of this Planning Permit.
  - 1.10 A notation on the plans stating that windows to be screened will have fixed obscure glazing (non-openable) to a height of 1.7 metres above finished floor level. The windows may be clear and openable above 1.7 metres. Adhesive film must not be used.
  - 1.11 Delete reference of rainwater tanks.
  - 1.12 Tree Protection Fencing and Tree Protection Zones to be drawn on all plans.

- 1.13** Tree protection fencing around the street tree 'T2' to be bordered by the footpath, road, and adjoining crossover to the south and is to extend towards the north for 11 metres.
- 1.14** The following notations for street tree 'T2':
  - 1.14.1** Any underground services passing through the Tree Protection Zone must be installed using non-destructive methods to prevent root damage.
  - 1.14.2** No underground services are permitted within the Structural Root Zone.
- 1.15** Notation for street tree 'T1' that the tree is to be removed by Council at the cost to the owner/developer.
- 1.16** All levels to be to AHD (Australian Height Datum).
- 1.17** Any changes resulting from the amended Waste Management Plan in accordance with Condition 7.
- 1.18** Any changes resulting from the amended Sustainability Management Plan in accordance with Condition 13.
- 1.19** The changes required by the Department of Transport and Planning in accordance with Condition 34.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

#### **Other Plans**

- 2.** Prior to the commencement of the development and issue of a Building Permit for the development approved under this Permit, the following plans and computations must be submitted to the Responsible Authority as a complete set. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. Construction must be in accordance with these plans. The plans must comprise the following:
  - 2.1** Drainage plans in accordance with Condition 3.
  - 2.2** Landscape plans in accordance with Condition 4.
  - 2.3** Amended Waste Management Plan in accordance with Condition 7.
  - 2.4** Amended Sustainability Management Plan in accordance with Condition 13.
  - 2.5** Construction Management Plan in accordance with Condition 27.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

#### **Drainage Plans**

- 3.** Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, drainage plans and computations must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. Construction of the drainage must be in accordance with these plans. The plans must show the following:
  - 3.1** All stormwater drainage discharge from the site connected to a legal point of discharge.

- 3.2** An on-site detention system designed by a suitably qualified Civil Engineering Consultant to ensure no net increase in stormwater discharge from the proposed development.
- 3.3** The on-site detention system to be installed in a suitable location for easy access and maintenance.
- 3.4** A suitable overland flow path for the entire site to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. Details of the overland flow path are to be included on the plans.
- 3.5** Any Environmental Sustainable Design initiatives shown on the Development Plans approved pursuant to Condition 1 of this permit.
- 3.6** Location of fencing in accordance with the Development Plans approved pursuant to Condition 1 of this permit.
- 3.7** All levels to be to AHD (Australian Height Datum).

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

### **Landscaping**

- 4.** Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a landscape plan prepared by a suitably qualified Landscape architect or a suitably qualified landscape designer to the satisfaction of the responsible authority must be submitted to and approved by the responsible authority in accordance with Council's 'Landscape Plan Guidelines'. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plan must show:
  - 4.1** A survey (including botanical names, height and width) of all existing vegetation to be retained and / or removed.
  - 4.2** The identification and removal of all vegetation identified as an environmental weed in Knox (as outlined in Council's 'Landscape Plan Guidelines').
  - 4.3** Buildings and trees (including botanical names, height and width) on neighbouring properties within three metres of the boundary including all trees that have their Tree Protection Zone extending into the subject site.
  - 4.4** Details of the surface finishes of pathways and driveways.
  - 4.5** Details and location of all existing and proposed services including above and below ground lines, cables and pipes.
  - 4.6** The location of Tree Protection fencing and Tree Protection Zones.
  - 4.7** A planting schedule of all proposed trees, shrubs and ground covers, including botanical names, common names, pot sizes, sizes at maturity, and quantities of each plant.
  - 4.8** Landscaping and planting within all open areas of the site (including additional planting within open space areas of the existing dwelling/s).
  - 4.9** The Landscape plans must show the provision of at least 13 new indigenous or native canopy trees and 17 new large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5 metres chosen from Plant List 1, 2 or 3 of Council's Landscape Plan Guidelines for Planning

Permits. The canopy trees must be a minimum 1.5 metres tall when planted and are to be in the following areas:

- 4.9.1 Wantirna Road street setback – 4 large indigenous canopy trees and 2 small indigenous or native canopy trees.
  - 4.9.2 Bellbird Drive street setback – 2 large indigenous canopy trees, 2 medium indigenous or native canopy trees and 2 small indigenous or native canopy trees.
  - 4.9.3 Garden area between TH7 and 8 – 1 large feature shrub with a mature height of 4-5 metres.
  - 4.9.4 Garden area between TH17 and 18 – 1 large feature shrub with a mature height of 4-5 metres.
  - 4.9.5 Southern boundary – 1 small canopy tree (opposite TH5) and 15 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5 metres.
- 4.10** Planting of this site to comprise 40% of the vegetation species to be indigenous (across all plant forms) from plant list 1 of the 'Landscape Plan Guidelines' and 40% additional native species (across all plant forms) from plant list 2 of the 'Landscape Plan Guidelines'. Remaining plant species (20%) can be indigenous, native or exotic (across all plant forms) provided they are not listed as weeds.
- 4.11** Delete footpaths through the front setback to TH12 and TH13, and replaced with a footpath from the porches to the shared internal footpaths.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

- 5. Before the occupation of the development, the landscaping works shown on the endorsed plans must be carried out and completed to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
- 6. The landscaping shown on the endorsed plans must be maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. Any dead, diseased or damaged plants are to be replaced.

#### **Waste Management Plan**

- 7. The Waste Management Plan (WMP) must be generally in accordance with the WMP prepared by Frater Consulting Services dated 13 March 2024, with the following change:
  - 7.1** The number of recycle bins provided is to be consistent with the total recycle waste of 2880L/week generated by the development.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

#### **General**

- 8. All development must be in accordance with the endorsed plans.
- 9. The layout of buildings and works as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered without the written consent of the Responsible Authority.
- 10. Once the development has started it must be continued and completed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

11. Prior to the occupation of the dwellings the development is to be completed in accordance with the endorsed plans to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
12. All walls on the boundaries of adjoining properties must be cleaned and finished to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

#### **Sustainability Management Plan**

13. Prior to the commencement of any buildings or demolition works, an updated Sustainability Management Plan (SMP) must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. The SMP must be generally in accordance with the SMP submitted, but updated to include:  
**13.1** 32 Amp power supplied to a garage switchboard of each dwelling for EV car charging.
14. Prior to the occupation of the development, the development must be constructed in accordance with the endorsed SMP, except for stormwater and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) requirements which are adopted, pursuant to the collective Responsible Authority's expectations and requirements, reflected on Drainage Plans.

#### **Street Tree Removal**

15. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, all costs associated with the removal of the street tree (amenity value, tree and stump removal and planting and maintaining a new tree) must be paid to Council by the owner/developer. The removal and replacement of the street tree/s must be undertaken by Council.

#### **Tree Protection**

16. All trees must be identified and accurately plotted on plans, indicating proposed removal or retention and Tree Protection Zones (TPZ) where appropriate.
17. Tree protection measures must be installed prior to any commencement of works.
18. TPZs must be managed and maintained in accordance with AS-4970 Protection of Trees on Development Sites.
19. All underground services must be routed outside TPZs. If underground services must be routed within a TPZ, they should be installed by directional drilling or hydro-vac excavation if cover less than 600mm, under supervision of suitably qualified Project Arborist.
20. All pruning works require written consent from Council and must be undertaken by a suitably qualified Arborist in accordance with Australian Standard – AS4373-2007 Pruning of Amenity Trees.
21. Excavation for any fencing within the TPZ of a tree to be retained must be limited to that required for postholes (No strip/trench excavation to occur). Post holes must be limited to 300mm in diameter and must be spaced to avoid encroachment into the Tree's SRZ wherever possible. Previous post holes are recommended to avoid further encroachment into the TPZ. Post holes located within TPZs must be excavated by hand (no machine excavation) and relocated if roots 40mm diameter or greater are encountered. Post holes and removal of the previous fence that is to be located within SRZs must be excavated by hand (no machine excavation) under the supervision of a suitably qualified arborist (minimum AQF level 5).

### **Car Parking & Accessways**

22. Before the dwellings are occupied, driveways and car parking areas must be:
  - 22.1** Fully constructed to the minimum standard of 100mm reinforced concrete and available for use in accordance with the plans submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority; and
  - 22.2** Formed to such levels and drained so that they can be used in accordance with the approved plan; and
  - 22.3** Treated with an all-weather seal or some other durable surface; andTo the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
23. Parking areas and driveways must be kept available and maintained for these purposes at all times to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
24. A minimum 2.1m height clearance is required for the entire length of the driveway.
25. All vehicles must enter and exit the site in a forward direction.
26. Before the development is occupied, vehicular crossings must be constructed to align with approved driveways to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. All redundant crossings, crossing openings or parts thereof must be removed and replaced with footpath, naturestrip and kerb and channel to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

### **Construction Management Plan**

27. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a Construction Management Plan (CMP) to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, must be submitted to and approved by the responsible authority. When approved, the plan will be endorsed as evidence of its approval and will then form part of the permit and must thereafter be complied with. The CMP must specify and deal with, but is not limited to, the following:
  - 27.1** A detailed schedule of works including a full project timing;
  - 27.2** A traffic management plan for the site, including when or whether any access points would be required to be blocked, an outline of requests to occupy public footpaths or roads, or anticipated disruptions to local services; and preferred routes for trucks delivering to the site. The traffic management measures must minimise disruption to the operation of roadway during construction;
  - 27.3** The location for the parking of all construction vehicles and construction worker vehicles during construction;
  - 27.4** A fully detailed plan indicating where construction hoardings would be located;
  - 27.5** A waste management plan including the containment of waste on site, disposal of waste, stormwater treatment and on-site facilities for vehicle washing;
  - 27.6** Containment of dust, dirt and mud within the site and method and frequency of clean up procedures in the event of build-up of matter outside the site;
  - 27.7** Site security;
  - 27.8** Public safety measures;

- 27.9** Construction times, noise and vibration controls;
  - 27.10** Restoration of any Council assets removed and/or damaged during construction;
  - 27.11** Protection works necessary to road and other infrastructure (limited to an area reasonably proximate to the site);
  - 27.12** Remediation of any damage to road and other infrastructure (limited to any areas reasonably proximate to the site);
  - 27.13** An emergency contact that is available for 24 hours a day; and
  - 27.14** All contractors associated with the construction of the development must be made aware of the requirements of the Construction Management Plan.
28. During the construction, the following must occur to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority:
- 28.1** Any stormwater discharges into the stormwater drainage system is to comply with EPA guidelines;
  - 28.2** Stormwater drainage system protection measures must be installed as required to ensure that no solid waste, sediment, sand, soil, clay or stones from the premises enter the stormwater drainage system;
  - 28.3** Vehicle borne material must not accumulate on the roads abutting the site;
  - 28.4** The cleaning of machinery and equipment must take place on site and not on adjacent footpaths, roads or parks;
  - 28.5** All litter (including items such as cement bags, food packaging and plastic strapping) must be disposed of responsibly; and
  - 28.6** All site operations must comply with the EPA Publication 1254 (including all revisions or replacement guidelines).

### **Fencing**

- 29. All costs associated with the provision of the fencing are to be borne by the owner/developer under this permit.
- 30. Prior to the occupancy of the development all fencing must be in a good condition to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

### **Amenity During Construction**

- 31. Upon commencement and until conclusion of the development, the developer must ensure that the development does not adversely affect the amenity of the area in any way, including:
  - 31.1** the appearance of building, works or materials on the land
  - 31.2** parking of motor vehicles
  - 31.3** transporting of materials or goods to or from the site
  - 31.4** hours of operation



- 31.5** stockpiling of top soil or fill materials
- 31.6** air borne dust emanating from the site
- 31.7** noise
- 31.8** rubbish and litter
- 31.9** sediment runoff
- 31.10** vibration

Should the development cause undue detriment to the amenity of the area then immediate remedial measures must be undertaken to address the issue as directed by, and to the satisfaction of, the Responsible Authority.

#### **Stormwater**

- 32. Stormwater runoff from all buildings and hardstanding surfaces must be properly collected and discharged in a complete and effective system of drains within the property and must not cause or create a nuisance to abutting properties.

#### **Energy Provision**

- 33. Any new dwelling allowed by this permit must not be connected to a reticulated gas service (within the meaning of clause 53.03 of the relevant planning scheme). This condition continues to have force and effect after the development authorised by this permit has been completed.

#### **Department of Transport and Planning**

- 34. Prior to the commencement of the development, functional layout plans (FLPs) must be submitted to and approved by the Head, Transport for Victoria. When approved, the FLPs may be endorsed by the Responsible Authority and will then form part of the permit. The FLPs must be prepared by an appropriately qualified traffic engineer and include the following:
  - 34.1** A 6.0 metres wide crossover with central splitter island to enforce left-in/left-out only access to the site access from Wantirna Road.
  - 34.2** Regulatory signage to enforce left-in/left-out only access to/from Wantirna Road.
  - 34.3** Installation of white double lines on the centre of Wantirna Road to avoid illegal right turning into the subject site.
  - 34.4** Any other consequential modifications to road and road related infrastructure on Wantirna Road.
- 35. Subsequent to the approval of the functional layout plans (FLPs), and prior to the commencement of any roadworks required by Head, Transport for Victoria under this permit, the applicant must submit detailed engineering design plans to the Head, Transport for Victoria for review and approval. The detail engineering design plans must be prepared in accordance with the approved functional layout plans.
- 36. Prior to the commencement of use of the development hereby approved, all roadworks as required by this permit, must be completed in accordance with the approved Functional

Layout Plans and Detailed Engineering Design Plan to the satisfaction and at no cost to the Head, Transport for Victoria or the Responsible Authority.

37. No works may be commenced in, on, under or over the road reserve without having first obtained all necessary approval under the Road Management Act 2004, the Road Safety Act 1986 and any other relevant Act or Regulation created under those Acts.
38. The splitter island, access points and regulatory signage must be maintained in a fit and proper state so as not to compromise the ability to enter and exit the site in a safe manner or compromise operational efficiency and safety of the road.

### Permit Expiry

39. This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:

**39.1** The development is not started within two years of the date of this permit.

**39.2** The development is not completed within four years of the date of this permit.

Pursuant to Section 69 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987, the Responsible Authority may extend:

- The commencement date referred to if a request is made in writing before the permit expires or within six (6) months afterwards.
- The completion date referred to if a request is made in writing within 12 months after the permit expires and the development started lawfully before the permit expired.

### NOTES

Drainage Notes (to be read in conjunction with the above drainage conditions):

- Applicant shall engage a certified Engineering Consultant to analyse the site's existing drainage to determine type and size of the Onsite Detention (OSD) system. This shall be designed in accordance with the Knox City Council (Responsible Authority) Stormwater Drainage Guidelines, (copy available on Council's website), and approved drainage design methods specified in the current edition of Australian Rainfall and Runoff. It should be located preferably in a common area to the dwellings, and be easily accessible for maintenance.
- The total Permissible Site Discharge (PSD) for the property including all dwellings is **7.2L/s** to the existing Council drainage system for a **5 year ARI (18.1% AEP)** event.
- Our records indicate that VicRoads is the responsible authority for drainage assets in the vicinity of the proposed development. Connection to the VicRoads system will be according to VicRoads requirements. Where possible applicant to utilise the existing Approved Point of Discharge.
- The Applicant is required to use Australian Height Datum (AHD) to present levels in all future plans. Applicant must ensure that levels on the plan are accurate.
- Drainage works in the Road reserve or in the Council easement will require a road opening permit.
- Drainage system designed so as to avoid impact on any vegetation shown on the endorsed plans as being retained.

- Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) should be addressed as part of this development, e.g. water storage tanks, swale drains, etc.

Other Notes:

- A building permit must be obtained before development is commenced.
- Buildings are not allowed to be built over Council easements.
- The dwellings must achieve a minimum 6-Star Energy Rating.
- In accordance with Council policy, an 8.5% public open space contribution may apply in the event of the subdivision of the land.
- To arrange an inspection of the Tree Protection fencing please contact Council Landscape Team on 9298 8125.
- Indigenous plants can be purchased through approved indigenous nurseries, as listed in the Knox City Council 'Preferred Local Replacement Plants' Information Sheet.
- The street tree 'T1' can be removed upon receipt of \$447.77. Total cost for street tree removal includes amenity value (using the *City of Melbourne- Amenity Value Formula*), cost of tree and stump removal, and planting and maintaining a new tree for 2 years, in accordance with Council's Green Streets Policy. For details regarding the cost and timing of the removal and replacement of street trees, please contact Council's Active Open Space Team on (03) 9298 8425.
- Dwelling numbers as shown on the endorsed plans do not necessarily indicate any future street numbers. Property (street) numbering shall be in accordance with Council's Property (Street) Numbering Policy. Information regarding this can be obtained from Council's Property and Revenue Services Department on 9298 8215.
- Letterboxes and all other structures (including meter boxes) shall be constructed to a maximum height of 900mm or relocated clear of a splayed area (2m x 2.5m) in accordance with AS2890.1, Clause 3.2.4 to ensure safe sight distances. Letterboxes shall face towards the street frontage.
- Internal public lighting shall be provided to the satisfaction of the relevant authority and in accordance with AS1158. This would generally be low height or bollard type lighting to avoid spill-over into adjacent properties. It may be sensor activated, to avoid all night running costs.
- Raised concrete slabs on the existing footpath fronting the site should be grounded.
- All litter and rubbish associated with the construction must be contained on site at all times.

Department of Transport and Planning note:

- The proposed development requires works within the road reserve. Separate approval under the Road Management Act 2004 for this activity may be required from the Head, Transport for Victoria. Please contact the Department of Transport and Planning for works within the road reserve prior to commencing any works.

## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - Officer Report - 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna [**6.2.1** - 12 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Council Attachments - 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna [**6.2.2** - 19 pages]



## Planning Application P/2023/6476 for the construction of 24 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 (TRZ2) at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna.

### 1. Summary:

Subject Site:	276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna
Proposed Development:	Construction of 24 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a TRZ2
Existing Land Use:	Vacant
Site Area:	3,227m <sup>2</sup>
Planning Scheme Controls:	Residential Growth Zone 1 (RGZ1)
Application Received:	30 October 2023
Number of Objections:	246
PCC Meeting:	Yes
Ward:	Collier

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with the Council Planning Officer's assessment of Planning Permit Application P/2023/6476 to assist in making a decision on the application. It should be read in conjunction with the other attachments.

### 3. Background

#### 3.1 Planning Scheme Amendment VC267

Planning Scheme Amendment VC267 was gazetted on 6 March 2025. VC267 amended the Victoria Planning Provisions and Knox Planning Scheme with regards to the Clause 55 controls that apply to applications for two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings.

VC267 included transitional provisions for applications that were lodged prior to its gazettal. As this application was lodged prior to 6 March 2025 and has not been amended after this date it is assessed against the pre-VC267 Clause 55 planning controls.

#### 3.2 Subject Site and Surrounds

The location of the subject site and surrounds is shown in Attachment 2.

- The subject site is a single allotment located on the western side of Wantirna Road, Wantirna.



## Attachment 1

- The site is rectangular in shape with approximate dimensions of 87 metres deep by 36 metres wide and has a lot size of approximately 3,227m<sup>2</sup>. The topography of the land generally falls from south to north across the site by approximately 2 metres.
- The site is a double depth block (as well as double width) that fronts Wantirna Road on the east boundary and Bellbird Drive on the west boundary.
- The site is currently vacant, and previously contained a building formerly used as a childcare centre, and there were car parks located on both sides of the property with access to their respective roads.
- The nearest bus stop is located on Wantirna Road approximately 60 metres to the south.
- The subject site and surrounds are located within an established residential area, with the exception of the subject site, properties that front Bellbird Drive are within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 4 (NRZ4) and properties that front Wantirna Road are located within the Residential Growth Zone (RGZ). Surrounding properties are predominately developed with single and double storey dwellings, with some examples of unit and townhouse development on sites that front Wantirna Road.
- The land is encumbered with a 2.44-metre-wide drainage and sewerage easement running north-south across the centre of the site.
- The Certificate of Title for the site contains a Section 173 Agreement, this agreement required demolition of the former buildings and limits the height of development on the western section of the site to a maximum of 9 metres. The proposal is in accordance with the requirements of the Section 173 Agreement.

### 3.3 The Proposal

The proposal seeks permission for the construction of 24 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a TRZ2. Refer to attached plans at Attachment 2. Details of the proposal are as follows:

- The proposal is to construct 24 dwellings comprising of six 2-bed dwellings, seventeen 3-bed dwellings and one 4-bed dwelling.
- The western half of the development (Bellbird Drive side) will be double-storey whilst the eastern half (Wantirna Road side) will be triple-storey.
- The dwellings will all have a reverse living layout with the main living space on the first floor, including balconies as the secluded private open space.
- The 2-bed dwellings will have single garages, whilst all the other dwellings will have two parking spaces, with some of these being double garages and some being in the form of a single garage plus a tandem car space.
- The development will have a maximum height of 10.07 metres (northeast corner, Wantirna Rd side).
- The proposal will have direct driveway access to Wantirna Road and gated driveway access to Bellbird Drive.
- There will be a centrally positioned waste bin storage area, including a turning area for waste trucks to be able to exit the site in a forward direction.

## 4. Consultation

### 4.1 Advertising

The application was advertised twice, both times by way of two (2) signs on the site and notices were sent to adjoining property owners and occupiers (and during the second round of advertising, all previous objectors were sent a notice). The application was advertised twice as it was amended from only providing access via Bellbird Drive to then include additional direct access to Wantirna Road. In total, 246 objections were received and are summarised below:



## Attachment 1

***Inappropriate traffic ingress/outflow from development onto Bellbird Drive.***

- The application had been referred externally to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), which initially required access to Bellbird Drive only and no vehicle access to Wantirna Road, which was due to their policy requirement for alternative access towards non-TRZ2 roads where available (for safety and congestion reasons).
- However, due to important feedback from the local community regarding congestion on Clarence Road, the applicant amended the proposal to include the additional direct access to Wantirna Road, with Bellbird Drive proposed to be a gated access that would prevent public vehicle access through the site.
- DTP accepted the Wantirna Road access subject to it being restricted to left-in/left-out vehicle movements only.
- This is a balanced outcome given that:
  - residents of the subject site would normally choose to enter and exit the site directly via Wantirna Road (subject to the left in/left out requirement), rather than Bellbird Drive via Clarence Road; and
  - the Wantirna Road safety and congestion concerns of DTP will be mitigated by the left-in/left-out driveway crossover design.

***Traffic congestion, parking and safety concerns, street access, in a narrow Neighbourhood-zoned area.***

- The proposed onsite car parking complies with the car parking provision of Clause 52.06 (Car parking) of the Knox Planning Scheme. Furthermore, Council's Traffic & Transport Department have not raised any concerns.
- The subject site is serviced by public transport, with a bus stop located within walking distance on Wantirna Road approximately 60 metres to the south.
- The proposal includes secure bicycle parking within each garage.

***Failure to meet setback requirements at Bellbird Drive and Wantirna Road.***

- The Residential Growth Zone varies the standard street setback requirement down to 6 metres. The proposal has a street setback of 6.2 metres from Wantirna Road and 6 metres from Bellbird Drive. Therefore, the proposal complies with the street setback requirement.

***Environmental impact and failure to meet minimum vegetation requirements.***

- The planning application was referred internally to Council's arborist and landscape team, which did not have any objection to the application subject to the inclusion of conditions on any permit if the application is approved. The conditions include 13 canopy trees and 17 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5 metres, with specific locations nominated for those trees and shrubs by the Council arborist and landscape team.

***Potential vermin/odour issues with large organic food waste bins.***

- The proposal includes a dedicated waste bin storage area that will be screened with a 1.8m high fence and will be set back from the southern boundary by 6 metres.
- The planning application was referred internally to Council's Waste Services team, which did not have any objection to the application subject to the inclusion of conditions on any permit if the application is approved. The conditions include the requirement for a Waste Management Plan.

***Loss of privacy due to overlooking balconies.***

- The proposal complies with the overlooking provisions. All balconies that have the potential to overlook neighbouring properties will have timber screening to 1.7 metres high.

***A different zone creating inappropriately exterior designed townhouses facing Bellbird Drive does not reflect the existing neighbourhood characteristics.***



## Attachment 1

- The site is wholly within the Residential Growth Zone.
- The western half of the site will comprise of double storey built form, which reflects the double storey height permitted along Bellbird Drive.
- The eastern half of the site will comprise of triple storey built form, which reflects the triple storey height permitted along Wantirna Road.
- The proposal reflects the preferred neighbourhood character for the area in terms of appearance, articulation, bulk, form, height, and materials.
- The proposal appropriately faces and addresses both Bellbird Drive and Wantirna Road, with street-facing building façades that have articulation and a mix of materials that create visual interest, whilst also providing passive surveillance to both streets via ground floor windows and upper floor balconies and windows.

***As the land will become private property, the neighbourhood will not be able to take a shortcut through the site to the bus stop on Wantirna Road, and the green space and children's playground on the site will be lost.***

- The land is already privately owned and this is not a relevant planning consideration. This was considered at the time of the site being sold.

***Lack of visitor parking onsite.***

- The subject site is within the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN) area and therefore is not required to provide visitor parking.

***The increase in impervious surfaces onsite will lead to greater flooding issues downslope at the northern end of Bellbird Drive.***

- The proposal complies with permeability provisions by providing a permeable site area of 20 percent.
- The planning application was referred internally to Council's Stormwater team, which did not have any objection to the application subject to the inclusion of conditions on any permit if the application is approved. The conditions include the requirement for drainage plans.

***The headlights of the many cars exiting onto Bellbird Drive will shine into the house opposite.***

- The proposal will include an electric timber look sliding gate with a height of 1.2 metres at the Bellbird Drive end of the common driveway, which will partially obscure any headlights at night. The amended proposal now includes access to Wantirna Road which is expected to be the more predominant access point.

***The subject site should not have been rezoned to Residential Growth Zone.***

- Contemplating the appropriateness of the zoning of a site is not within the scope of application assessments.

***Increase in crime rate due to increase in the number of cars parked on the street.***

- This is not a relevant planning matter.

***Proposed common driveway of 5.8m width may be too narrow for the larger vehicles of today to get in and out of the garage.***

- The proposal included swept path diagrams that showed standard size vehicles can access the garages. The planning application was referred internally to Council's traffic & transport team, which did not have any objection to the application.

***Potential to obstruct or slow down emergency vehicle access (fire, police, ambulance, etc.) due to increased congestion and on-street parking.***

- The planning application was referred internally to Council's traffic & transport team, which did not have any objection to the application.





## Attachment 1

- The subject site can be accessed by emergency services from Wantirna Road.
- Bellbird Drive is not a dead-end road and can also be accessed from Mint Street by emergency services if required.

#### 4.2 PCC Meeting

A Planning Consultative Committee (PCC) Meeting was held online via Zoom on 10 December 2024. The meeting was attended by 35 participants. The issues discussed at the meeting were in accordance with the issues raised in Section 4.1 above.

During the PCC meeting the applicant indicated that they would have discussions with the Department of Transport and Planning with regards to amending the application to include an additional access point onto Wantirna Road. The planning application was subsequently amended to include access onto Wantirna Road.

#### 4.3 Referrals

The application was referred to internal departments as well as the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) for advice. The following is a summary of relevant advice:

**DTP:** No objection, subject to left-in/left-out crossover design for Wantirna Road access.

**Arborist:** No objection – standard conditions to be included on any permit issued.

**Assets:** No objection – standard conditions to be included on any permit issued.

**Building:** No objection – building permit required.

**City Futures:** No objection – the proposal is consistent with the planning policy direction.

**ESD:** No objection, subject to an amended Sustainability Management Plan.

**Landscape:** No objection, subject to an amended Landscape Plan.

**Parks Services:** No objection, subject to conditions for tree protection fencing for a street tree to be retained and a removal fee for another street tree to be removed.

**Stormwater:** No objection – standard conditions to be included on any permit issued.

**Traffic & Transport:** No objection – standard conditions to be included on any permit issued.

**Waste Services:** No objection, subject to an amended Waste Management Plan.

### 5. Discussion

This section considers the proposed development in light of the provisions of the Knox Planning Scheme including the Planning Policy Framework and any other relevant policies and objectives.

#### 5.1 Zoning and Overlays

##### 5.1.1 Zone

The site is located within the Residential Growth Zone – Schedule 1. A permit is required for the construction of two or more dwellings on a lot.

Pursuant to Clause 32.07-6 (RGZ), a permit is required to construct two or more dwellings on a lot.



## Attachment 1

*Response: The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the Residential Growth Zone by providing housing at increased densities in buildings up to and including four storey buildings.*

### 5.1.2 Overlays

The subject site is not affected by any Overlays.

## 5.2 Municipal Planning Strategy

Council's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) encourages development occurring with the necessary consideration to such matters as managing population growth, encouraging sustainable development, and influencing the urban form so that Knox itself becomes more sustainable.

The MPS makes specific reference to the diversifying and aging population in Knox which will see an increase in the number of smaller household types, with 'lone person' and 'couple only' households making up just over half of all within 20 years

**Clause 02.03-4 Built Environment and Heritage:** Knox takes a 'whole of city' approach to the creation of liveable and sustainable environments, with a focus on place-based planning with a strong green and leafy landscape being the unifying element of the neighbourhood character of Knox.

Development should be accessible, sustainable and adaptable to meet existing and future community needs and all people in Knox should feel and be safe.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Ensure well designed development to create functional, architecturally attractive, sustainable and accessible places and buildings.
- Support building design that addresses the needs of changing commercial and residential markets and household structures.
- Strengthen the unifying 'green and leafy' character of Knox across all residential areas.
- Ensure development responds to the residential typologies and the desired future character, built form, and natural environmental elements that make up the neighbourhood character of each residential area.
- Implement environmentally sustainable design in development to improve housing liveability and amenity for occupants.
- Minimise car dependency and improve the use of sustainable transport modes.

**Clause 02.03-5 Housing:** The Housing theme implements the Knox Housing Strategy 2015. In managing the City of Knox's current and future housing needs, Council supports a scaled approach to residential development. This scaled approach recognises that some parts of the City will need to accommodate change, due to population growth and the community's changing household needs. Development in residential areas will need to respond positively to the desired future character of the local area and take account of the particular built form and natural environmental elements that make up the neighbourhood character of Knox.

The subject site is located within an "Activity Area", which contains a range of shops, services and employment and have good access to a range of public transport options. A greater range and increased densities of residential development are encouraged within these areas

*Response: The proposed development is considered to be consistent with the MPS for the following reasons:*



## Attachment 1

- *Housing Choice - The development provides two, three and four-bedroom dwellings that adds to the diversity of housing types and size in a location offering good access to services and provides dwellings for the projected increase in demand in the number of smaller household types.*
- *Existing infrastructure – The site is located within a fully serviced area.*
- *Location – The location of the site is identified in the Housing Framework Plan to be in an “Activity Area” where a greater range and increased densities of residential development are encouraged.*

### 5.3 Policy Consideration: Planning Policy Framework

Planning policy requires Council to integrate a range of policies relevant to the issues to be determined, and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development. The key themes for the assessment of the application include Settlement, Built Environment and Heritage and Housing.

#### 5.3.1 Settlement

Planning is to facilitate sustainable development that takes full advantage of existing settlement patterns and investment in transport, utility, social, community and commercial infrastructure and services.

**Clause 11.03-1S – Activity centres:** To encourage the concentration of major retail, residential, commercial, administrative, entertainment and cultural developments into activity centres that are highly accessible to the community.

*Response: The proposed development provides a different type of housing, including higher density housing, at a location that is well-serviced by parks, shops, medical centres, schools, and a bus stop nearby.*

#### 5.3.2 Built Environment and Heritage

Planning is to recognise the role of urban design, building design, heritage and energy and resource efficiency in delivering liveable and sustainable cities, towns and neighbourhoods.

**Clause 15.01-1S – Urban design:** To create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Require development to respond to its context in terms of character, cultural identity, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate.
- Ensure the interface between the private and public realm protects and enhances personal safety.
- Ensure that the design and location of publicly accessible private spaces, including car parking areas, forecourts and walkways, is of a high standard, creates a safe environment for users and enables easy and efficient use.
- Promote good urban design along and abutting transport corridors.

**Clause 15.01-1L – Urban design on residentially zoned land:** To ensure that the design and scale of development is consistent with the housing types encouraged in each area and makes a positive contribution to the built form of the area.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Provide visual interest and articulation to present an appropriate scale and detail to the street frontage and adjoining sites.



## Attachment 1

- Design street facades with an appropriate scale, rhythm and proportion that respond to the site's context.
- Avoid large blank walls and facades.
- Ensure site services and car parking areas are sensitively designed and sited so as to be as visually unobtrusive as possible from the street and adjoining sites.

**Clause 15.01-2S – Building design:** To achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Ensure a comprehensive site analysis forms the starting point of the design process and provides the basis for the consideration of height, scale, massing and energy performance of new development.
- Minimise the detrimental impact of development on neighbouring properties, the public realm and the natural environment.
- Improve the energy performance of buildings through siting and design measures.
- Minimise stormwater discharge through site layout and landscaping measures that support on-site infiltration and stormwater reuse.
- Ensure buildings and their interface with the public realm support personal safety, perceptions of safety and property security.
- Ensure development considers and responds to transport movement networks and provides safe access and egress for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Ensure development provides landscaping that responds to its site context, enhances the built form, creates safe and attractive spaces and supports cooling and greening of urban areas.

**Clause 15.01-2L – Accessible design:** Ensure the design of development considers the needs of people with limited mobility.

**Clause 15.01-2L – Environmentally sustainable development:** To achieve best practice in environmentally sustainable development from the design stage through to construction and operation.

**Clause 15.01-5S – Neighbourhood character:** To recognise, support and protect neighbourhood character, cultural identity, and sense of place.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Support development that respects the existing neighbourhood character or contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character.
- Ensure the preferred neighbourhood character is consistent with medium and higher density housing outcomes in areas identified for increased housing.

**Clause 15.01-5L – Neighbourhood character:** To facilitate more intensive residential development that is architecturally and functionally well designed, while retaining the 'green and leafy' character when viewed from the street. Strategies include:

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Enhance the unifying 'green and leafy' landscape character of Knox.
- Support development that makes a positive contribution to the area's built form.
- Provide no, low or transparent front fencing.



## Attachment 1

- Provide single crossovers for driveways.
- Establish new styles of housing within existing streetscapes.
- Establish consistent street setbacks as part of the future character of the area.
- Provide wide, upper floor balconies fronting the street and any adjoining public open space to maximise passive surveillance.
- Encourage developments of three or more dwellings to provide a mix of dwelling sizes (number of bedrooms).
- Encourage at least one dwelling in developments of three or more dwellings contains a bedroom, kitchen, bath or shower, and a toilet and wash basin at ground floor level.
- Locate carports and garages behind the line of or underneath the dwelling or in the rear yard.

*Response: The proposed development is consistent with the Built Environment and Heritage objectives and strategic direction for the following reasons:*

- *The design contributes to providing a safe urban environment by presenting well to both street frontages and provides well designed communal spaces.*
- *The proposed built form is of a scale that is consistent with the preferred housing typology for an Activity Area whilst appropriately responding to the sensitive interfaces.*
- *The proposal provides visual interest and articulation to present an appropriate scale and detail to the street frontage and adjoining sites.*
- *Subject to minor modification, the design achieves the required environmentally sustainable design requirements.*
- *The proposal is consistent with the preferred neighbourhood character, providing a mix of dwelling sizes and satisfying the required landscaping.*

### 5.3.3 Housing

Planning should provide for housing diversity, and ensure the efficient provision of supporting infrastructure and should ensure the long term sustainability of new housing, including access to services, walkability to activity centres, public transport, schools and open space.

**Clause 16.01-1S – Housing supply:** To facilitate well-located, integrated and diverse housing that meets community needs.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Ensure that an appropriate quantity, quality and type of housing is provided, including aged care facilities and other housing suitable for older people, supported accommodation for people with disability, rooming houses, student accommodation and social housing.
- Encourage higher density housing development on sites that are well located in relation to jobs, services and public transport.
- Identify opportunities for increased residential densities to help consolidate urban areas.
- Facilitate diverse housing that offers choice and meets changing household needs by widening housing diversity through a mix of housing types.

**Clause 16.01-1L – Housing supply:** To support a scaled approach to residential development that is consistent with preferred dwelling typologies for each area as shown on the Housing Framework Plan that forms part of this clause.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Encourage housing growth in Activity areas.



## Attachment 1

- Support developments of three or more dwellings that include a mix of sizes, including one-and two-bedroom dwellings.
- Encourage villa units, townhouses and apartments.

**Clause 16.01-2S – Housing affordability:** To deliver more affordable housing closer to jobs, transport and services.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Ensuring land supply continues to be sufficient to meet demand.
- Increasing choice in housing type, tenure and cost to meet the needs of households as they move through life cycle changes and to support diverse communities.
- Promoting good housing and urban design to minimise negative environmental impacts and keep costs down for residents and the wider community.

*Response: The proposed development is considered to be consistent with the Planning Policy Framework direction for housing provision for the following reasons:*

- *Housing Choice - The development provides two, three and four-bedroom dwellings that adds to the diversity of housing types in a location offering good access to services and provides dwellings for the projected increase in demand in the number of smaller household types.*
- *Location – The location of the site is well located in relation to jobs, transport and services and is identified in the Housing Framework Plan to be in an “Activity Area” where a greater range and increased densities of residential development are encouraged.*

#### 5.4 Particular Provisions

**Clause 52.06 – Car Parking:** Prior to a new use commencing or a new building being occupied the car parking spaces required under Clause 52.06-5 must be provided on the land or as approved under Clause 52.06-3 to the satisfaction of the responsible authority

Clause 52.06-5 specifies a ratio of one car space for each one- or two-bedroom dwelling and two car spaces to each three or more bedroom dwelling (with studies or studios that are separate rooms counted as a bedrooms). As the subject site is located within the Principal Public Transport Network area no visitor spaces are required to be provided. A permit may be granted to reduce or to waive the number of car spaces required by the table

Clause 52.06-8 details the design standards for car parking, such as car space dimensions and minimum access widths.

*Response: The proposed development satisfies the provision of car parking specified in Clause 52.06, specifically:*

- *Each dwelling is provided with the required number of car parking spaces.*
- *The design of the car parking meets the requirements of this clause.*

**Clause 52.29 – Land Adjacent to the Principal Road Network:** A permit is required to create or alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2.

- *The application was referred externally to the Department of Transport and Planning, which had no objection subject to conditions being included on any permit issued.*
- *The conditions primarily focussed on the provision of a left-in/left-out crossover design for the Wantirna Road access, which was to improve safety and minimise congestion.*



## Attachment 1

## 5.5 Clause 55 – Two or More Dwellings on a Lot and Residential Buildings (ResCode)

**Neighbourhood Character and Infrastructure**

Neighbourhood Character – The development complies with Neighbourhood Character, refer above.

Residential Policy – Complies, refer above.

Dwelling Diversity – Complies.

Integration with the Street – Complies.

**Site Layout and Building Massing**

Street Setbacks – Complies.

Building Height – Complies.

Site Cover/Permeability – Complies.

Energy Efficiency – Complies.

Open Space – Complies.

Safety – Complies.

Landscaping – Complies, a condition of any permit to issue will require an amended landscape plan to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Access – Complies.

Parking Location – Complies.

**Amenity Impacts**

Side and Rear Setbacks – The proposal does not comply with this Standard along the north elevation of Dwellings TH18-TH24 (the northeastern dwellings). Specifically, the northern corner of the roof encroaches into the northern side setback by 0.69m.

The proposal is deemed to comply with the Side and Rear Setback Objective as these dwellings are located on the south side of the adjoining property, there will not be any impact on overshadowing and it is in an area that adjoins land that is within the Residential Growth Zone.

Walls on Boundaries – Complies.

Daylight to Existing Windows – Complies

North Facing Windows – Complies.

Overshadowing Open Space – Complies.

Overlooking – Complies.

Internal Views – Complies.

Noise Impacts - Complies.

**On-Site Amenity and Facilities**

Accessibility – Complies.

Daylight to New Windows – Complies.

Private Open Space – Complies.

Solar Access – Complies.



## Attachment 1

Storage – Complies.

### **Details Design**

Design Detail – Complies.

Common Property – Complies.

Site Services – Complies.

Front Fence – Complies.

## 5.5 General Decision Guidelines

Clause 65 of the Knox Planning Scheme and Section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 set out decision guidelines/matters which the responsible authority must consider when deciding any planning application.

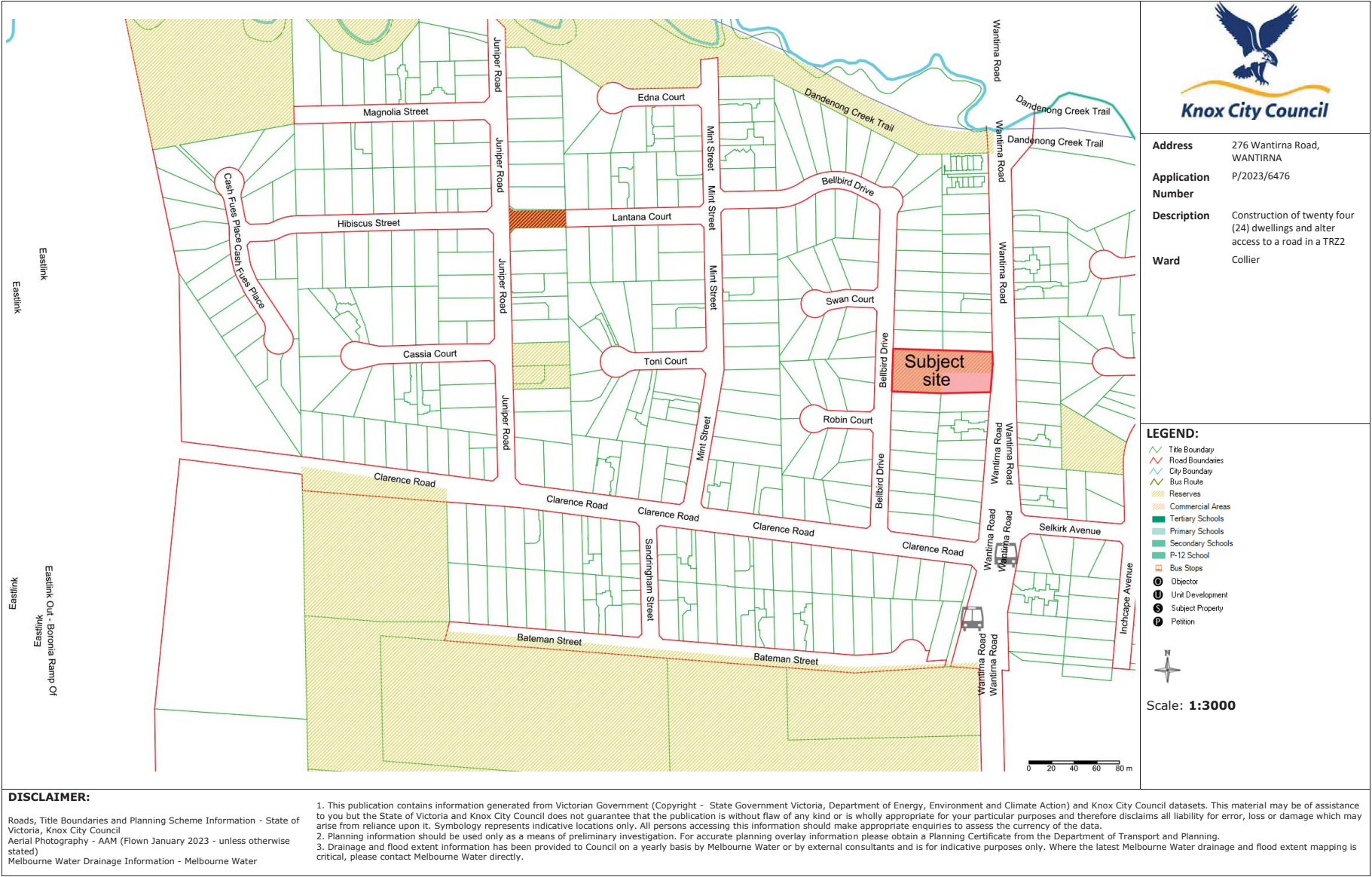
- The decision guidelines of Clause 65 of the Knox Planning Scheme and Section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987) have been appropriately considered.

## 6. Conclusion

Clause 71.02-3 of the Knox Planning Scheme requires Council to balance relative policy objectives when making decisions to ensure resulting development is sustainable and achieves a net community gain. In this context, the proposal is considered appropriate given the following:

- The development is consistent with Planning Policy Framework, Clause 11.03 (Settlement), Clause 15.01 (Built Environment and Heritage) and Clause 16.01 (Housing) of the Knox Planning Scheme.
- The proposal complies with the purpose of the Residential Growth Zone – Schedule 1.
- The development is compliant with ResCode (Clause 55 of the Knox Planning Scheme).
- The development provides an appropriate balance between the need for additional housing within an established residential area while ensuring the amenity of occupants and adjoining residents is not compromised.











DRAWING SCHEDULE

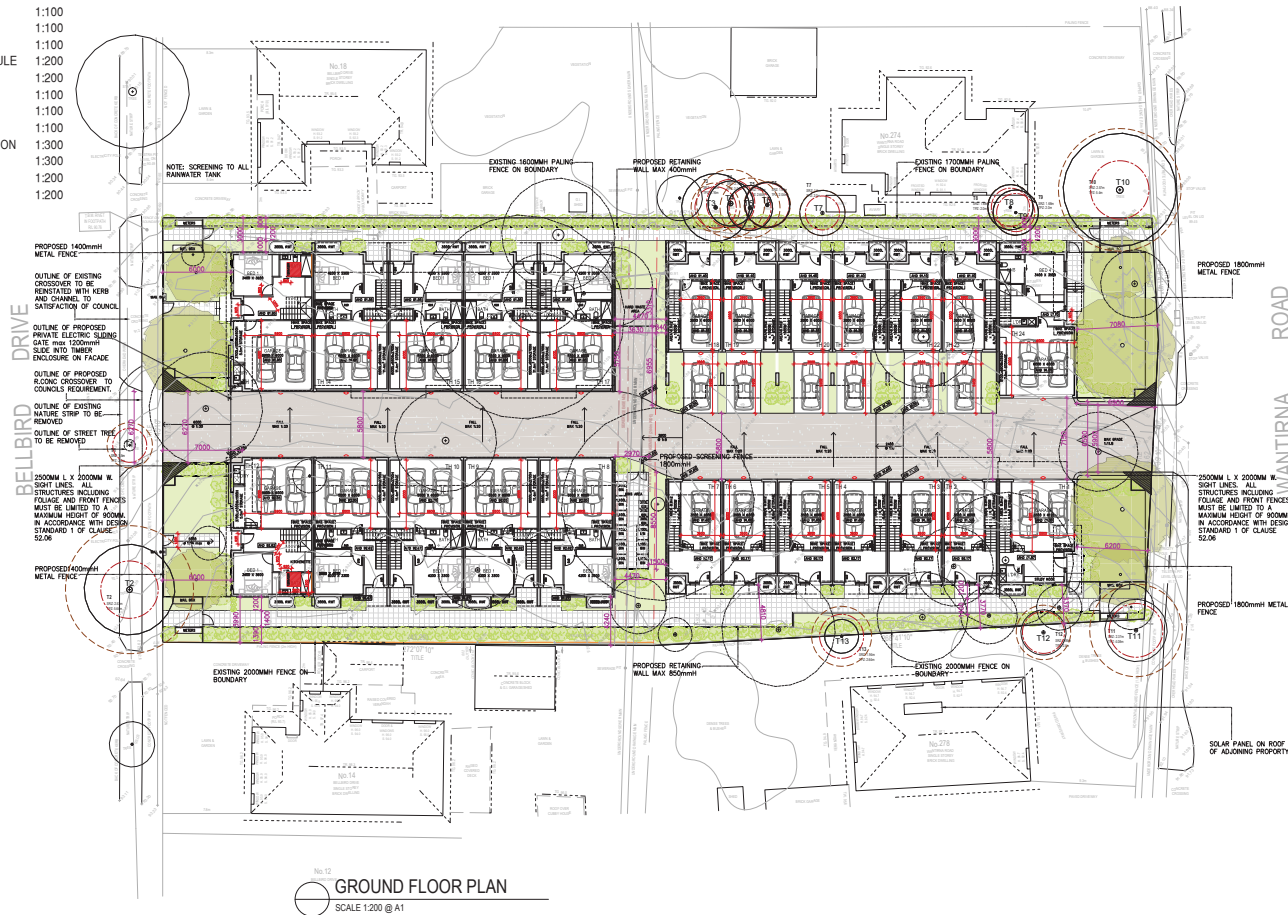
TPA01	GROUND FLOOR PLAN	1:200
TPA02	FIRST FLOOR PLAN	1:200
TPA03	SECOND FLOOR PLAN	1:200
TPA04	GROUND FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 1)	1:100
TPA05	FIRST FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 1)	1:100
TPA06	SECOND FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 1)	1:100
TPA07	GROUND FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 2)	1:100
TPA08	FIRST FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 2)	1:100
TPA09	SECOND FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 2)	1:100
TPA10	ELEVATIONS AND MATERIAL SCHEDULE	1:200
TPA11	STREET SCAPE ELEVATIONS	1:200
TPA12	ELEVATIONS 1:100 1	1:100
TPA13	ELEVATIONS 1:100 2	1:100
TPA14	ELEVATIONS 1:100 3	1:100
TPA15	NEIGHBOURHOOD AND SITE DESCRIPTION	1:300
TPA16	DESIGN RESPONSE	1:300
TPA17	SHADOW ANALYSIS	1:200
TPA18	SHADOW ANALYSIS	1:200

ESD NOTES

- WATER AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
- RAINWATER TANK TO BE CONNECTED TO THE TOILETS AND LAUNDRY.
  - NATIVE OR DROUGHT-TOLERANT SPECIES TO BE USED FOR LANDSCAPED AREAS. WATERING WILL NOT BE REQUIRED AFTER AN INITIAL PERIOD WHEN PLANTS ARE GETTING ESTABLISHED. IF IRRIGATION IS REQUIRED, IT WILL BE CONNECTED TO RAINWATER TANKS.
  - WELLS RATING FOR WATER FITTINGS/FIXTURES REFER TO ESD REPORT. FITTINGS PROVIDED AS PART OF BASE BUILDING WORK HAVE TO BE CHOSEN WITHIN ONE WELL STAR OF BEST AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF PURCHASE.
- ENERGY EFFICIENCY
- COMMITMENT TO kWh/LIGHTING DENSITY IN THE DWELLINGS.
  - RETRACTABLE EXTERNAL CLOTHES DRYING LINE TO BE PROVIDED.
  - LIGHTING SENSORS FOR EXTERNAL LIGHTING TO BE PROVIDED.
  - COMMITMENT TO 6.5 STAR AVERAGE ENERGY RATING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT.
- INDOOR ENVIRONMENT QUALITY
- DOUBLE GLAZING ON ALL HABITABLE ROOMS.
- TRANSPORT
- ONE BIKE SPACE LOCATION FOR EACH DWELLING PROVIDED IN THE GARAGE.
- WASTE
- THREE BINS SYSTEM INCLUDING KITCHEN, RECYCLING, AND ORGANIC/GARDEN WASTE, AS WELL AS FUTURE GLASS WASTE PROVISION PROVIDED.

LEGEND

- PROPOSED NEW TREES
- EXISTING TREES TO BE RETAINED
- RETRACTABLE CLOTHES LINE CONCEALED IN COURTYARD (TYPICAL)
- EXISTING TREE TO BE REMOVED
- SENSORS LIGHTING OVER GARAGE DOOR



AREA ANALYSIS

SITE AREA	3227.3 m <sup>2</sup>
No. DWELLINGS PROPOSED	24
OVERALL BUILDING AREA	3852 m <sup>2</sup>
BUILDING SITE COVERAGE	1810.0m <sup>2</sup> 56.0%
IMPERVIOUS SITE COVERAGE (EXCLUSIVE OF BUILDING SITE COVERAGE)	775m <sup>2</sup> 24.0%
PERMEABLE SITE COVERAGE (PERMEABLE TO RAIN AND STORMWATER DRAINAGE)	20.0%
GARDEN AREA	910m <sup>2</sup> 28.2%

TH 1	TH 18 - TH23
GARAGE	42.0m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	20.5m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	62.0m <sup>2</sup>
SECOND FLOOR	46.0m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	16.5m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	187.0m <sup>2</sup>

TH 2 - TH7	TH24
GARAGE	27.5m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	16.5m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	40.0m <sup>2</sup>
SECOND FLOOR	44.0m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	15.0m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	143.0m <sup>2</sup>

TH 8 - TH11	
GARAGE	41.5m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	38.0m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	67.5m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	15.2m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	162.2m <sup>2</sup>

TH 12	
GARAGE	45.0m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	42.5m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	74.5m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	16.4m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	178.4m <sup>2</sup>

TH 13	
GARAGE	45.0m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	42.5m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	74.5m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	16.4m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	178.4m <sup>2</sup>

TH 14 - TH17	
GARAGE	41.5m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	38.0m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	69.5m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	15.2m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	164.2m <sup>2</sup>

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design | architecture

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L21 105-111 BICKETTS ROAD  
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PROJECT  
**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
276 WANTIRNA ROAD WANTIRNA

FOR TOWN PLANNING APPLICATION

REVISIONS

NO.	DATE	NOTES
1	26-01-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
2	26-01-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
3	26-01-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
4	26-01-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
5	26-01-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
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8	26-01-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
9	26-01-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
10	26-01-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION

TITLE  
**GROUND FLOOR SITE PLAN**

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1 / 19

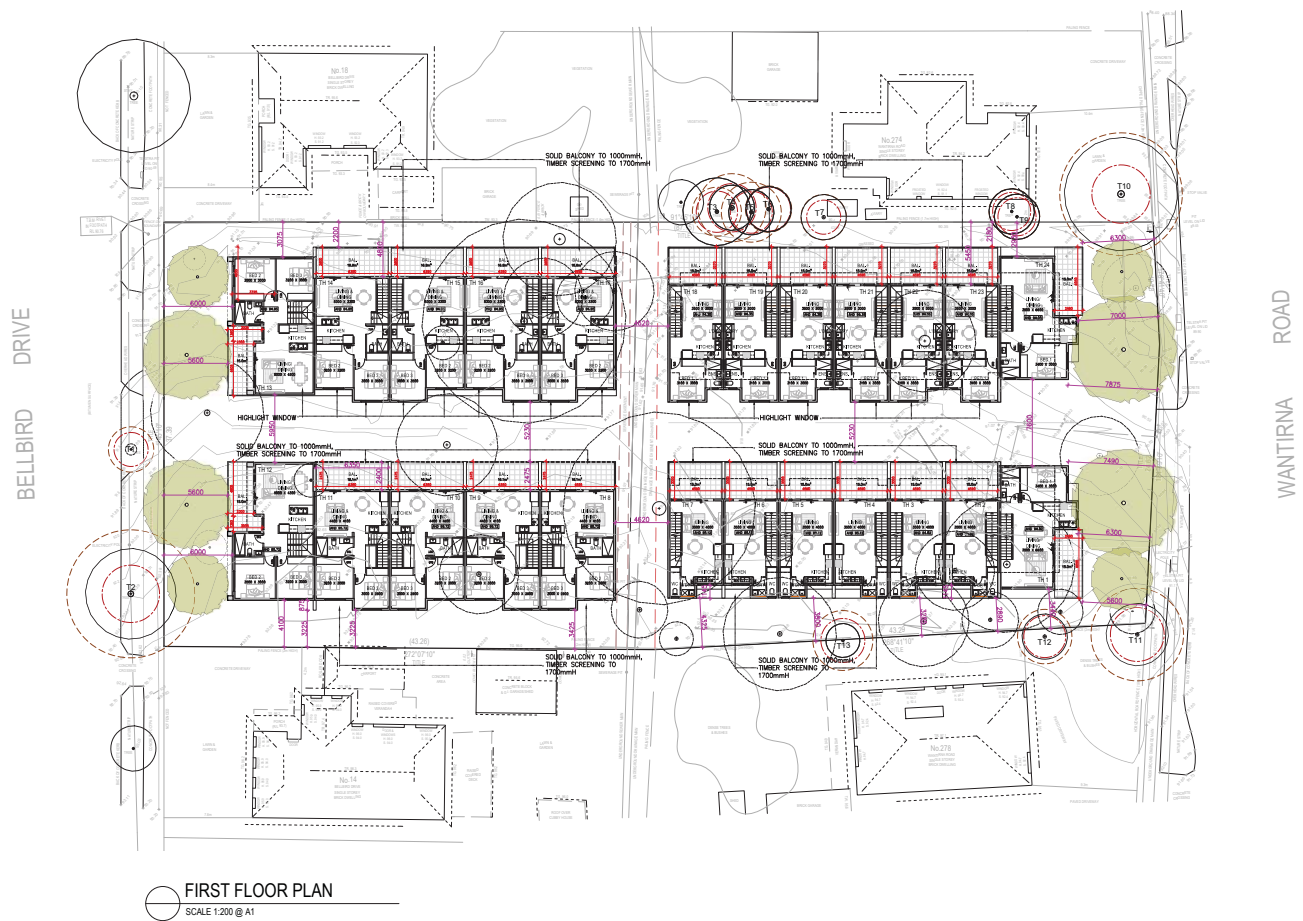
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DATE  
03-01-2025

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FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1



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**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
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REVISIONS		
NO.	DATE	NOTES
1	20-09-2021	TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
2	20-09-2021	ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
3	20-09-2021	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
4	20-09-2021	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
5	20-09-2021	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
6	20-09-2021	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
7	20-09-2021	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
8	20-09-2021	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW

TITLE

**FIRST FLOOR SITE PLAN**

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**2 / 19**

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SHEET NO

**TPA02**

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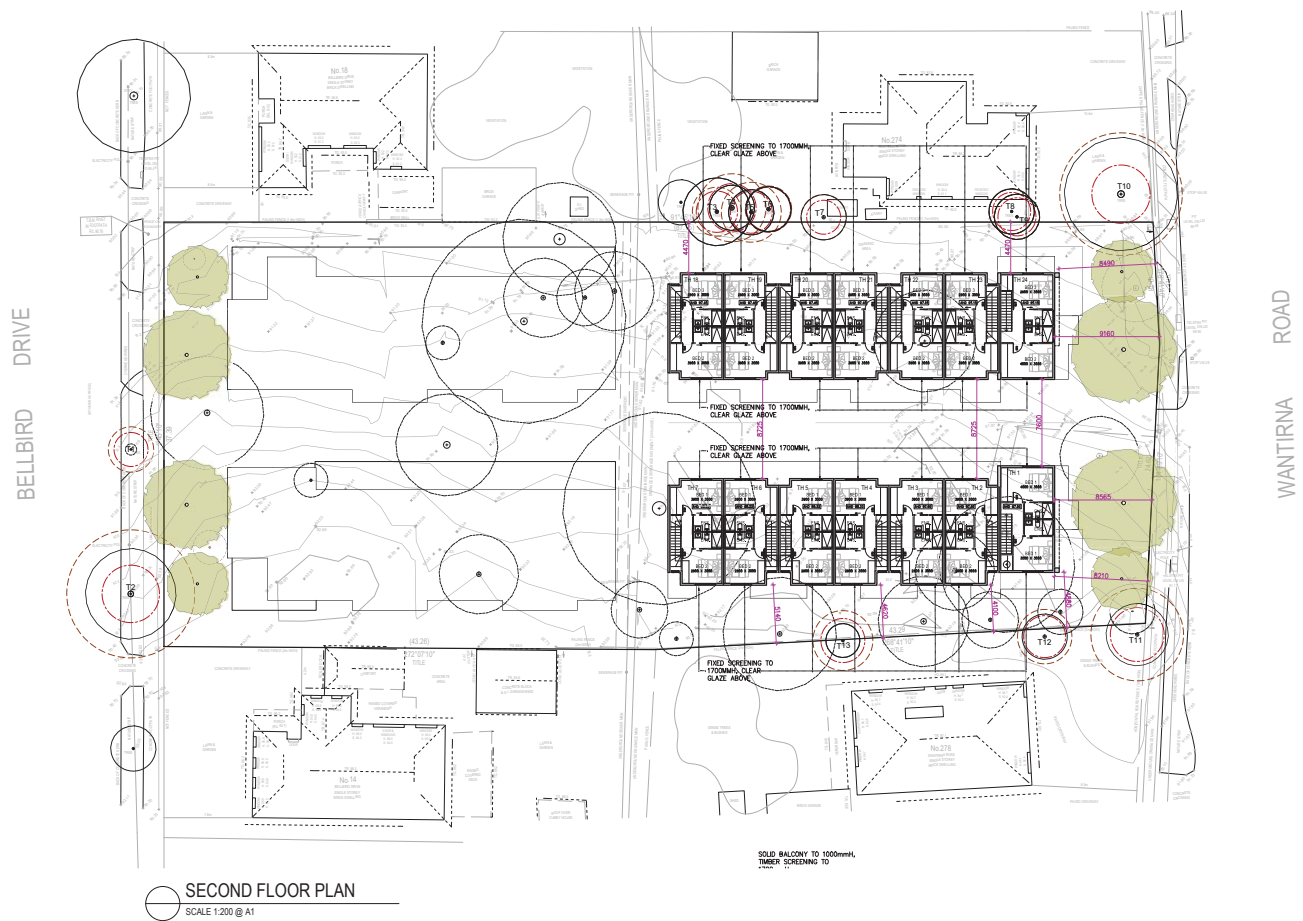
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03-01-2025

REVISION



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SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
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**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
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REVISIONS

NO.	DATE	NOTES
1	20-03-2025	TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
2	20-03-2025	ARCHITECTURAL
3	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
4	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
5	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
6	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
7	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
8	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW

TITLE

**FIRST FLOOR SITE PLAN**

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3 / 19

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**TPA03**

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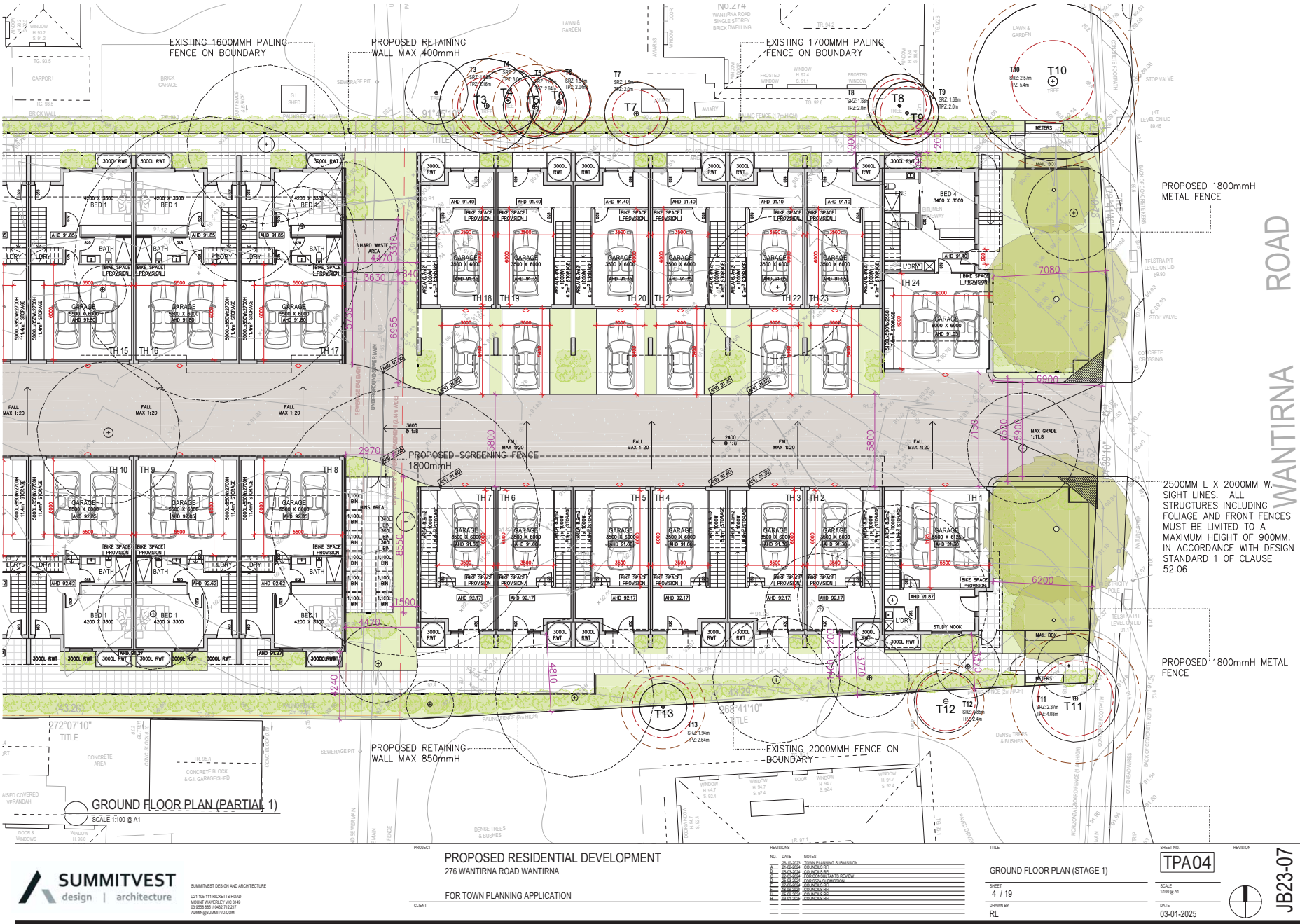
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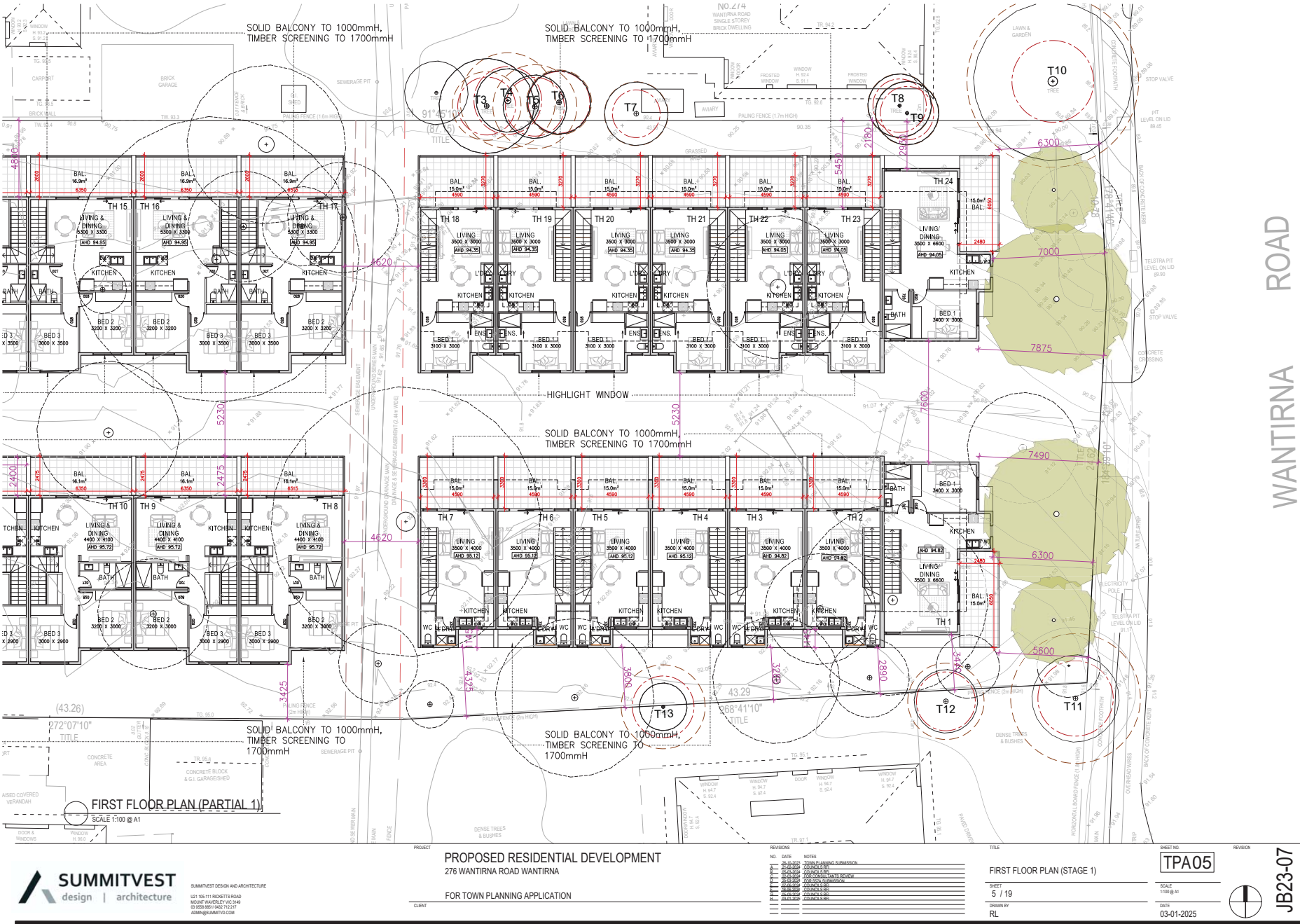
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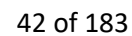
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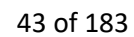


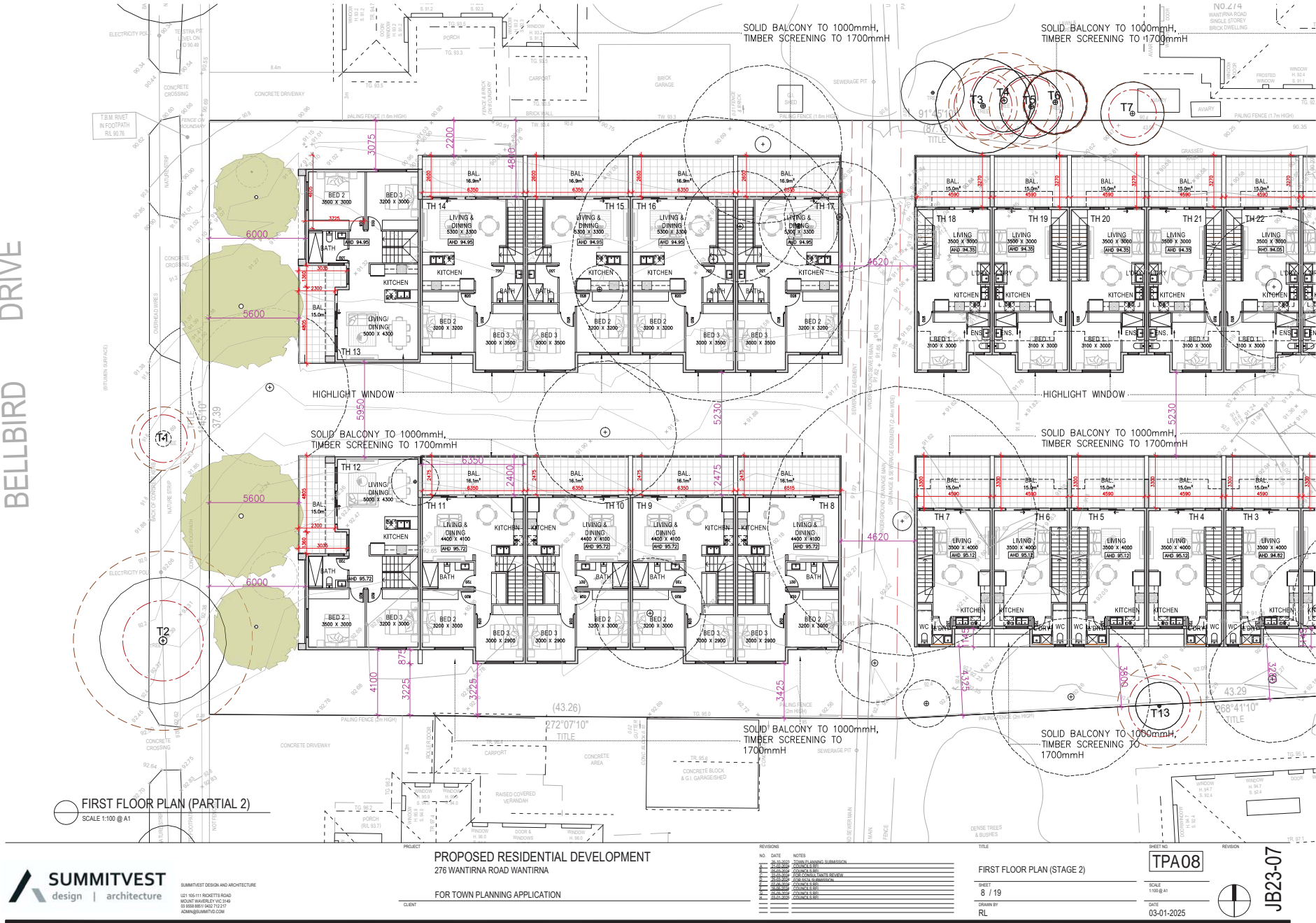


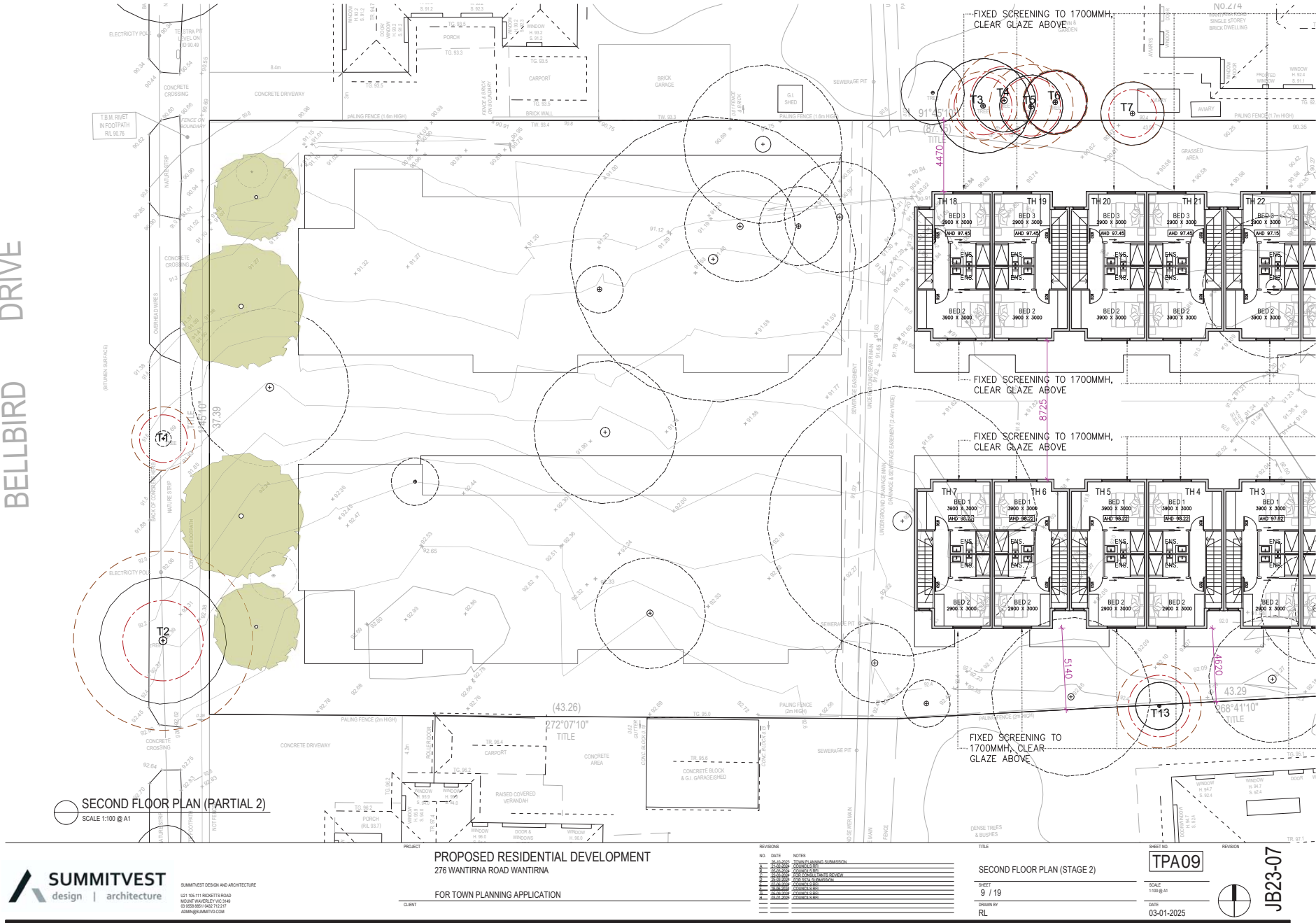


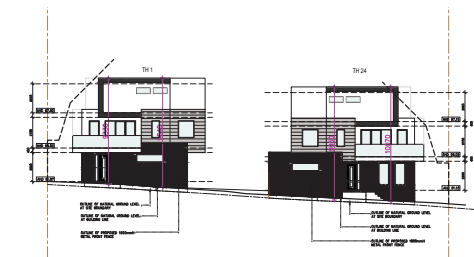




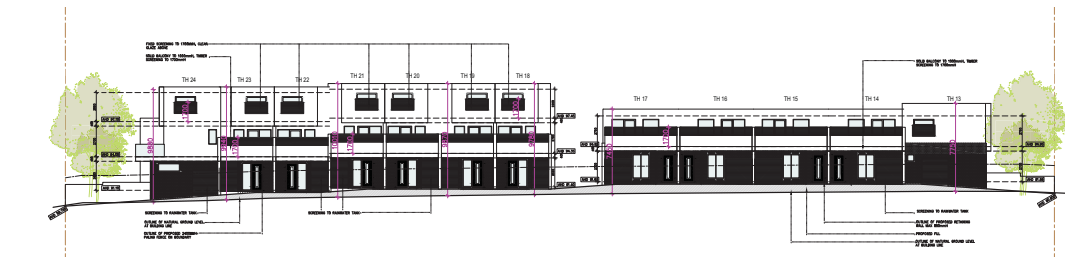








EAST ELEVATION  
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NORTH ELEVATION  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1



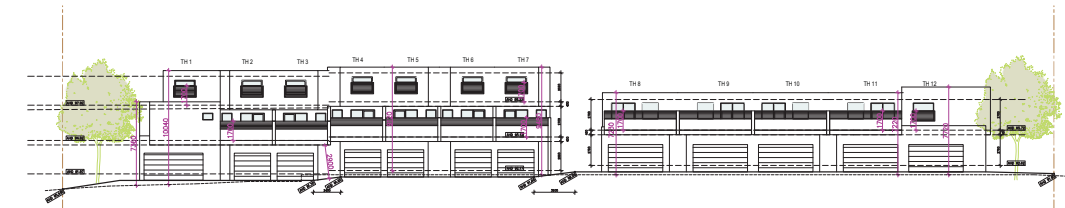
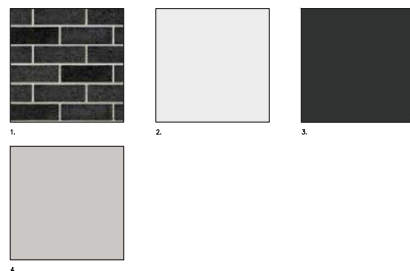
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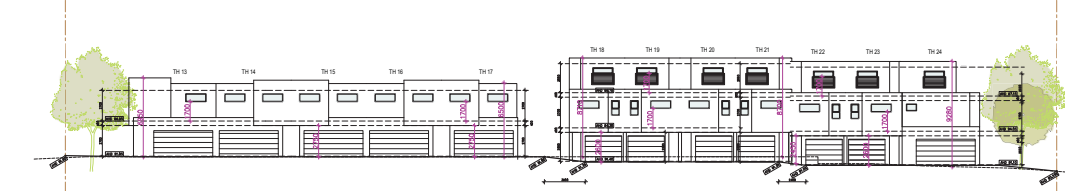
SOUTH ELEVATION  
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MATERIALS AND FINISHES  
SCHEDULE

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- WALLS: ① SELECT FACE BRICKWORK, SELECT AUSTRAL BRICK METALLIC RANGE "SUNMETAL BLUE" OR SIMILAR  
② SELECT CEMENT RENDER, SELECT DULUX COLOUR "LEXICON HAUT" OR SIMILAR  
③ SELECT CEMENT RENDER, SELECT DULUX COLOUR "MONUMENT" OR SIMILAR  
④ SELECT JAMES HARDIE CLADDING, SELECT OBSCURE CLADDING "DULUX DESHAUT" OR SIMILAR  
⑤ SELECT DULUX COLOUR "MONUMENT" OR SIMILAR
- WINDOWS: ALUMINIUM FRAMED WINDOWS, BLACK ANODISED  
⑥ CLEAR GLAZING  
⑦ OBSCURE GLAZING
- OUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES: SHEET METAL, SELECT DULUX COLOUR SPECIFIER "SURFMIST" OR SIMILAR
- FRONT DOOR: TIMBER DOOR, SELECT COLOUR "MONUMENT"
- DRIVEWAY: COLOURED CONCRETE DRIVEWAY - "LIGHT GREY"

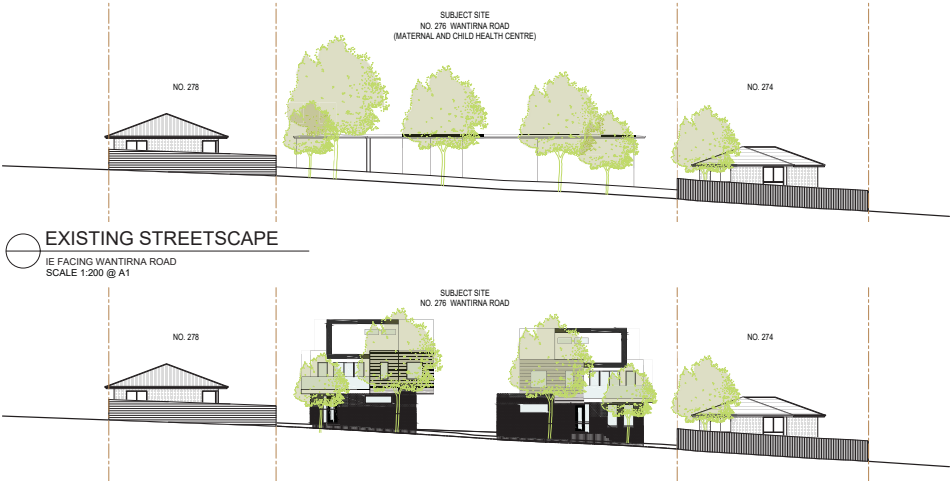


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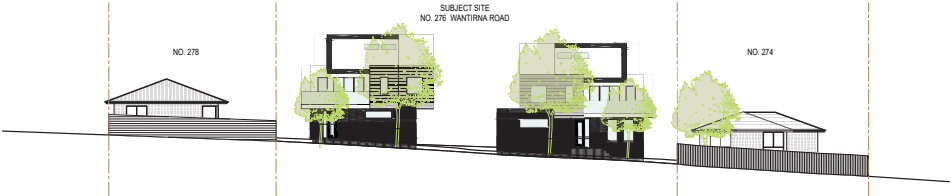


INTERNAL SOUTH ELEVATION  
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EXISTING STREETSCAPE  
1E FACING WANTIRNA ROAD  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1



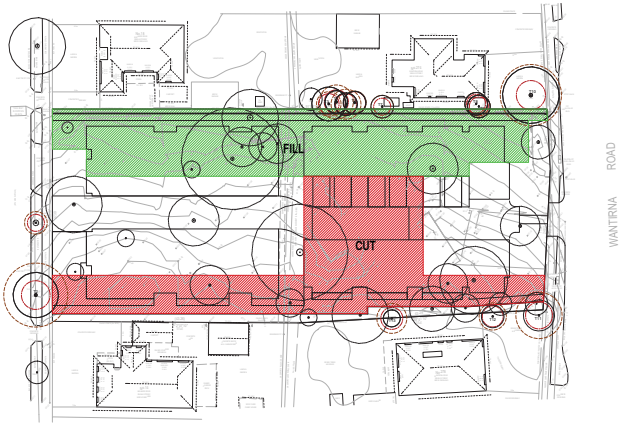
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1E FACING WANTIRNA ROAD  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1



EXISTING STREETSCAPE  
1E FACING BELLBIRD DRIVE  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1



PROPOSED STREETSCAPE  
1E FACING BELLBIRD DRIVE  
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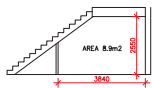
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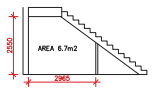
GATE ELEVATION WHEN OPENED  
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SCALE 1:100 @ A1



GATE ELEVATION WHEN CLOSED  
1E FACING BELLBIRD DRIVE  
SCALE 1:100 @ A1



TYPICAL U1-7



TYPICAL U18-23

UNDER STAIR STORAGE SECTION  
SCALE 1:100 @ A1



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U21 100-111 RICKETTS ROAD  
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PROJECT

**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
276 WANTIRNA ROAD WANTIRNA

CLIENT

FOR TOWN PLANNING APPLICATION

REVISIONS

NO.	DATE	NOTES
1	20-03-2025	TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
2	20-03-2025	CONCEPT PLAN
3	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
4	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
5	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
6	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
7	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
8	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
9	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
10	20-03-2025	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW

TITLE

**STREETSCAPES**

SHEET

11 / 19

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SHEET NO.

**TPA11**

SCALE

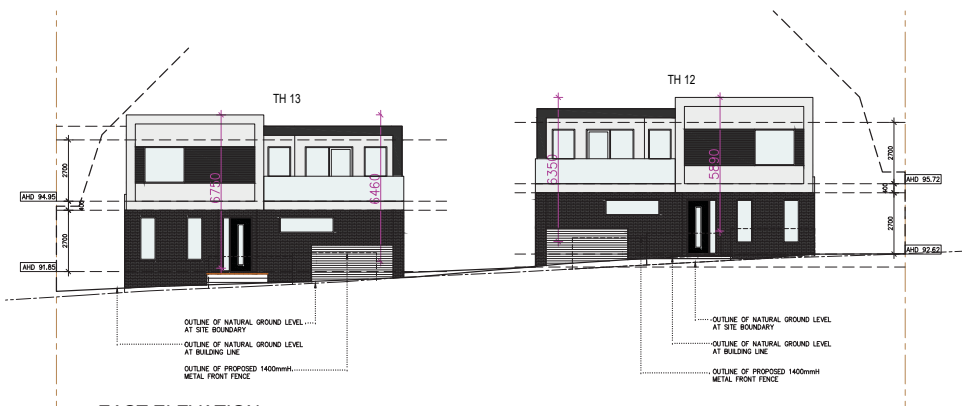
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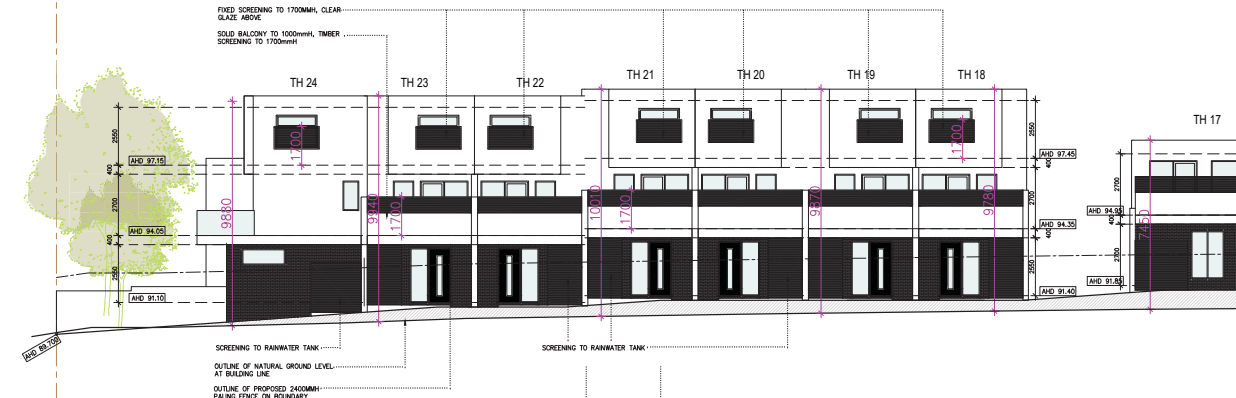
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REVISION

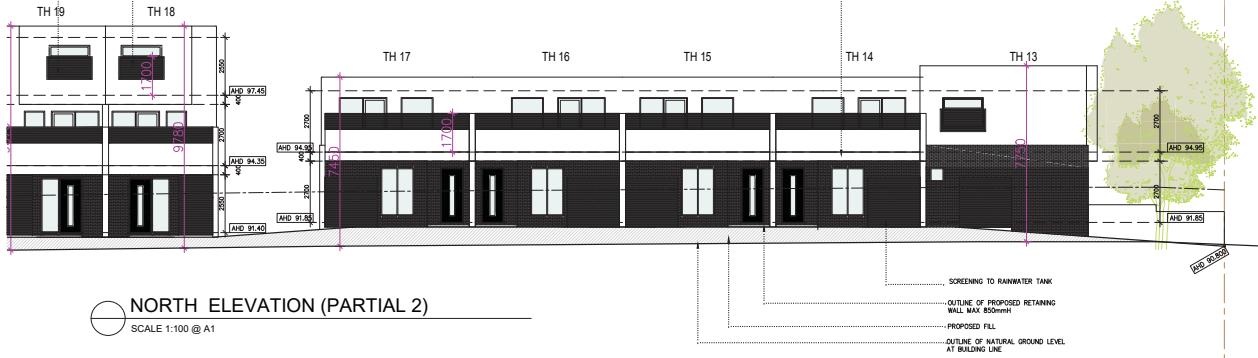
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EAST ELEVATION  
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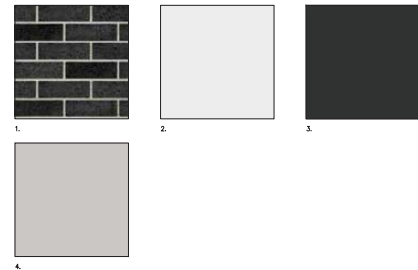
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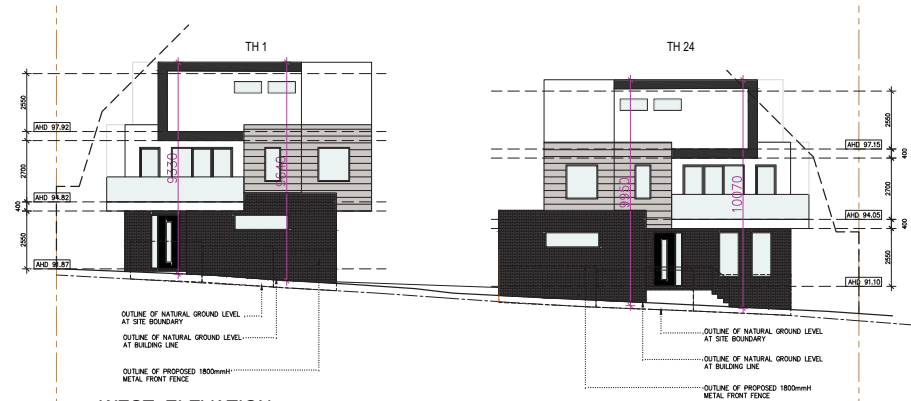


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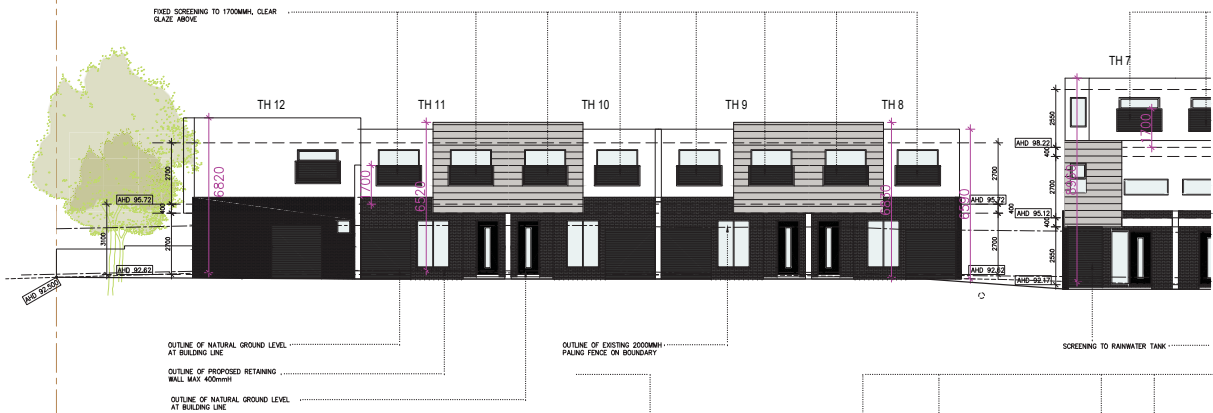
MATERIALS AND FINISHES  
SCHEDULE

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WALL:	① SELECT FACE BRICKWORK, SELECT AUSTRAL BRICKS METALLIC RANGE "CONCRETE BLUE" OR SIMILAR ② SELECT CEMENT RENDER, SELECT DULUX COLOUR "LESSON HALL" OR SIMILAR ③ SELECT CEMENT RENDER, SELECT DULUX COLOUR "MONUMENT" OR SIMILAR ④ SELECT JAMES HARDIE CLADDING, SELECT COLOURED CLADDING "DULUX REDBAY" OR SIMILAR ⑤ SELECT DULUX COLOUR "MONUMENT" OR SIMILAR	⑥ CLEAR GLAZING ⑦ OBTUSE GLAZING	SHEET METAL, SELECT DULUX COLOUR SPECIFIER "SUNWIST" OR SIMILAR
GARAGE DOORS:		OUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES:	FRONT DOOR: TIMBER DOOR, SELECT COLOUR "MONUMENT"
		DRIVEWAY:	COLOURED CONCRETE DRIVEWAY - "LIGHT GREY"

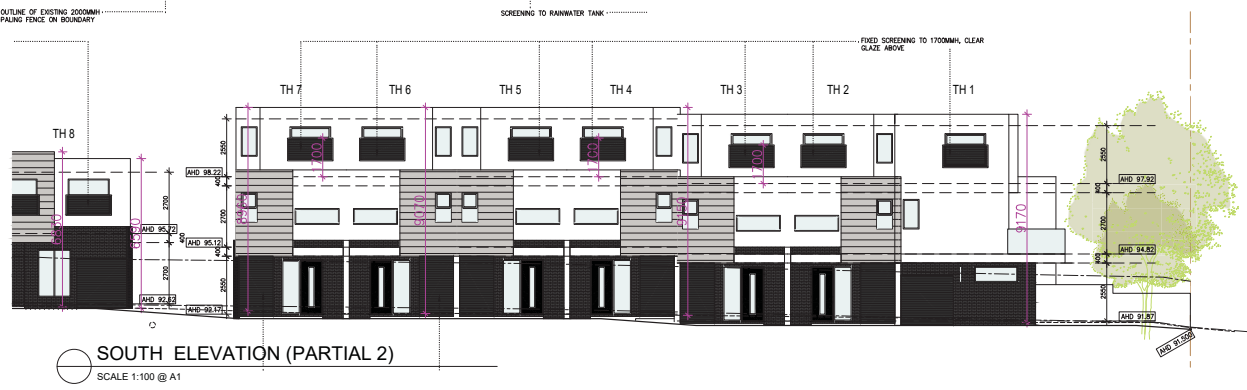




WEST ELEVATION  
IE BELLBIRD DRIVE  
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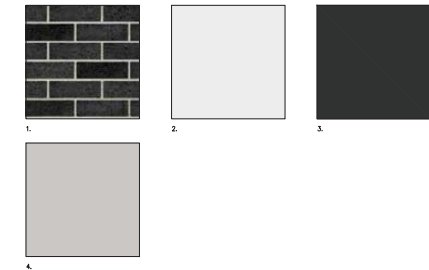
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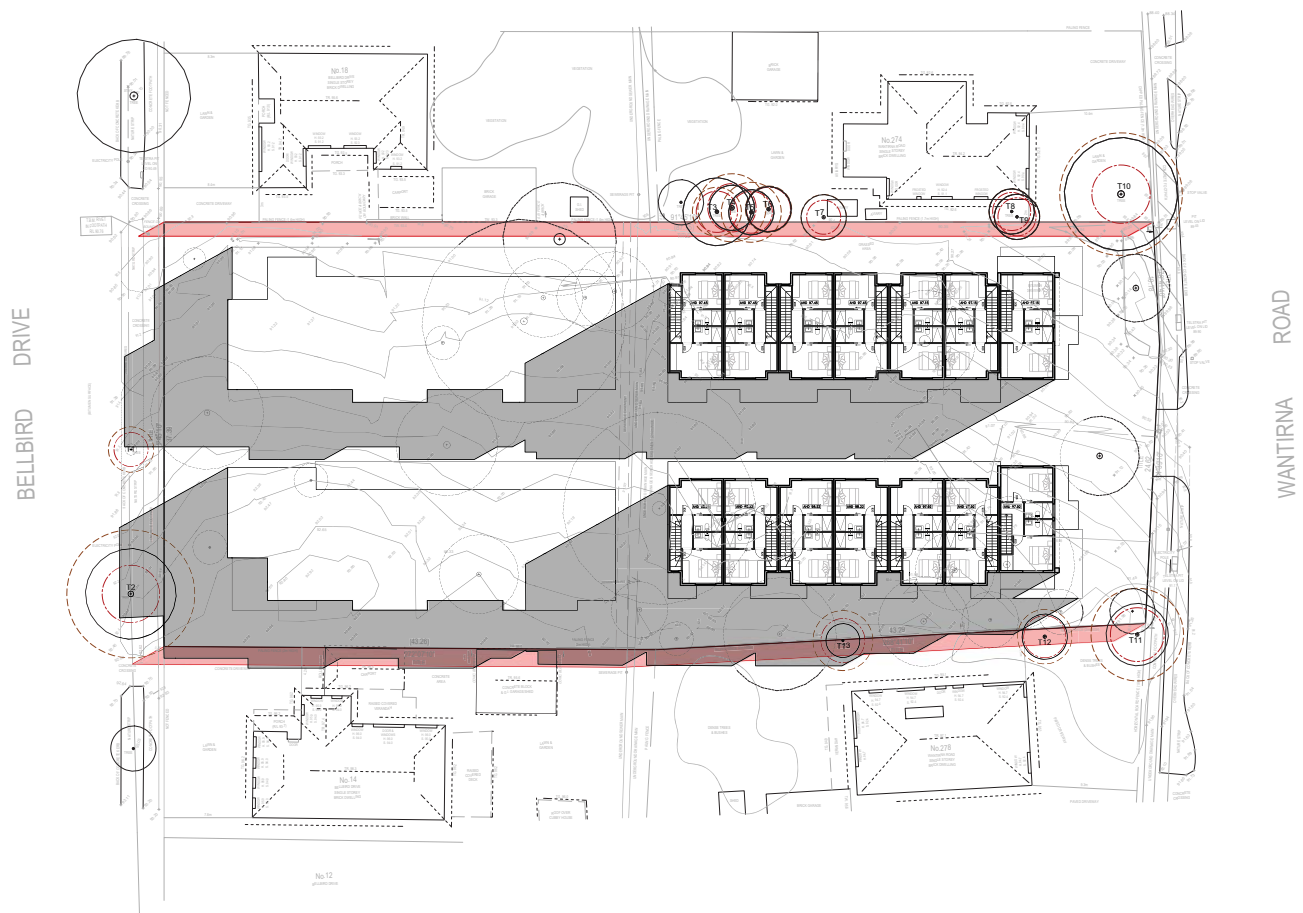


SOUTH ELEVATION (PARTIAL 2)  
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MATERIALS AND FINISHES  
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- ROOF: CORRUGATED STEEL ROOF OR SIMILAR
- WALLS: ① SELECT FACE BRICKWORK, SELECT AUSTRALIAN BRICKS METALLIC RANGE "CONCRETE BLUE" OR SIMILAR  
② SELECT CEMENT RENDER, SELECT DULUX COLOUR "LEISURE HALL" OR SIMILAR  
③ SELECT CEMENT RENDER, SELECT DULUX COLOUR "MONUMENT" OR SIMILAR  
④ SELECT JAMES HARDIE CLADDING, SELECT COLOUR CLADDING "DULUX RESPAW" OR SIMILAR  
⑤ SELECT DULUX COLOUR "MONUMENT" OR SIMILAR
- WINDOWS: ALUMINUM FRAMED WINDOWS, BLACK ANODISED  
⑥ CLEAR GLAZING  
⑦ OBTUSE GLAZING
- OUTLETS AND DOWNPIPES: SHEET METAL, SELECT DULUX COLOUR SPECIFIER "SUNWIST" OR SIMILAR
- FRONT DOOR: TIMBER DOOR, SELECT COLOUR "MONUMENT"
- DRIVEWAY: COLOURED CONCRETE DRIVEWAY - "LIGHT GREY"







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PROJECT

**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
276 WANTIRNA ROAD WANTIRNA

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FOR TOWN PLANNING APPLICATION

REVISIONS

NO.	DATE	NOTES
1	26-09-2023	TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION
2	26-09-2023	ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
3	26-09-2023	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
4	26-09-2023	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
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6	26-09-2023	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
7	26-09-2023	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW
8	26-09-2023	FOR TOWN PLANNING REVIEW

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**SHADOW ANALYSIS - 9AM SEP 22**

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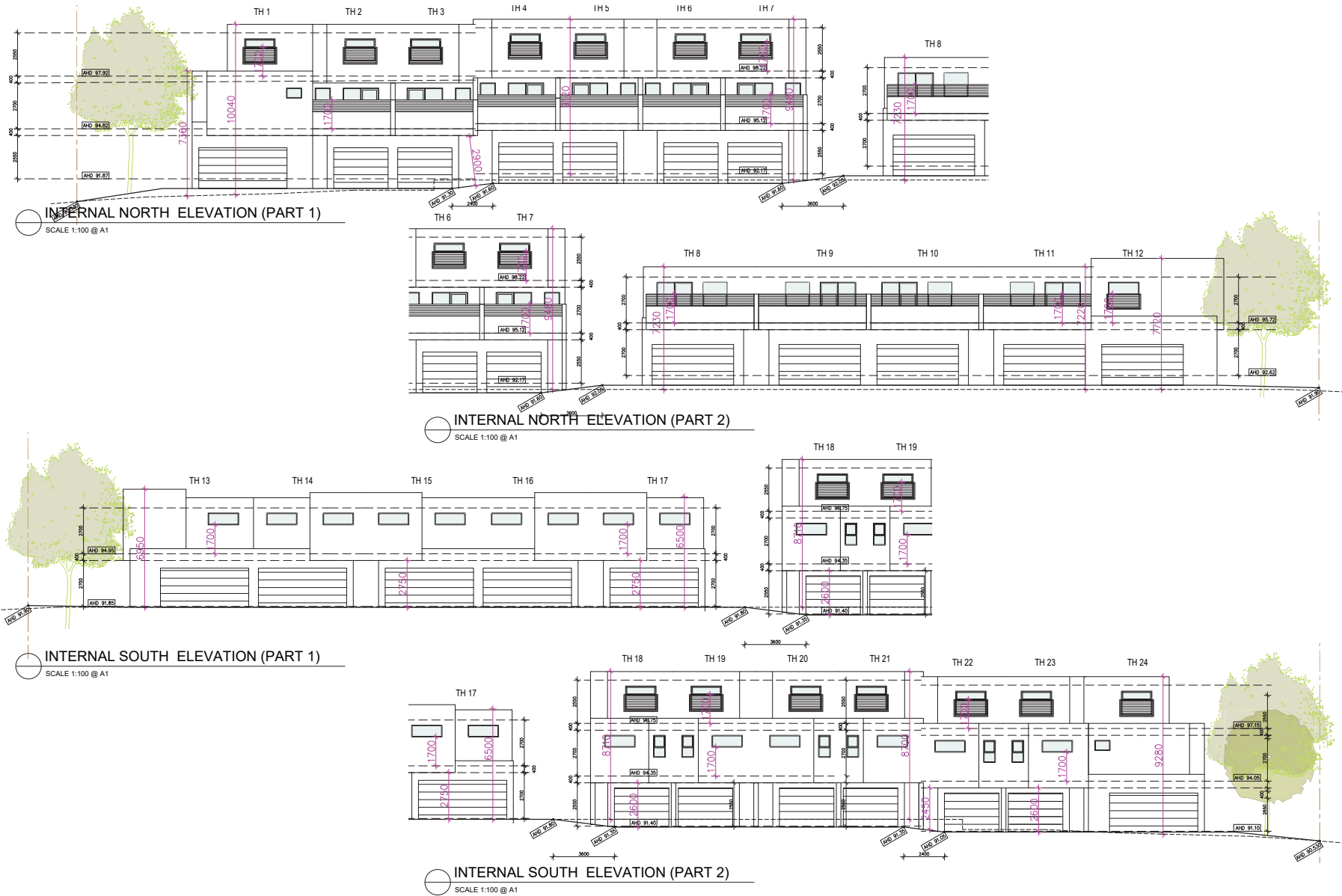
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REVISIONS

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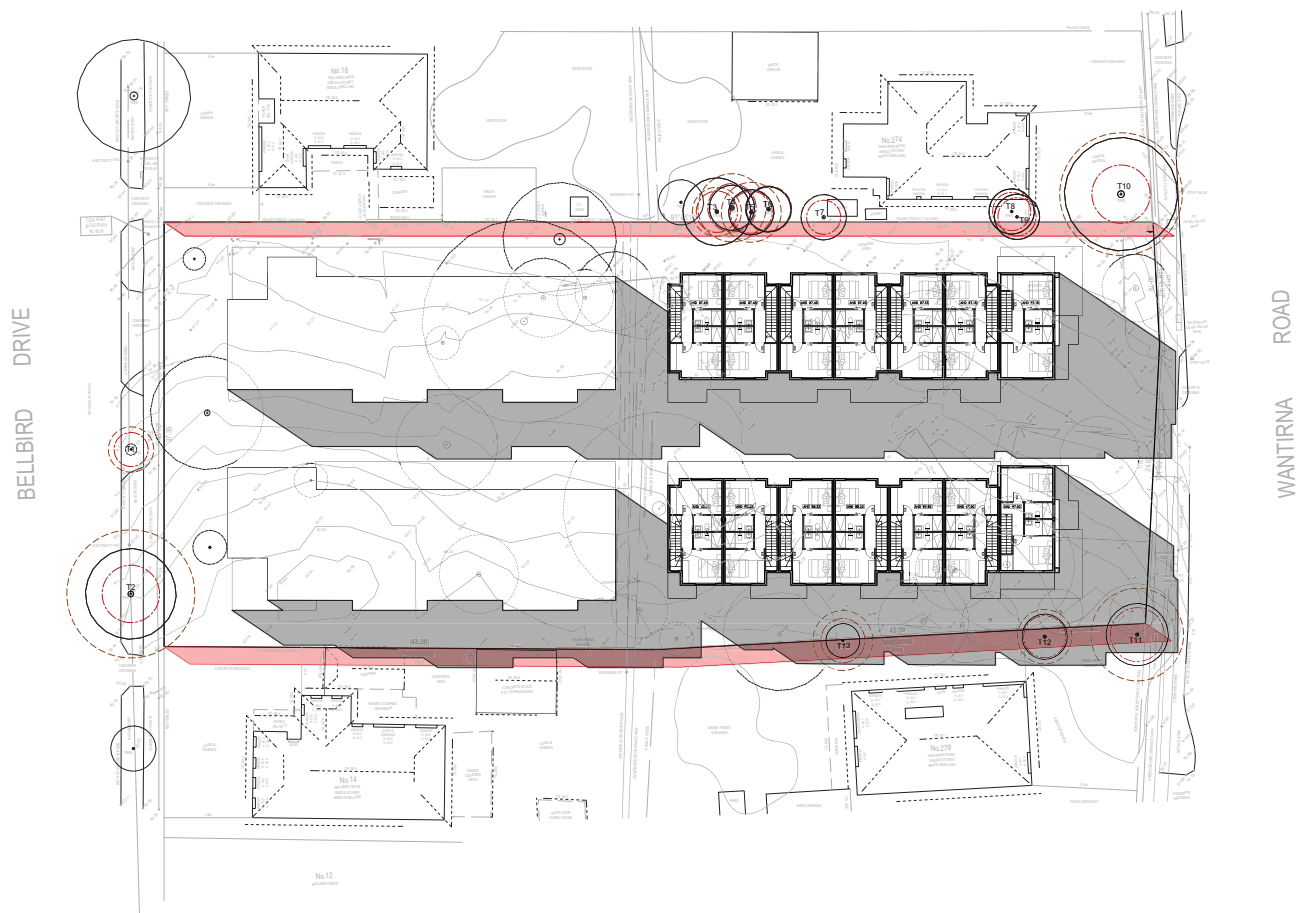
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SHADOW ANALYSIS - 3PM SEP 22

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## 7 Public Question Time

## 8 Officer Reports

### 8.1 Knox Community Grants Review

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Discussion
<b>Author:</b>	Community Partnerships Team Leader, Jade Mainwaring
<b>Manager:</b>	Manager Community Strengthening, Kerryn Jansons
<b>Executive:</b>	Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

#### SUMMARY

Across the organisation there are six grant streams with an annual budget allocation in 2024 - 2025 financial year of \$1,433,163. The Community Strengthening team administer the Minor Grant Program, Community Development Fund and Community Partnership Fund:

Grant Stream	2024-25 Budget Allocation
Community Development Fund	\$370,658
Community Partnership Fund	\$787,360
Minor Grant Program	\$155,145
Leisure Minor Capital Works	\$100,000
Biodiversity Buddies	\$10,000
Individual Excellence Grants	\$10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,433,163</b>

Knox grants are currently administered in accordance with Council's overarching Grant Framework Policy, implemented in 2022 upon recommendation of the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO), with underlying procedures and/or guidelines for each individual grant program.

Council's Community Partnerships Team has undertaken a review of the following Community Grants Programs:

- Minor Grant Program; and
- Community Development Fund.

The Minor Grant Program and Community Development Fund Grant Programs were due for review March 2025. Administering these grant programs over the last 12 months highlighted opportunities for overall improvements, enhancing the grant programs integrity and effectiveness, and improving the overall quality moving forward.

The Review has also considered the relevance of the current grant programs and their respective strategic objectives. The overall objectives of the review were to ensure that:

- Funding areas are aligned to the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan and address community need;
- Grant programs are accessible and equitable;

- Best practice principles are utilised throughout Council's grant programs;
- Internal processes and guidelines are consistent; and
- Grant programs are flexible in responding to community need and /or emerging issues or trends.

## RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the Knox Community Grants Review.
2. Endorses the updated Knox Community Grants Framework Policy.
3. Endorses the Knox Community Grants Guidelines 2025-2026.

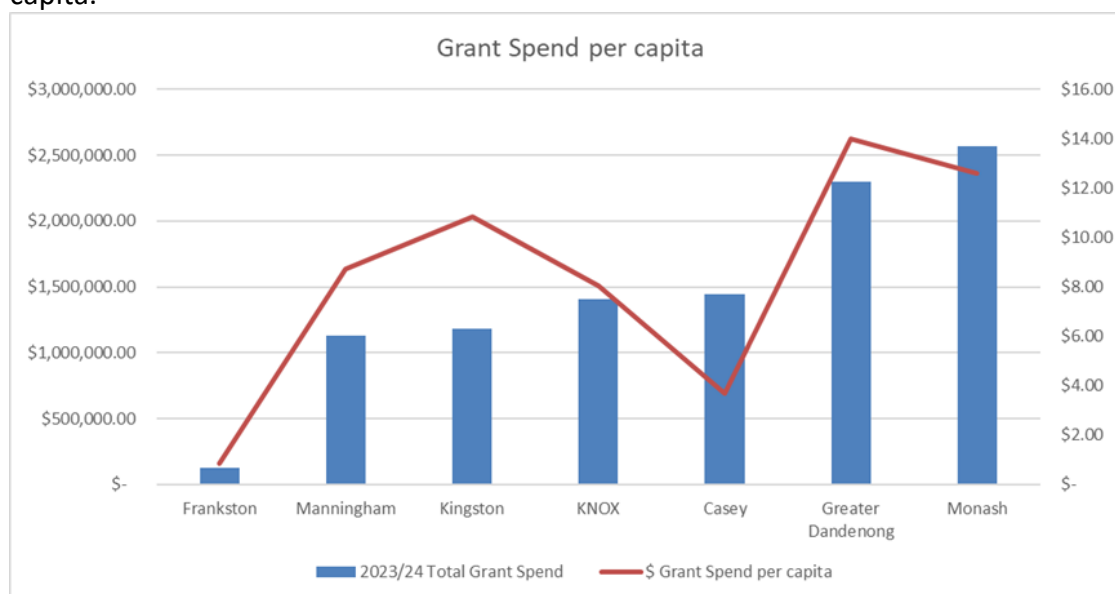
## 1. DISCUSSION

### 1.1 Benchmarking

Council's Community Partnerships Team participated in two benchmarking exercises during 2024, with Maroondah City Council (community grants only) and the City of Kingston (all grants). Maroondah's benchmarking focused on all aspects of community grants, whilst Kingston's focus was on budget allocation. Benchmarking from these exercises has been included in this review where relevant.

### 1.2 Grants Budget Allocation

Council's annual grant budget allocation is approximately \$1,433,163. Benchmarking data across six Local Government Areas (LGAs) indicates that Knox's grant budget sits within the median range of the benchmarked LGAs. The chart below shows this comparison, including grant spend per capita.



The 2024-25 budget allocation for the Minor Grant Program, Community Development Fund and Community Partnership Fund is shown below.

Grant Stream	2024/25 (Current) Budget Allocation
Community Development Fund	\$370,658
Community Partnership Fund	\$787,360
Minor Grant Program	\$155,145
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,313,163</b>

Looking ahead at the 2025 - 2026 budget allocation (effective 1 July 2025) and the Councillor budget proposal to take into consideration ongoing community needs and the increasing demand for support services, it is proposed to reallocate a portion of the Minor Grants and Community Development Fund budgets to create a new grant stream specifically towards addressing short term, essential support for the Knox Community. Council can better support local organisations providing essential services, ensuring vulnerable Knox residents can access essential support whilst still providing organisations access to the Community Development Fund for broader projects relating to community wellbeing.

It is proposed that if this change is approved, it will be implemented as the “Community Response Fund” effective from 1 July 2025. The Community Response Fund will highlight Council’s commitment to responding to residents in Knox experiencing the need for essential support. The Community Response Fund will be open until the budget allocation is exhausted, with applications presented to Council each month for consideration. A review of the program would be presented to Councillors after 12mths if the new grant stream is implemented.

Criteria and eligibility of the new grant stream is outlined in Attachment 2.

The proposed budget breakdown for 2025 - 2026 would be:

<b>Grant Stream</b>	<b>2024-2025 (Current) Budget Allocation</b>	<b>2025-2026 Proposed Budget Allocation</b>
Community Development Fund	\$370,658	\$309,365
Community Partnership Fund	\$787,360	\$791,523
Minor Grant Program	\$155,145	\$121,696
Community Response Fund	0	\$100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,313,163</b>	<b>\$1,322,584</b>

### **1.3 Council’s Grant Framework Policy**

Council’s Grant Framework Policy was implemented in 2022 upon recommendation of the Victorian Auditor General’s Office (VAGO) to provide a consistent guide in the allocation, management and review of all Council’s grant programs for the Knox community. The Grant Framework Policy (Attachment 1) is the overarching Policy that outlines how all of Knox’s grant programs are administered. The Policy has been reviewed as part of the Grants Review to ensure it is updated to reflect any changes in regulations, and to incorporate any additional items that are consistent across each of the grant programs at Knox.

The Grant Framework Policy was due for review in April 2026, however in order to meet the Child Safety regulations, the review has been brought forward in line with this grant review.

The Grant Framework Policy currently outlines that each grant program will have underlying Grant Procedures. Procedures are a formal, step-by-step process of how each grant program is managed, operational workflows and administrative requirements. It is recommended these more formal Procedures be transitioned into Guidelines for the Minor Grants Program, Community Response Fund and Community Development Fund. Guidelines are more flexible, user centric documents intended for public use. They define objectives, eligibility criteria and the

overall framework for the grant program and importantly are easier to understand for applicants. Other Knox grant streams that do not form part of this Grant Review Project will look to transition into Guidelines when they are up for review.

Benchmarking against neighbouring LGAs has shown that many Councils have adopted a more user-friendly approach by implementing comprehensive grant guidelines rather than procedures.

A summary of the recommended changes to the Grant Framework Policy is outlined in the Table below.

Section	Update
Section 2 – Context	Inclusion of Child Safety Requirements.
Section 4.3 – Relevant Legislation	Add - Child Wellbeing & Safety Act 2005.
Section 4.6 – Related Council Procedures	Minor adjustment to language used.
Section 5 – Definitions	Add the following defined words: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Acquittal</li> <li>– Assessment Panel.</li> </ul> Minor adjustment to language used.
Section 6.1 – Grant Procedures	Amend Guidelines for Minor Grants, Community Partnership Fund and Community Development Fund.
Section 6.3 – Applications	Amend “Procedure” to “Guidelines.”
Section 6.5 – Assessment Process	Amend “Procedure” to “Guidelines.”  Amend “weighted” criteria to “assessment criteria” as not all grants have weighted criteria, however all grants have assessment criteria.
Section 6.10 – Funding Agreement	Include a statement that all funding conditions outlined in the Funding Agreement must be met prior to a grant payment being released as Child Safety Requirements now form part of Funding Agreements for some grant streams.
Section 6.15 – Financial Acquittal	Remove 5% condition on unspent grant funds and maintain the dollar amount of \$150 for unspent grant funds due to the administration costs outweighing the value of the returned funds. Organisations will be encouraged to utilise funds under \$150 towards other project costs.
Section 6.15 – Financial Acquittal	Include an item stating that groups may not be eligible for future Knox grants if the acquittal is outstanding.
Section 6.19 added – Grant Recipients behavior	Include the requirement that funded organisations must behave in a manner aligned to Knox Council’s values. “Grant recipients must demonstrate behavior that aligns with



Section	Update
	and supports the core values of Knox City Council. This includes, but is not limited to, conducting activities in a manner that promotes respect, integrity, inclusivity, accountability, and responsibility. Organisations that do not adhere to these values may be required to return grant funds to Council and may not be eligible for future grant funding.”

#### 1.4 Insights and Recommendations

This section outlines the insights and recommendations of the Minor Grants Program and Community Development Fund analysis, including recommendations for potential adjustments or reallocation of funding to better meet the needs of the community.

##### 1.4.1 Minor Grant Program Overview and Insights

The Minor Grant Program has a current budget allocation of \$155,145 for the 2024 - 2025 financial year and is a responsive funding source to assist a wide range of community led activities across Knox that support volunteer effort and civic participation. Applications are received monthly and presented to Council for consideration.

The Program responds to the needs of the community, contributing to an estimated project value of \$2.2M over the past five years, as detailed by community groups within their applications. The Program is popular amongst community groups, with the 2024 - 2025 annual budget expected to be fully utilised by April 2025.

The Minor Grant Program was last reviewed, and recommendations approved by Council in April 2024, with minor changes to eligible projects implemented. This current Review aims to enhance the spread of funding and budget allocation and has considered benchmarking and funding history of the Program.

The Program receives an average of 101 applications a year, with an average grant amount provided of \$1,751. The highest volume of funded applications is for equipment, making up 31% of all funded Minor Grants. The top 3 organisation seeking funding for equipment are Sport and Leisure, Early Years and Active Ageing seeking various equipment including iPad's, training equipment and play equipment.

The Table below demonstrates benchmarking of Minor Grant equivalents regarding limits and frequency:

LGA	Grant Name	Grant Amount	Frequency
Knox	Minor Grant Program	\$3,000	Monthly
Maroondah	Small Equipment Grants	\$750	Monthly
Yarra Ranges	Monthly Grants	\$1,500	Monthly
Manningham	Community Strengthening	\$3,000	Assessed quarterly
	Equipment	\$1,500 (50% co contribution requirement)	

### 1.4.2 Minor Grant Program Recommendations

The most significant recommendations to the Minor Grants Program are outlined below:

- **Application Limits** - Currently, organisations can apply for up to \$3,000 per financial year, with a maximum of \$5,000 over three consecutive financial years. However, this financial cap has proven to be a barrier for some groups, limiting their ability to fully access funding. As a result, it is recommended that the \$5,000 limit over three consecutive financial years be removed in future rounds.

Additionally, it is proposed that the maximum amount an organisation can apply for in a single financial year be reduced to \$2,000. It is anticipated that this adjustment will not significantly impact the majority of applicants, whilst still ensuring the sustainability and equitable distribution of available funds.

The Table below outlines the recommended changes for the Minor Grant Program for the 2025 - 2026 Financial Year, effective 1 July 2025. Full recommendations are shown in Attachment 3 – DRAFT – Community Grants Guidelines.

Minor Grant Program Procedure Recommendations		
Section	Recommendation	Expected Outcome
Minor Grant Program Annual Application Limit	Reduce the annual application limit from \$3,000 to \$2,000.	With the implementation of a \$2,000 limit, it is anticipated that a greater number of applications will be able to be funded across the Minor Grants Program and enable fairer access across organisations in Knox. The average grant amount funded across the program is \$1,751, and it is envisaged that this will have minimal impact on funded projects.
Minor Grant Program three-year funding \$5,000 cap.	Remove the three-year funding cap of \$5,000.	This will ensure organisations can continue to access Minor Grant funding each financial year, up to \$2,000, and contribute to supporting smaller annual events. The three-year funding cap is often misleading and amending this will simplify the process and work in with the reduction of the annual limit.
Amusement rides	Exclusion update: Use of amusement rides is updated to include “use and hire” of amusement rides.	To provide clarification on the intent of the exclusion. The intent is - Costs associated with the hire of the amusement rides and inflatables are excluded.
Equipment co-contribution requirement	Include a Clause where applications for, or including, items of equipment will not be supported without a	To align with Community Development Fund recommendations

Minor Grant Program Procedure Recommendations		
Section	Recommendation	Expected Outcome
	minimum of a 10% co-contribution by the applicant towards the equipment costs. Note: maximum co-contribution would be \$200 under the Minor Grant Program.	

### 1.4.3 Community Development Fund Program Overview and Insights

The Community Development Fund (CDF) is a grants program that aims to develop, enhance and support the involvement of not-for-profit community groups with projects, programs or equipment which respond to identified needs in the Knox community. It has an annual budget allocation of approximately \$385,000 (Financial Year 2024 - 2025) and grants are assessed and allocated annually.

The CDF Program is currently offered over four general categories including:

- Category 1 – General projects, programs, activities, or equipment (\$3,000 - \$20,000);
- Category 2 – Equipment only (\$3,000 - \$20,000);
- Category 3 – Community festivals and events (\$15,000); and
- Category 4 – Community functions (\$5,000).

The CDF Program has provided approximately \$1,967,367 worth of grant funding in support of 257 projects in the Knox community over the past five years, contributing to an estimated value of these projects of \$2,741,259 as described by community groups in their applications.

The Table below details Knox's approval rate in comparison to neighbouring LGAs in the 2024 - 2025 funding round:

LGA	Total Applications Received 2024-2025	Number of Successful Applications in 2024-2025	Success Rate
Maroondah	109	81	75%
Banyule	95	43	45%
<b>Knox</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>49%</b>
Manningham	67	53	79%
Whitehorse	120	89	74%
Yarra Ranges	204	146	72%

When benchmarked against neighbouring LGAs, the Knox CDF Program approval/success rate is relatively low. Analysis of past applications indicates a number of factors that could have contributed to this, including available grant categories and eligibility within CDF.

The Table below demonstrates each of the current CDF Program categories, total applications received, approval rates and the total allocation provided over the past five years:

CDF Application Category	Total Applications 2020-2025	Total Approved Applications 2020-2025	Approval Rate 2020-2025	Total \$ Provided 2020-2025	Average Grant Awarded 2020-2025
Category 1 - General Projects, programs, activities, or equipment (\$3,000 - \$20,000)	264	166	62%	\$1,381,948	\$8,325
Category 2 - Equipment only (\$3,000 - \$20,000)	83	64	77%	\$398,744	\$6,230
Category 3 - Community Festivals & Events (\$15,000)	41	27	66%	\$178,227	\$6,601
Category 4 - Community Function (\$5,000)	7	3	43%	\$8,447	\$2,816
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>\$1,967,367</b>	<b>\$7,655</b>

Category 1 – General Projects, Programs, Activities or Equipment – is a broad category and receives the highest volume of applications. The types of projects falling into this category range from food relief to major equipment purchases.

The top three organisation types seeking funding under the CDF Program are sport and leisure, multicultural organisations and community service organisations. Collectively, these make up 45% of all applications received.

Approval rates, however, vary significantly between these organisation types, with multicultural organisations receiving the second lowest approval rate across the CDF Program. This may indicate that the application and assessment process need adjustments to ensure that grant information and application processes are accessible for all applicants. The Community Partnerships Team will work with multicultural groups in Knox, together with the Multicultural Partnerships Officer, to develop and provide specific training and resources via our Community Training Program and Grants Information Sessions that will help build capacity of our multicultural groups for future grant applications.

Organisations with the lowest volume of applications are from organisations working specifically in the categories of animal aid, First Nations, and gender equity.

The highest volume of applications received under the CDF Program relates to equipment purchases, with the 2024-25 Program providing \$109,461 worth of equipment funding over 12 applications, making up just under 30% of the total 2024 - 2025 CDF Program budget.

The current equipment funding limit is \$20,000, with the five-year average equipment grant awarded being \$6,320. Benchmarking against other LGAs, as shown in the table below, reveals that this limit is notably higher at Knox. Based on this comparison and the five-year average, it is recommended to reduce the equipment funding cap to \$5,000, with a co-contribution of at least 10% required from the applicant.

This adjustment is expected to promote a more equitable distribution of funds, making it accessible to a wider range of community organisations for community strengthening activities. It will also have minimal impact on future equipment applications, considering the five-year average of \$6,320.

Requiring a co-contribution from the applicant helps to encourage a sense of ownership and responsibility, making the funding more sustainable and impactful.

LGA	Current Equipment Limit
Maroondah	\$750
Banyule	\$10,000
<b>Knox</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
Manningham	\$1,500 (50% co-contribution requirement)
Whitehorse	\$1,000
Yarra Ranges	\$750

#### 1.4.4 Community Development Fund Program Recommendations

Given the complexity of this review, the recommendations have been split into two sections:

- Community Development Fund administrative changes; and
- Community Development Fund Funding Category Changes.

As outlined in Section 1.3 - Grant Framework Policy, the main administrative change for the CDF Program is the consolidation of the grant guidelines and grant procedure documentation. This will ensure processes are easier for applicants to understand and enable flexibility for the programs to respond to community need.

The equipment limit is also recommended to be reduced in the CDF Program to enable a greater spread of funding in the program, and minor administrative updates in relation to event permits and minor capital facility upgrades.

The Table below outlines the recommended changes for the CDF Program for the 2025 - 2026 Financial Year, effective 1 July 2025. Full recommendations are shown in the newly developed Grant Guidelines shown in Attachment 2.

Community Development Fund Program Recommendations		
Section	Recommendation	Expected Outcome
Equipment Limit	Reduce the limit on equipment (either stand-alone applications or part of bigger grants) to \$5,000 and introduce a co-contribution from the applicant of at least 10% (minimum contribution would be \$500).	Encourage greater spread of applications from more diverse communities and ensure funding is spread equitably amongst community organisations.  Ensure the CDF Program can respond to community needs beyond equipment.

Community Development Fund Program Recommendations		
Section	Recommendation	Expected Outcome
Event Permits	Include a Clause that requires applications for events/functions to ensure appropriate permits have been obtained.	Highlights the importance of compliance where permits are required.
Capital or Facility Upgrades	Project & Event eligibility "Capital or Facility Maintenance" to be updated to "Capital or Facility Upgrades".	Provide clarity on the original exclusion's intent, which is to exclude major capital works projects.

#### 1.4.5 Proposed CDF Program Categories

As part of the review and benchmarking process, the current CDF Program categories have been assessed, and the generic nature of these categories has been found to be too broad.

New grant categories have been developed to better align with community needs and to provide clearer guidance for the allocation of CDF Program funds. This process involved a comprehensive review of current community priorities, emerging trends and feedback from stakeholders.

The new categories are designed to be more specific, addressing distinct areas of need within the community, such as cultural celebrations and events, mental health support, social inclusion, active ageing, or environmental sustainability. By narrowing the focus of each category, the funding allocation process becomes more targeted, ensuring that resources are directed where they are most needed and can have the greatest impact. These new categories provide a structured approach that supports both immediate community needs and long-term strategic goals.

The Table below shows the 2025 – 2026 Proposed CDF Program Categories:

Proposed 2025 - 2026 Community Development Fund Program Categories		
Category	Example Projects	Limit
<b>Active Ageing</b> For activities, programs or projects that promote social connection, health and wellbeing, volunteer engagement for positive ageing in Knox.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital Literacy</li> <li>Community Lunches</li> <li>Exercise/walking groups</li> </ul> Applications should support senior's groups to provide participation outcomes and encourage intergenerational connections that value the contribution of older people in Knox.	\$5,000
<b>Community Strengthening</b> Projects or programs that strengthen the Knox community through a diverse range of activities, services and programs that are responsive to community need and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Food programs and food literacy</li> <li>Mental health and wellbeing</li> <li>Social connection, inclusion, and diversity</li> <li>Volunteer coordination</li> </ul> Applications will need to demonstrate significant benefit to Knox residents and include strategies for sustainable delivery of programs beyond the CDF Program. Applications are encouraged to show	\$15,000

Proposed 2025 - 2026 Community Development Fund Program Categories		
Category	Example Projects	Limit
provide benefit to the Knox community.	inclusion for diverse communities such as LGBTIQ+, First Nations, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD).	
<b>Cultural Celebrations and Community Events</b> For projects, programs or events that increase awareness and understanding of diverse cultures within the community and enhance social inclusion and participation for all residents of Knox.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards Cultural celebrations, community events and educational programs/projects</li> </ul> <p>It is encouraged that projects, programs or events are open to the general public, and where possible, joint partnerships from various community groups in Knox.</p> <p>A community event usually attracts less than 500 people.</p>	\$3,000
<b>Active Communities</b> To assist with capacity building of sport and leisure clubs to deliver programs/projects that promote club wellbeing, diversity, inclusion, gender equity, volunteer engagement and retention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous round</li> <li>Mentoring and leadership training for women and girls and gender diverse people</li> <li>Training programs to upskill club members on cultural competency, governance, volunteer engagement, harm prevention, gender equity, mental health, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Applications will need to show consideration of diverse communities such as LGBTIQ+, First Nations, CALD, Gender Equity and contribute to the Club's sustainability.</p>	\$5,000
<b>Arts &amp; Events</b> To assist Not-For-Profit community organisations with the delivery of community festivals, events and creative activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music Festival showcasing local artists</li> <li>Local annual art shows</li> <li>Art murals</li> </ul> <p>Proven experience in holding an event previously. Engaging and using local artists.</p> <p>To qualify as an eligible event in this category, the event must be open to the wider community and attract more than 500 people.</p>	\$15,000
<b>Small Equipment Grants</b> To assist Not-For-Profit organisations with small, essential equipment purchases that enhance the sustainability of the organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soccer goal, goal post padding, new netting, court rollers, blowers, gardening equipment &amp; tools, fridges, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Applications will need to show a level of co-contribution for equipment only grants, with a minimum of 10% of equipment costs to be funded by the applicant.</p>	\$5,000
<b>Environment and Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revegetation and weed control programs, habitat restoration projects, recycling programs,</li> </ul>	\$5,000



Proposed 2025 - 2026 Community Development Fund Program Categories		
Category	Example Projects	Limit
To assist Not-For-Profit community organisations with projects or purchases that support the natural environment and sustainability or supports capacity building or participation numbers of an environmental group.	environmental education, or skill development  Applications will need to demonstrate positive biodiversity and / or sustainability outcomes in alignment with Council strategies.	

#### 1.4.6 Community Partnership Fund Program Overview and Insights

The Community Partnership Fund (CPF) Program is the most substantial of Council's various grant streams with a total allocation in 2024 - 2025 of \$787,367 allocated amongst 21 locally based not-for-profit organisations, with an anticipated total investment over the 2022 – 2026 four-year funding period of \$3,126,789.

The purpose of the CPF Program is to support the provision of free and low-cost services that are accessible to any resident in Knox and strengthens Council's commitment to effective partnerships with key service providers. The Partnership Fund is a four-year agreement that expires in June 2026.

In the final year of the Community Partnership Fund, a review will be conducted to ensure that the future priorities of this funding program align with the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 - 2029. The proposed framework for the 2026 - 2030 Partnership Fund Program will be presented to a future Meeting of Council.

#### 1.4.7 Community Response Fund Recommendations

In response to the Councillors' budget proposal, which highlights the ongoing community need and the growing demand for immediate support services, the Community Partnerships Team has responded with the introduction of a new grant stream. This initiative, aimed at providing short-term, essential support and relief for the Knox Community, is set to be implemented as the "Community Response Fund" if approved, with an effective start date of 1 July 2025.

The Community Response Fund will highlight Council's commitment to responding to residents in Knox experiencing the need for immediate, short-term relief. The Community Response Fund will be open until the budget allocation is exhausted, with applications presented to Council each month for consideration.

The purpose of the fund is to provide an accessible and responsive funding source for local service providers based in Knox, or servicing Knox residents, to develop and deliver essential relief such as food, clothing, bedding, vouchers, medication and other vital services that support individuals in need within the Knox community.

The Community Response Fund will operate under two tiers, based on the amount requested as follows:



Application Amount	Assessment and Determination	Grant Accountability and Acquittal
Up to and including \$500	Assessed and determined by the CEO or delegate. Reported to Council at next ordinary meeting of Council.	Acquittal showing proof of expenditure/purchase (i.e. receipt, paid invoice, bank statement).
\$501 to \$10,000	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Acquittal showing proof of expenditure/purchase (i.e. receipt, paid invoice, bank statement).

The Community Response Fund, as with all Councils grant programs, will be underpinned by Council's Grant Framework Policy which outlines all grant programs require published assessment criteria. As such, it is proposed that applications will be assessed and reviewed by the officers on the following criteria:

- Clear organisational need or opportunity – the project addresses a specific, evidence-based need or opportunity within Knox (30%).
- Consultation and Partnership – The application demonstrates consultation or collaboration with other organisations (20%).
- Organisational Capacity – the organisation has the capacity to effectively deliver the project (25%).
- Project Budget – the project budget is well structured and reasonable.

An assessment matrix will be developed by Officers, and applications will be presented to Council each month for consideration and decision.

Full guidelines and program details can be found in Attachment 2.

## 2. ENGAGEMENT

Consultation and engagement with other LGAs and subject matter experts from the following Council Teams were sought during this review:

- Active Communities
- Governance
- First Nations Lead
- Multicultural Partnerships Officer
- Gender Equity & Health Promotion Officer
- Biodiversity
- Community Access & Support
- Events

## 3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council's Community Grant Programs have a broad reach in the number of Knox community services and organisations accessing them. The Grant Programs are continuing to address the increasing needs of support for Knox residents. The collaborative partnerships that have been established through these grant programs continue to address issues and opportunities that reflect the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan priorities and help maintain a strong network of resources for the Knox community.

#### **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

#### **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental issues directly associated with this report.

#### **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The projected costs associated with the administration and implementation of the Minor Grant, Community Development Fund and Community Partnership Fund Programs have been accounted for in Council's budget projections. There are no recommendations as part of this report that will impact budget projections.

#### **7. RISKS**

Any risks associated with administering the Minor Grant, Community Development Fund and Community Partnership Fund Programs are managed through the Council Grant Framework Policy's relevant grant Procedures/Guidelines. Acquittal documents are produced for each grant allocated by Council and evidence of expenditure must be provided by the funded organisation.

The Procedures/Guidelines and Council's Grant Framework Policy sets out an open and transparent grant program that meets the principles of good governance and is compliant with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.

#### **8. KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021 - 2025**

##### **Opportunity & Innovation**

Strategy 1.2 - Encourage and support opportunities for skills development and lifelong learning for all people in Knox.

Strategy 1.3 - Support organisations in Knox to navigate recovery and new ways of working.

##### **Neighbourhoods, Housing & Infrastructure**

Strategy 2.2 - Create, enhance, and maintain places and spaces for people to live, work, play and connect.

##### **Natural Environment & Sustainability**

Strategy 3.1 - Preserve our biodiversity and waterways and enhance our urban landscape.

Strategy 3.2 - Prepare for, mitigate, and adapt to the effects of climate change.

Strategy 3.3 - Lead by example and encourage our community to reduce waste.

##### **Connection, Resilience & Wellbeing**

Strategy 4.1 - Support our community to improve their physical, mental, and social health and wellbeing.

Strategy 4.2 - Foster inclusivity, equality, belonging and safety within the community.

Strategy 4.3 - Honour and integrate First Nations Culture into actions and environments.

Strategy 4.4 - Support the community to identify and lead community strengthening initiatives.

### **Civic Engagement & Integrity**

Strategy 5.1 - Provide opportunities for all people in Knox to have their say.

Strategy 5.2 - Manage our resources effectively to ensure financial sustainability and improved customer experience.

Strategy 5.3 - Ensure our processes are transparent and decisions are accountable.

### **9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The Officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

### **10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

### **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - Policy DRAFT Final ELT Council Grant Framework Policy Clean Copy (1) [**8.1.1** - 10 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Community Grant Guidelines [**8.1.2** - 20 pages]



# Council Grant Framework

Policy Number:	2022/1	Directorate:	Connected Communities
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Manager Community Strengthening
Approval Date:	TBC	Version Number:	03
Review Date:	26 April 2026		

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a consistent guide for the allocation, management and review of all of Council's grant programs to the Knox community.

## 2. Context

Council provides an annual budget for a suite of grants which support and encourage community, business and individual activity and service delivery in Knox, for the benefit of the Knox community. Council will also, from time to time, allocate budget for special or specific purpose grants to respond to emerging community need.

All of Council's grant programs are underpinned by the following principles:

- Funded projects will provide benefit to the Knox community and help meet Council objectives;
- Responsiveness to current and changing needs;
- Encouragement of collaboration and partnerships;
- Consistency, equity and transparency; and
- Accountability for public funds.

Council is also committed to addressing the following:

### Best-practice grant-making

Council is committed to best practices and continuous improvement in its grant programs. Council will monitor the grant-making environment, as well as respond to feedback about its grant making processes to improve programs and procedures on an ongoing basis.

### Access and Equity

Council is committed to access and equity through all facets of its operations including through its grant programs. To identify people from diverse backgrounds, staff will ensure they collect all relevant data. Wherever possible, sex- disaggregated data will be collected to inform planning, monitoring and evaluation of projects, programs and services in order to support Council's gender and equity goals.



### **Climate and Sustainability**

Council is committed to tackling climate change and to support the community to adapt to climate change impacts. Council adopted the Climate Response Plan in 2021, which identifies actions to achieve zero greenhouse emissions for Council by 2030 and for the community by 2040. Council grants programs will provide opportunities to increase community impact and improve understanding of how climate change intersects with Council-funded program and service outcomes.

### **Electronic Gaming Machines**

Council recognises that electronic gaming machines can pose a threat to public health and wellbeing due to the harm this activity can cause for individuals, families and the community. Council is committed to mitigating the negative impacts of electronic gaming in the municipality by adopting a harm minimisation approach in relation to the use of electronic gaming machines. As such, Council grant funds cannot be used to support applications from electronic gaming machine operators or for events that rely on venues with electronic gaming machines.

### **Alcohol**

Council recognises that alcohol misuse can result in harmful impacts to our local community and as such, Council grant funds cannot be used for the purchase of alcohol in any circumstances.

### **Child Safety**

Under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, all organisations in Victoria that provide services or facilities for children and young people under 18 years of age are required by law to comply with the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

Grants recipients of Knox City Council who provide services, programs or activities that include children and young people must be aware of their legislative obligations and may be required to demonstrate these to Council in the grants application and funding agreement stages. Council's child safety requirements cover the following:

1. Council requires grant recipients to ensure their compliance with all relevant child safety legislation, and with their responsibilities and requirements as a 'contractor' as outlined in Council's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (available at [Child Safe Policy | Knox](#)). If the Standards apply to community funded programs, activities or services, the Provider must:
  - a. implement and comply with the Standards at all times; and
  - b. supply Council with a copy of their child safety policy at any time upon reasonable request.

Information on the Child Safe Standards is available at <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/>.

2. Under the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic), people engaging in child-related work must obtain a Working with Children (WWC) Check. Grant recipients must:
  - a. ensure that all their relevant employees, contractors and volunteers who are providing the services or facilities in any Council-funded program hold a valid and current WWC Check (or for interstate visitors, an equivalent Check from their home State/Territory) as per the requirements outlined in Council's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy;
  - b. maintain an up-to-date register of WWC Checks;
  - c. provide evidence of a valid and current WWC Check for each of their employees, contractors and volunteers providing the services or facilities to Council at any time upon reasonable request; and



- d. notify Council immediately if any of their employees, contractors or volunteers who are providing the services or facilities to Council have their WWC Check suspended or revoked, or are issued with a WWC Check Exclusion.

Information about the WWC Check is available at <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>.

### 3. Scope

This Policy applies to all grants allocated via the following ongoing Council grant programs including:

- Individual Excellence Grants;
- Biodiversity Buddies Grants;
- Minor Grants Program;
- Leisure Minor Capital Works Program;
- Community Development Fund Program; and
- Community Partnership Fund Program.

The Policy also applies to any one-off or ongoing grants that Council creates to respond to community need at the time.

This Policy will prevail over all other policies relevant to the above Council grant programs where inconsistencies are found.

### 4. References

#### 4.1 Community Plan 2021-2031

#### 4.2 Council Plan 2021-2025

- **Key Direction 1: Opportunity and innovation** - Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive. We value our natural and built environment.
- **Key Direction 2: Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure** - Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.
- **Key Direction 3: Natural environment and sustainability** - Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.
- **Key Direction 4: Connection, resilience and wellbeing** - Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.
- **Key Direction 5: Civic engagement and integrity** - Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

#### 4.3 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

#### 4.4 Charter of Human Rights

- This Policy has been assessed against and complies with the Charter of Human Rights.



#### 4.5 Related Council Policies

- Election Period Policy.
- Electronic Gaming Machines Policy.
- Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure.
- Knox City Council Governance Rules (Chapter 5 – Conflicts of Interest).
- Fraud and Corruption Control Framework.

#### 4.6 Related Council Documents

- Individual Excellence Grants Procedure.
- Biodiversity Buddies Grants Procedure.
- Minor Grants Program Guidelines
- Community Development Fund Program Guidelines.
- Community Partnership Fund Program Guidelines.
- Community Development Fund Assessment Panel Terms of Reference.
- Leisure Minor Capital Works Grant Scheme Procedure.
- Leisure Minor Capital Works Grant Scheme Assessment Panel Terms of Reference.
- Knox Council Integrated Risk Management Process.
- Knox City Council Fraud & Corruption Control Procedure.

## 5. Definitions

Acquittal	Means the information provided by the grant recipient that proves funds have been spent responsibly and in line with the guidelines of each grant program.
Auspice	An established not-for-profit legal entity that agrees to take responsibility for the grant obligations of an unincorporated or informal or newly established group with no legal status.
Assessment Panel	A specific purpose committee to provide recommendations to Council on grant allocations.
CEO	Means the Chief Executive Officer of Knox City Council.
Community Group(s)	A legal entity who provide services, support or activities to the Knox community.
Council	Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.
Delegate	Means a Council officer(s) selected by the CEO to administer a grant process.
Funding agreement	An agreement between the grant recipient and Council that documents the agreed objectives of the funded project/activity and the reporting and accountability requirements of the grant.
Grant	Means a sum of money given to an individual or organisation with the expectation that the money will be used for an agreed and specific purpose.
GST	Goods and Services Tax.
Individual(s)	Means a resident(s) of the Knox Municipality.



Legal Entity	An incorporated association, a co-operative, a company limited by guarantee, share or a trust or other organisation established under an Act passed by the State or Commonwealth.
Not-for-profit	Means a group or organisation that is not operating for the profit or gain of its individual members; and any profit or surplus is directed back into the operation of the organisation to carry out its purpose.

## 6. Council Policy

### 6.1 Grant Procedures/Guidelines

All Council grant programs will have accompanying procedures/ guidelines (with some to be developed or updated after the commencement of this Policy) that outline the eligibility and other specific information for each Council grant. Any amendments that materially change the intent of each procedure/guideline, must be considered and approved by the CEO.

From time to time minor administrative changes may need to occur to grant procedures/guidelines. Where an update does not materially alter procedures/guidelines, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, the grant management software that Council uses, changes to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact.

### 6.2 Promotion

All Council grant programs will be promoted widely within Knox to the targeted audience using the following approaches, where appropriate:

- Council's website and social media channels; and/or
- Media release; and/or
- Paid advertisement in community newspapers; and/or
- Opt-in email subscription lists via Smarty Grants; and/or
- Council newsletters and other Council publications; and/or
- Community information sessions; and/or
- Phone contact.

Additional assistance such as interpreters will be provided where required to ensure an equitable process for all applicants

### 6.3 Applications

- 6.3.1 All applicants must be able to demonstrate a positive benefit to the Knox community.
- 6.3.2 Council grant procedure/ guidelines will specify the application process.

### 6.4 Record keeping

All Council grant program records will be managed through Council's Smarty Grants portal. This system aims to track interactions between Council and each unique grant applicant.

Applications and funding agreements will also be stored in Council's central record keeping system, Knox Explorer.





## 6.5 Assessment Process

Assessment will be carried out in the following manner:

- 6.5.1 Applications will first be assessed for eligibility outlined in this Policy and the relevant grant procedure/guidelines.
- 6.5.2 Applications that are deemed ineligible at this first point will not be included in the following parts of the assessment process.
- 6.5.3 Grant procedures/guidelines will clearly specify the assessment criteria. These criteria will be made available to all applicants and assessors. Applications will be assessed against the program's criteria.
- 6.5.4 Where practicable, an assessment report summarising all relevant assessor comments, will be developed for presentation to the Assessment Panel as a tool to assist with assessment.
- 6.5.5 The assessment report will include details of the application and the assessors will be given Assessor access to Smarty Grants (where applicable) to view the full application and supporting documents where possible.
- 6.5.6 Where applicable, each assessor will undertake an individual assessment of each application prior to the Assessment Panel process.

## 6.6 Assessment Panels

- 6.6.1 Where practicable and subject to the individual grant program procedure, an Assessment Panel will be appointed and may comprise:
  - 6.6.1.1 a mix of community representatives and Council officers,
  - 6.6.1.2 Council officers only,
  - 6.6.1.3 community representatives only.
- 6.6.2 Assessment Panels that comprise Council officers only should include officers who are subject matter experts as well as at least one officer representative from an unrelated department.
- 6.6.3 Council officers that assist applicants with information or support to complete their applications, or with the administration of a particular grant program, will not become members of relevant grant assessment panel they help to administer or support as part of their role.
- 6.6.4 Community representatives can only be appointed to one grant Assessment Panel at any time.
- 6.6.5 The Assessment Panel will be led by a Chair (a Council officer) and the Chair will be supported by an officer responsible for administrative oversight of the particular program. This officer will provide the Chair with the following support:
  - Confirmation that the grant application and evaluation process were completed in accordance with the Grant Framework Policy and individual grant procedure.
  - Confirmation that all queries were resolved, to the extent possible, before initial assessments were made.
  - Any conflicts of interest that were identified among assessment panel members or applicants were managed in accordance with Council's Governance rules.



- A Panel Assessment report that outlines all matters relevant to the application and the assessor's initial assessment.
- Any other issues of relevance to the individual grant.
- The Chair will then lead the Assessment Panel through a consensus decision making process.
- Where the collective Assessment Panel decision differs from any prior individual assessment, a collective agreement will be reached. These recommendations will be noted in the Minutes.
- Written assessment will be recorded for each application including the reason for approval or decline and where relevant, the reason why an application did not receive the full allocation.
- Panel Assessment meetings will be minuted and saved in Council's central record system, Knox Explorer.
- A report containing the Assessment Panel's recommendations will be prepared by the Council officer responsible for administrative oversight of the particular grant program. All recommendations of Grant Assessment Panels will go to Council for approval, except those made under delegation of the CEO.

#### **6.7 Decision-making**

The final decision regarding successful applications will be made by Council or by CEO delegation. The decision will be recorded in Smarty Grants and reasons for the decision will be given to applicants.

#### **6.8 Conflicts of Interest**

- 6.8.1 All members of assessment panels and Council officers must identify any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to grant programs they are involved in as assessors or administrators, declare all conflicts of interest and exclude themselves from any decision making processes in relation to a matter in which they have a conflict of interest; this includes any discussions that occur as a precursor to the decision being made.
- 6.8.2 Council officers who are involved in the administration or support of a particular grant program will not become a member of a related grant assessment panel. This does not preclude Council officers from participating in other grant assessment panels for other grant programs. They must still declare any conflicts of interest.
- 6.8.3 Council's Governance Rules (Chapter 5) will be followed in relation to conflict of interest procedures and a Conflict of Interest Disclosure form must be completed for members of grant assessment panels (including community / industry / business representatives; Council officers; and by the officers involved in grant administration of that particular program).
- 6.8.4 Grant applicants must disclose conflicts of interest at the time of application, particularly where they work or volunteer for Knox City Council. Disclosures will be managed in accordance with Council's Governance Rules (Chapter 5).
- 6.8.5 All members of grant assessment panels and Council officers, including those involved in the administration of grants, must not make improper use of information acquired because of their position, or release information that they know of, or should reasonably know, is confidential information.

**6.9 Notification process**

Notification of successful and unsuccessful applications will take place as soon as practicable after the decision is made.

Successful applicants will be informed by:

- Email; and
- An announcement on Council's website.

Unsuccessful applicant will be informed via email with an offer of feedback and contact details of the officer to provide feedback. Council's decision in relation to funding applications is final.

**6.10 Funding Agreements**

All successful grant recipients will be required to enter into a funding agreement with Council. The funding agreement will set out the terms of the grant based on the applicant's application. Council will use a standard funding agreement relevant to each grant program. Any contract negotiations, within the ambit of the approved grant, will be carried out between the relevant Council representative and the successful recipient's appointed representative.

The funding agreement must be signed and returned to Council with all funding conditions outlined in the funding agreement met prior to the grant payment being released.

Funded organisations have three months from the date of the Council meeting to complete and return their signed funding agreement. Every effort will be made to secure a signed funding agreement before the money is returned to the grants pool. For community groups and not-for-profit organisations, a copy of the signed funding agreement will also be forwarded to the Committee of Management to ensure transparency and to provide more information on acquittal requirements and outcome reporting.

**6.11 Payment arrangements**

Payment will be made by Knox City Council to the nominated bank account by electronic funds transfer. The bank account must be in the name of the successful applicant entity or nominated auspice (except in the case of the Individual Excellence Grants). The individual grant procedures will provide more information about grant payment arrangements.

**6.12 GST Treatment**

- Where an applicant is registered for GST, GST will not be paid for any part of a grant for salary or project management costs.
- Where an applicant is registered for GST, GST will be paid for grants for equipment and other items that attract GST.
- GST will not be included as part of a grant to entities not registered for GST (though non-GST registered entities may still apply for Council grants depending on the individual grant guidelines).

**6.13 Reporting and Monitoring**

The reporting arrangements for each individual grant program are specified in each individual grant procedure and within the standard funding agreement. Any project specific items or conditions to be reported on will be identified in the contract.



All reporting is to be completed via Council's Smarty Grants portal. Monitoring may be undertaken via telephone, meeting or network meeting.

#### 6.14 Performance

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that projects go smoothly, grant recipients may fail to deliver on aspects of their contract for a range of reasons. For applicants with the following:

- 6.14.1 **Variation requests** – any requests for variation to the approved project must be made in writing. A written response to such requests will be provided by Council. Variations to project details are expected to deliver similar outcomes as initially approved by Council.
- 6.14.2 **Extension requests** - any requests for an extension of a funding agreement must be made in writing. A written response to such requests will be provided by Council. Extensions will not be accepted beyond a twelve-month period from the original acquittal date in the Funding Agreement, unless extenuating circumstances can be demonstrated.
- 6.14.3 **Unspent Grant Funds** - In the event that an applicant can no longer complete any or all of the approved project, unspent grant funds will be returned to Council and any partial expenditure must be acquitted on the relevant forms.

#### 6.15 Financial acquittal

Financial acquittal is required for all Council grants. A financial acquittal report must be submitted:

- Via Council's Smarty Grants portal on the form provided by Council;
- By the date agreed in the funding agreement;
- With supporting documents including receipts or other supporting documentation that shows expenditure of Council grant funds. Further information about the types of supporting documentation will be outlined in the individual grant procedures.

Any unspent Council grant money in excess of \$150 must be returned to Council.

Failure to meet the above criteria may result in an applicant being:

- Required to return allocated funding to Council; and/or
- Becoming ineligible for future Council grants.

Applicants who have not provided adequate grant acquittal documentation within two years of the original grant approval date will be referred to Council's Finance Department for debt retrieval, and may not be eligible for future Knox grant funding.

#### 6.16 Project Outcomes

The success of the funded activity will be assessed through a final report via Council's Smarty Grants portal (along with the financial acquittal). The specific grant procedures and/or funding agreement will outline Council's expectations around outcome reporting.

As with the financial acquittal, failure to meet the requirement to report on project outcomes may result in an applicant being:

- Required to return allocated funding to Council; and/or



- Becoming ineligible for future Council grants.

#### **6.17 Complaints and dispute resolution**

Council is committed to sound decision-making processes to ensure fair and reasonable outcomes for the Knox community. Council values complaints and encourages people to contact us when they have a problem with our services, actions, decisions, and policies. If a complaint or dispute arises through Council's grant making processes, Council's Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure will be followed.

Where there is a complaint or dispute between assessment panel members, the Terms of Reference for that Panel will provide guidance.

#### **6.18 Fraud and corruption control**

Council recognises that there are specific fraud and corruption risks related to the administration of public funds through grant making. Council maintains a Fraud and Corruption Control Framework and Risk Register which provides guidance to all parties around fraud or corruption risk in the grant making process.

#### **6.19 Grant recipients**

Grant recipients must demonstrate behavior that aligns with and supports the core values of Knox City Council. This includes, but is not limited to, conducting activities in a manner that promotes respect, integrity, inclusivity, accountability, and responsibility. Organisations that don't adhere to these values may be required to return grant funds to Council and may not be eligible for future grant funding.

## **7 Administrative Updates**

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Council.

# Knox City Council

## Community Grants Guidelines 2025-2026

April 2025



Image Credit: Outer East Food Share Pop Up Market

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## Introduction

Knox Council provides an annual budget to a range of grant programs designed to capture the priorities of the community and enable or community to thrive. All our grant programs are underpinned by the following principles:

- Funded projects/activities will provide benefit to the Knox community and help meet Council's objectives.
- Co-operation and collaboration between groups is encouraged.
- Grants processes will be consistent, equitable and transparent; and
- Grants processes will support and strengthen community groups in developing local solutions to local needs.

The community grants outlined in these guidelines are:



**We welcome and encourage applications from a wide range of groups, including but not limited to:**

**First Peoples, LGBTQI+, Seniors, Organisations representing or supporting diverse cultural communities and people with a disability.**

**We also encourage partnership and collaboration between organisations.**

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## Who can apply?

Organisations who meet the following criteria are eligible to apply for the Minor Grant Program, Community Response Fund or Community Development Fund:

- **Operational location:** the organisation must operate within the boundaries of Knox or provide services to Knox residents.
- **Not-for-profit status:** The organisation must be a not-for-profit legal entity that provides services, support, or activities to the Knox community.
- **Australian Business Number:** The organisation must have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or complete a Statement by Supplier form.
- **Public liability insurance:** The organisation must hold adequate public liability insurance appropriate for the activity outlined in the application.
- **Governing body:** The organisation must have a Committee of Management or similar governing body that accepts responsibility for administering the grant.
- **Required permits and plans:** The organisation must have obtained any necessary permits or plans required by law specific to the activity.
- **Working With Children:** Employees, contractors, and volunteers (aged 18 and over) involved in the organisation must hold a valid and current Working with Children Check if the organisation provides services, facilities, or activities for children or young people under 18 years old. A signed statutory declaration is required as part of the application.
- **Electronic Gaming Machines policy:** The organisation must not operate Electronic Gaming Machines, in accordance with Council's Electronic Gaming Machine Policy.
- **Previous grant expenditure:** The organisation must have provided evidence to Council's satisfaction regarding the expenditure of any previous grants received from Council.
- **No outstanding debts:** The organisation must have no outstanding debts to Knox City Council.

The Knox logo is displayed in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font.

# Application Process

## How to apply

All our grant programs are accessed through the Smartygrants online platform where you can read more about the grant and view the application form. Once you begin your application, you can upload documents and save and return to your application as often as you like before submitting to us.

## When will I know the outcome of my application?

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email. If approval is required at a Council meeting, you will be notified of the outcome in the days following the meeting.

## What happens if my application is successful?

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a formal funding agreement which sets out the details of the grant. The agreement will clearly define what the grant is for and specify the terms and conditions to foster effective project delivery and the protection of public funds.

## What happens if my application is unsuccessful?

If you are not successful, we encourage you to talk to us and seek feedback on your application and make further applications in the future.

## Your Privacy

As part of the Information Privacy Act Statement of Consent, Council collects information from grant applicants for the purpose of registering and administering grant applications for the specified funding period. The information may also be used to send you relevant associated information and to ascertain satisfaction with our services. The information will not be disclosed except as required by law. In particular, the information will not be disclosed to others for marketing purposes.

## Administrative Updates

Occasionally, circumstances may require minor administrative updates to this document. If the change doesn't significantly affect the guidelines, it can be made administratively and approved by the CEO. Examples include changes to department or position names, government department names, or minor legislative amendments with no major impact. Any change that could materially alter the intent of the procedure must be considered by Council.

## I need help!

If you are having difficulty applying online, we are here to help. Contact the Community Partnerships Team on 03 9298 8000 or email [cdf@knox.vic.gov.au](mailto:cdf@knox.vic.gov.au).

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## What can't grant funds be used for?

- **Organisations, projects or programs outside Knox** unless they offer clear benefits to Knox residents.
- **Projects run by political or religious groups** to promote core beliefs.
- **Retrospective payments or expenses** for activities or expenses undertaken before Council approval.
- **General fundraising or funding** for prizes sponsorships, donations, trophies, or gifts.
- **Electronic Gaming Machines** – for events or activities at venues with electronic gaming machines.
- **State or Federal government responsibilities** – projects may not be an event or activity that is the core funding responsibility of another level of government.
- **Alcohol** – grant funds cannot be used for the purchase of alcohol in any circumstances. This includes items that support the consumption and/or storage of alcohol.
- **Operating Expenses** – items that usually form part of your reasonable operating budget such as wages, rent, maintenance, utilities, cleaning, insurance etc) unless it can be demonstrated to Council's satisfaction that exceptional circumstances warrant consideration. For sporting clubs, this includes routine or everyday equipment required for playing sport (i.e., balls).
- The use or hire of **Inflatables, amusement rides, or fireworks.**
- **Camps for Children or young people under 18** that include overnight stays.
- **Transport costs** unless transport is a significant barrier that can only be addressed with grant funding.
- **Printed merchandise or branded materials** primarily used to promote another organisation.
- **Expenditure contributing to carbon emissions** when more sustainable options are available, such as single use plastics or excessive printing.
- **Recurring applications** – for the same or substantially same project, event, activity or equipment purchase that has been approved for two previous consecutive financial years unless significant community need can be demonstrated.
- **Catering expenses** that exceed 20% of the total grant amount being requested.
- For any **items of equipment** without a co-contribution of at least 10%.
- **Educational institutions and State or Federal Government departments** and agencies are excluded from Knox Grant programs.

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## Funding Conditions

### Funding Agreements

All successful applicants are required to enter into a funding agreement. Funding agreements detail the terms and conditions of the grant, the relevant accountability requirements relating to the delivery of the project and financial reporting expectations.

### Use of Grant funds

Funding may only be used for the purpose stated in the grant application and funding agreement, unless exceptional circumstances prevent delivery of agreed projects. In which case, grant recipients must seek approval from Council for any proposed changes to expenditure or acquittal timeframes.

### What happens if circumstances change impacting the delivery of our project?

We understand from time to time, circumstances may change. Please contact the Community Partnerships Team on 03 9298 8000 to discuss your project and any foreseeable impacts to the delivery of your project.

### Child Safe Standards

Knox City Council has a zero tolerance for child abuse. Organisations that provide services or facilities for children are required by law to comply with the Victorian Child Safe Standards to safeguard children. Obligations are detailed on the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) website. Council will request information and evidence from your organisation in support of these obligations as part of the Funding Agreement.

### The role of an Auspice

An auspice arrangement occurs when a larger organisation helps a smaller group apply for and manage a grant. The larger organisation, known as the auspice, manages the grant funds and provides public liability insurance for the event or activity.

To use an auspice, you'll need to provide proof of their agreement, typically in the form of a letter, which should be uploaded with your grant application on SmartyGrants. The auspice must meet the Eligibility Criteria in the "Who Can Apply" section of the guidelines.

### Events or Artwork on Council owned sites

If your event or project is being planned on Council land or installed in/on a Council owned building, you will need to ensure that all relevant permits and/or event applications are submitted prior to submitting your grant application.

### Alignment with the values of Knox City Council

Grant recipients must demonstrate behaviour that aligns with and supports the core values of Knox City Council. This includes, but is not limited to, conducting activities in a manner that promotes respect, integrity, inclusivity, accountability, and responsibility. Organisations that don't adhere to these values may be required to return grant funds to Council and may not be eligible for future grant funding.

### Alignment with Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan

All applications for funding must demonstrate benefit to the Knox community and will be considered in relation to the objectives and directions of Knox City Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

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## Definitions

<b>Acquittal</b>	Means the information provided by the grant recipient that proves that funds have been spent responsibly and in line with the guidelines of each grant program.
<b>Assessment Panel</b>	A specific purpose committee to provide recommendations to Council on the Community Development Fund grant allocations.
<b>Auspice</b>	An established not-for-profit legal entity that agrees to take responsibility for the grant obligations of an unincorporated or informal or newly established group with no legal status.
<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>	Means the Chief Executive Officer of Knox City Council.
<b>Community Group/Organisation</b>	Means a legal entity which provides services, support or activities to the Knox community.
<b>Community Representative</b>	A member of the community appointed by Council to participate in the Panel Assessments.
<b>Council</b>	Means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of these Guidelines.
<b>Delegate(s)</b>	Means a Council Officer selected by the Chief Executive Officer to administer the Grant Programs.
<b>Event</b>	Means an event, celebration, conference, performance or exhibition open to the community and held within the boundaries of Knox City.
<b>Funding Agreement</b>	Means an agreement between the grant recipient and Council that documents the agreed objectives of the grant and the accountability requirements of the grant.
<b>Grant</b>	Means a sum of money given to an organisation with the expectation that the money will be used for an agreed and specific purpose.
<b>GST</b>	Goods and Services Tax.
<b>Individual</b>	Means a resident of the Knox Municipality.
<b>Legal Entity</b>	An incorporated association, a co-operative, a company limited by guarantee or a trust or other organisation established under an Act passed by the State or Commonwealth.
<b>Not-for-Profit Group</b>	A group or organisation that is not operating for the profit or gain of its individual members and any profit or surplus is directed back into the operation of the organisation to carry out its purpose.

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## Minor Grants Program

The Minor Grants Program provides accessible funding to support community-led activities in Knox that promote volunteer effort, civic participation, and align with the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Grants are available for small, short-term projects, equipment purchases, or repairs, with a maximum grant of \$2,000. Applications are assessed and allocated monthly.

Minor Grants operate under three tiers based on the amount requested as follows:

Application Amount	Assessment and Determination	Grant Accountability and Acquittal
Up to and including \$500	Assessed and determined by the CEO or delegate. Reported to Council at next ordinary meeting of Council.	Electronic Funds Transfer consent for payment and Acquittal showing proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt, paid invoice, bank statement).
\$501 to \$1,000	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement and Acquittal required that show proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt, paid invoice or bank statement) and benefit of grant.
\$1,001 to \$2,000	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement and Acquittal required that show proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt, paid invoice or bank statement) and benefit of grant.

### Minor Grant Applications that may be supported

- Small, incidental (secondary or miscellaneous) amounts for one-off projects, activities or equipment purchases or repairs that will benefit Knox residents.
- Applications that support groups to minimise waste or adapt to climate change are encouraged.
- Be for funds that will be expended within 12 months from receipt of the grant.
- Be for an amount of no more than \$2,000.

### Minor Grant Applications that won't be supported

- Applications that are more appropriately funded under another Council grant program.
- For the same, or substantially same project, activity or equipment purchase by the same applicant approved within the current financial year unless significant community need can be demonstrated.
- Items typically included in an organisation's operating budget (e.g., salaries, rent, maintenance, utilities, insurance) will not be funded unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction.
- For Sporting clubs, grant funding will not support the purchase of routine or everyday sports equipment required for playing sport (i.e.: balls)
- Requests for catering costs of more than 20% of the total grant amount being requested.






### Crisis Response Provision for Minor Grants

In the event of a declared emergency or exceptional circumstance, such as a natural disaster or pandemic impacting the municipality, Council or it's delegate may waive specific clauses in this document to enable appropriate support to community organisations.

### Budget Allocation

If the Minor Grants Program budget allocation is exhausted before May, the Program will be suspended immediately. New applications will not be accepted until the beginning of the new financial year.

### Application Submission Deadlines

Applications must be submitted at least 15 working days before the Council meeting to allow time for assessment. Late applications for the May Council meeting will be carried over to the new financial year. No Minor Grants will be awarded in June due to end-of-year processes. Applicants will be notified if their application is delayed until the new financial year.

### Minor Grants Program Oversight

The Minor Grant Program and any allocation and payment of Minor Grants will be temporarily suspended prior to any Council election or by-election in accordance with Council's Election Period Policy.

### Minor Grant Program Application Process

All applications must be completed through the Smartygrants Online Portal, which can be found here: <https://knoxminorgrantsapplication.com>

Dates to Remember	
21 July 2025	July submission cut off
11 August 2025	Council Meeting
18 August 2025	August submission cut off
8 September 2025	Council Meeting
22 September 2025	September submission cut off
13 October 2025	Council Meeting
20 October 2025	October submission deadline
10 November 2025	Council Meeting
17 November 2025	November submission deadline
8 December 2025	Council Meeting

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## Community Response Fund

The Community Response Fund is a new grant program at Knox Council that offers accessible funding to local service providers in Knox or those servicing Knox residents, enabling them to deliver **immediate and essential support** to individuals in need within the Knox community.

Immediate and essential support may include the provision of food, bedding, clothing, vouchers, medication and other vital services, along with community meals and new initiatives aimed at addressing immediate and essential needs of individuals requiring support in Knox.

All Community Response Fund Applications are assessed and allocated monthly with applications completed through the Smartygrants Online Portal, which can be found here: **XXXX TBD**

The Community Response Fund operates under two tiers based on the amount requested as follows:

Application Amount	Assessment and Determination	Grant Accountability and Acquittal
Up to and including \$500	Assessed and determined by the CEO or delegate. Reported to Council at next ordinary meeting of Council.	Electronic Funds Transfer consent and Acquittal showing proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt, paid invoice, bank statement).
\$501 to \$10,000	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement and Acquittal showing proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt, paid invoice, bank statement).

### Community Response Fund Applications that can be supported:

- Projects that focus on assisting people in Knox with an immediate crisis or those with unmet essential needs.
- Initiatives focussing on acquiring and distributing food and other emergency supplies such as bedding and clothing.
- Projects that involve purchasing items to store rescued food.
- Capacity building of services in Knox to enable and expand continued support of people in Knox.

### Community Response Fund Applications that won't be supported:

- Multiple applications from the same applicant.
- Funding requests for individuals.
- Projects that don't demonstrate community wellbeing or enhance access and inclusion.
- Projects from applicants whose primary mission does not align with the purpose of this fund, which is enabling the delivery of **immediate and essential relief and support** to individuals in need Knox.
- Applications for costs relating to core business activities, such as wages, salaries, rent, utilities etc.
- Fundraising activities.

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### Community Response Fund Application Process

All Community Response Fund Applications will first be reviewed by Council Officers for eligibility outlined in these guidelines and the Grant Framework Policy and recommended to Council based on the following criteria.

- ✓ **Clear Organisational Need or Opportunity** – the project addresses a specific, evidence-based need or opportunity within Knox – 30%.
- ✓ **Consultation and Partnership** – The application demonstrates consultation and collaboration with other organisations – 20%.
- ✓ **Organisational Capacity** – The organisation has the capacity to effectively deliver the project 25%.
- ✓ **Project Budget** – The project budget is well structured and reasonable – 25%.

Applications will be presented to Council each month for consideration and decision.

Dates to Remember	
<b>21 July 2025</b>	July submission cut off
<b>11 August 2025</b>	Council Meeting
<b>18 August 2025</b>	August submission cut off
<b>8 September 2025</b>	Council Meeting
<b>22 September 2025</b>	September submission cut off
<b>13 October 2025</b>	Council Meeting
<b>20 October 2025</b>	October submission deadline
<b>10 November 2025</b>	Council Meeting
<b>17 November 2025</b>	November submission deadline
<b>8 December 2025</b>	Council Meeting

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### **Community Response Fund Application Submission Deadlines**

For applications to be considered at a Council meeting, they must be received at least 15 working days prior to the meeting date to provide enough time to assess and report the application to Council.

Applications received after the closing date for presentation to the May Council meeting, will be held over until the new financial year. No Community Response Fund applications will be awarded in June to allow for end of financial year processes.

### **Community Response Fund Funding Requirements**

Recipients of the Community Response Fund grants are strongly encouraged to participate in Knox Emergency Relief Network.

### **Community Response Fund Program Oversight**

The Community Response Fund and any allocation and payment of Community Response Fund Grants will be temporarily suspended prior to any Council election or by-election in accordance with Council's Election Period Policy.

### **Community Response Fund Budget Allocation**

If the Community Response Fund budget allocation is exhausted before May, the Program will be suspended immediately. Applicants will be advised if their applications cannot be processed.

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## Community Development Fund

The Community Development Fund is an annual grant program designed to capture the priorities of the Community and enable our community to thrive. It provides grants to develop, enhance and support the sustainability of not-for-profit organisations in the delivery of projects or programs that benefit the Knox community. The funding period is November 2025 to November 2026. Council will provide an allocation in each annual budget to fund the Community Development Fund program. The 2025-2026 Funding Categories are outlined below:

Community Development Fund Category	Objectives	Requirements
<b>Active Ageing Up to \$5,000</b>	For activities, projects or programs that promote social connection, health and wellbeing, volunteer engagement for positive ageing in Knox.	Applications should provide participation outcomes and encourage intergenerational connections that value the contribution of older people in Knox.
<b>Community Strengthening Up to \$15,000</b>	For projects or programs that strengthen the Knox community through the support of a diverse range of activities, services and programs that are responsive to community needs and significantly benefit the Knox community.	Applications will need to demonstrate significant benefit to Knox residents and include strategies for sustainable delivery (if required) of the project beyond the grant program.
<b>Cultural Celebrations and Community Events Up to \$3,000</b>	To support projects, programs or events that increase awareness and understanding of diverse cultures within the community and enhance social inclusion and participation for all residents of Knox.	Applications should demonstrate collaboration and partnership where possible. A community event usually attracts less than 500 people.
<b>Arts and Events Up to \$15,000</b>	To assist community organisations with the delivery of Community Festivals, Events and Creative Activities	Applications should demonstrate engaging with and showcasing local artists, musicians, theatre performers etc. To qualify as an eligible event in this category, the event must be open to the wider community and attract more than 500 people.
<b>Environment and Sustainability Up to \$5,000</b>	To assist community organisations with projects or purchases that support the natural environment and sustainability or supports capacity building or participation numbers of an environmental group.	Applications will need to demonstrate positive biodiversity and/or sustainability outcomes in alignment with Council strategies.
<b>Active Communities Up to \$5,000</b>	To assist with capacity building of sport and leisure clubs to deliver programs and projects that promote club wellbeing, diversity, inclusion, gender equity, volunteer engagement and retention.	Applications will need to show consideration of diverse communities and contribute to the sustainability of the club.
<b>Small Equipment Grants Up to \$5,000</b>	For small, essential equipment purchases that enhance the sustainability of the organisation.	Applications will need to show a minimum co-contribution of 10% of the cost of the equipment contributed by the applicant.




### **Community Development Fund Applications that may be supported**

- Applications demonstrating clear project goals, defined outcomes, and a detailed plan and budget.
- Applications that clearly support Council's strategic objectives and priorities captured in the Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.
- Community need is demonstrated and addressed within the application.
- Projects and events that demonstrate collaboration with other local organisations and services, share resources within the community, and involve volunteers will be favourably considered.

### **Community Development Fund Applications that won't be supported**

- Applications that are submitted after the submission period closes will not be eligible.
- Projects that are more appropriately funded under another Council grant program.
- Applications for the same or similar project funded by CDF for three consecutive years (except for annual community events) will only be considered if significant community need is demonstrated.
- Projects relating to capital or facility upgrades or maintenance. For example, projects that primarily focus on improvement, replacement, disposal or addition to fixed assets such as land, building and facilities.
- Operating Expenses relating to the day-to-day costs incurred in carrying out your usual business. This includes expenses such as salaries for existing positions, insurance, utilities, cleaning and general maintenance.
- Applications for equipment must include a co-contribution from the applicant of at least 10%.




### Community Development Fund Application and Assessment Process

All Community Development Fund Applications must first be discussed with the Community Partnerships team for eligibility outlined in these guidelines. You can contact the team on 03 9298 8000.

The 2025-2026 Community Development Fund information sessions, opening and closing dates are shown below, and we encourage you to attend the Grant Information Sessions.

Dates to Remember	
<b>7<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b>	Knox City Council Grant Program Information Session
<b>14<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b>	Grant Writing Training Session
<b>26<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b>	<b>Applications open (9am)</b>
<b>29<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b>	Knox City Council Grant Program Information Session
<b>30<sup>th</sup> June 2025</b>	<b>Applications close (5pm)</b>
<b>27<sup>th</sup> October 2025</b>	Council meeting (endorsement of Panel recommendations)

### Community Development Fund Assessment Criteria

All Community Development Fund applications are assessed on the following weighted criteria:

- Clear demonstration of community need and proposed project objectives – 30%
- The capacity of the organisation applying for the grant to deliver the project and manage the grant – 25%.
- The degree to which the project is shown to have a clear financial need, is feasible and financially viable – 20%.
- The level of benefit to Knox residents – 15%
- Demonstration of consultation and partnership with others – 10%



The word "knox" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font.

### **Community Development Fund Application Process**

The annual Community Development Fund submission round will be widely publicised and promoted to the Knox community.

All applications are to be submitted via the Knox City Council Smartygrants Portal, and must include:

- ✓ Your current Public Liability Insurance Certificate of Currency
- ✓ Your most recent full year financials
- ✓ Quotes to support the proposed expenses/budget.
- ✓ Evidence of your organisation's legal status
- ✓ Project Plan

### **How are Community Development Fund applications assessed?**

Applications are evaluated by the Community Development Fund Assessment Panel, which consists of approved Community Representatives, with support from Council Officers.

The assessment is conducted in accordance with the Community Development Fund Assessment Panel Terms of Reference.

In addition, expert advice is gathered from relevant Council Officers who provide subject matter expertise on specific submissions. This officer advice is presented to the Assessment Panel as an additional resource to assist in their thorough review and consideration of each application.

### **How are Community Development Fund applications decided?**

After the funding round, a report is presented to Council, summarising the recommendations from the Community Development Fund Assessment Panel. Council will then consider and endorse these recommendations.

knox



## Acquittals

### What is an acquittal?

An acquittal is a report that the successful grant applicant submits, showing how the grant was spent and the outcomes of the funded activity. This report helps confirm that the funding was used as intended. Submitting an acquittal is required. If you don't complete it or provide the necessary documentation, it may affect your ability to apply for future grants.

### Why is an acquittal important?

An acquittal is important to ensure public funds are used responsibly, according to the Funding Agreement and grant program guidelines. Applicants must provide evidence of purchases and confirm the funds were spent on approved items.

If the acquittal report is incomplete or missing, your organisation may not be eligible for future Knox City Council grants. Additionally, any unreported funds will need to be returned to the Council.

### Tips for a successful acquittal

- ✓ Complete and submit the acquittal online using the Smartygrants Portal
- ✓ Submit the acquittal as soon as possible at the completion of your project/event.
- ✓ Upload evidence of acknowledgement of council funding
- ✓ Include your receipts or other evidence of payment to the value of the grant. Remember – these need to show payment or a zero balance!
- ✓ Attach photos or videos of your project/event.
- ✓ Provide a summary of the benefit to the community. We love to hear your stories!
- ✓ If required – return any unspent grant funds to Council.

### Top Tips for a successful acquittal!



The Knox logo is displayed in a yellow-green color on a dark blue background.

## References

### **Knox City Council Plans**

- Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

### **Relevant Legislation**

- Local Government Act 2020
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance and Enforcement) Amendment Bill 2021

### **Charter of Human Rights**

- This guideline has been assessed against and complies with the Charter of Human Rights.

### **Related Council Policy**

- Council Grant Framework Policy (April 2025)
- Election Period Policy
- Electronic Gaming Machine Policy
- Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure
- Knox City Council Governance Rule (Chapter 5 Conflicts of Interest)
- Fraud and Corruption Control Framework
- Child Safe Policy

### **Related Council Documents**

- Knox City Council Fraud and Corruption Control Procedure
- Community Development Fund Assessment Panel Terms of Reference
- Community Events in Knox – Information Pack

## 8.2 Response to Notice of Motion 159 - Outer East Foodshare Pilot Project Evaluation

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Discussion
<b>Author:</b>	Manager Community Strengthening, Kerry Jansons
<b>Manager:</b>	Manager Community Strengthening, Kerry Jansons
<b>Executive:</b>	Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

### SUMMARY

This report was prepared in response to Notice of Motion (NOM) 159 that was presented at the 26 August 2024 Council Meeting by Cr Marcia Timmers-Leitch. The NOM requested that:

“Council receive a report on the current findings of the trial (initially 12-months and extended to two years) of a pilot Food Hub (Outer East Foodshare) on a Council owned site, which aimed to streamline the collection, storage and distribution of rescued food, which includes but not limited to:

- a) Data on the volume and impact to the Knox and broader community of the trial to date; and
- b) An analysis of the capacity of the current site at Templeton Orchards Preschool to serve the ongoing needs of the service.”

Officers engaged consultant Kass Halastanis of Diverse Works to undertake an independent review of the Outer East Foodshare (OEF) that is based at Templeton Orchards Kindergarten in Wantirna (refer to Attachments 1 and 2).

The review provides detailed analysis of the significant impact that OEF Hub has had on food relief in the Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges municipalities including:

- 46 Outer East food relief providers access the Hub with majority located in Knox (25), followed by Yarra Ranges (11) and Maroondah (10);
- 94% of food relief providers confirmed that their access to the Hub has resulted in larger numbers of community members receiving food relief through their service;
- 90% of food relief providers agreed or strongly agreed that their access to the Hub resulted in more fresh and chilled foods being provided to community members through their food relief service;
- 74% of food relief providers agreed that their access to the Hub has improved the use of staff/volunteer time in their organisation;
- 79% of food relief provider confirmed that their access to the Hub has improved their collaboration and/or partnerships with other Knox food relief providers; and
- Based on 2022, Foodbank estimated a 167,000 kg annual grocery deficit in Knox. OEF's supply of approx. 109,500kg annual food supplies has dramatically reduced this grocery deficit.

It is clear that the OEF Hub has had a positive and significant impact on food relief in Knox, both for the community and those that work and volunteer their time in these organisations. The license agreement for Templeton Orchards Kindergarten is due to expire on 31 August 2025, with no provisions to extend the license in the current agreement.

In regard to the tenure of OEF at Templeton Orchards Kindergarten it is important to note that Council is currently developing the Kindergarten Infrastructure Services Plan (KISP). This document assists Council in determining the future kindergarten needs in the Knox municipality, to inform decision making on which kindergarten centers can be declared surplus and which may be required in future years to meet demand. Unfortunately, due to delays within the State Government, this document is not anticipated to be completed until the end of 2025. Preliminary estimated data for the revised KISP indicates that within the Wantirna region, there is no future demand for kindergarten places beyond what is currently available until the year 2035. Alongside this the neighbouring Wantirna South region is showing an estimated oversupply.

Given the information provided in the report on the OEF pilot and the clear benefit that both the organisation and this location has provided to the Knox community in relation to food relief, Officers are recommending that a 5-year lease be offered to Outer East Foodshare at the Templeton Orchards Kindergarten site. This will provide OEF with security in their tenancy and enable them to apply for further funding and grants to assist them with their operational requirements.

#### **RECCOMENDATION**

That Council resolve to;

1. Note the report on Outer East Foodshare Pilot at Templeton Orchards Kindergarten
2. Agree to enter into a lease with Outer East Foodshare at Templeton Orchards Kindergarten for a period of 5 years with no extension options, based on the terms and conditions of Councils standard lease template and current licence conditions
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer delegates) to negotiate and execute the lease.

#### **1. DISCUSSION**

Food insecurity is an issue of growing need across the nation as communities face increasing financial hardship with cost-of-living pressures and are impacted daily by escalating grocery costs, higher utility costs, increasing rents and consecutive interest rate rises. In Knox, community members are presenting to food relief providers to access basic groceries, cooked meals and food vouchers to make ends meet and reduce their risk of homelessness.

Knox City Council's submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria (July 2024) details the increase in complexity of food insecurity in Knox and refers to widespread reports received from Knox food relief providers: where food relief was once a stop-gap measure providing "emergency" relief, the structural and systemic barriers to financial security are increasingly seeing food relief services become a way of life for a growing number of community members, notably for a new cohort, the "working poor".

The issues faced by Knox community members and local food relief providers have been of concern to Council which has demonstrated leadership in supporting a local response. Council undertook an audit of food relief providers in 2022 to profile the service response at the

community level, then in January 2023, Council convened the Knox Food Relief Taskforce which brought together over 30 local food relief providers to consider opportunities for an effective coordinated response to growing community need and to increasing issues of supply and demand of food supplies in food relief services.

Through the Taskforce 2023 meetings, Knox food relief providers continued to report that demand outstripped supply, with many providers working around the clock to meet community need. Council collected data at different stages to capture more detailed information on the municipality's food relief system. A comparison of 2022 data and 2024 data paints a stark picture of growing community need. By May 2024, each week Knox food relief providers were:

- Serving or distributing 2,000+ cooked meals which is a 167% increase in less than two-years; and
- Assisting with 2,200+ grocery packs/pantry visits which is a 550% increase in less than two-years.

In mid-2023, Knox Council facilitated a Taskforce's workshop to develop an Advocacy Strategy which identified as a key priority the establishment of a local Food Hub for large-scale food collection and distribution. At the same time, OEF had commenced discussions with Knox Council on the possibility of a suitable Council-owned site for food collection, storage and distribution.

Low demand for kindergarten places in Knox in recent years resulted in several kindergarten sites being suspended. Following this Templeton Orchards Kindergarten was flagged by Council as a potential site for the OEF to operate a Food Hub short term while other options were explored. The possibility to occupy a site for this purpose was widely considered a game changer to addressing food insecurity in the municipality.

Importantly, Knox Council saw that partnering with OEF to establish a Hub within Knox aligned with the Knox Council Plan 2021-25, Key Direction: Connection, Resilience and Wellbeing. It also supported Healthy Eating and Food Security, as one of six priorities identified in the Knox Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. After extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders, and with an immediate demand, the Food Hub license agreement was signed for Templeton as a 12-month trial and commenced operations in September 2023.

Quantifiable measures demonstrate the successes of the Hub's operations to date, in a period of 15 months (from September 2023 to December 2024) the number of:

- Food relief providers accessing food from the Hub grew from 6 to 46 organisations;
- Drivers grew from 3 to 14, and volunteers from 7 to 43, delivering 250-300 volunteer hours per week;
- Hub food supplies received per month went from 400kgs to 26 tonnes; and
- Kilos of Knox's annual grocery deficit have significantly reduced by 109,500 kg, based on Foodbank's 2022 estimated 167,000+kg annual grocery deficit for Knox.

The vastly increased volume of food, the major growth in providers sourcing Hub supplies, and the large increase in Hub volunteers highlight the expanded impact of the Hub's capacity to support the local food relief system. Food relief providers have widely reported the strengths of a Hub and the strong impact that a Hub has had at the community level, which has been manifold. Knox

Council's survey findings, collected from food relief providers in December 2024, detail the key areas of the Hub's impact on community food relief programs. As a result of accessing the OEF Hub, providers have:

- Strengthened their capacity to provide food relief to an increased number of community members;
- Significantly reduced costs of provider food purchases, which subsequently has increased provider capacity to support a larger number of community members;
- Provided more fresh and chilled foods being provided to community members through providers' food relief service;
- Strengthened capacity to provide a variety of foods for community members with diverse dietary requirements;
- Improved knowledge of, and engagement with, other providers;
- Improved knowledge of how to effectively extend the use of Hub food supplies;
- Greatly improved the utilisation of staff and volunteer time; only small improvement in use of volunteer transport costs and/or use of private vehicles; and
- Reduced food relief providers' reliance on other sources of food supplies.

Although the Templeton site offered a suitable facility at the time of OEF's commencement of a Food Hub, the fast growth of the Hub's service has raised major storage challenges and questions. Officers are aware that the long-term goal for OEF is to secure a fit for purpose warehouse facility in Croydon/Kilsyth area and to retain Templeton Orchards Kindergarten as a satellite site.

It is important to note that as the initial offer of OEF to occupy Templeton Orchards Kindergarten was a trial, therefore, OEF was placed on a 12-month license agreement, however, as they are exclusively occupying this site, under the existing Lease and Licensing policy their tenure going forward should be under a lease agreement, rather than a license.

The Hub's positive impact on the community is indisputable, having rendered important economic, social and environmental benefits to the Knox community and beyond. Its future operation by the OEF at the Templeton site presents Knox Council with questions on how to support such an important, effective and impactful community service. The report identifies that the future needs of the OEF Share are to:

- Complete site investigations to support a fit-for-purpose facility;
- The provision of permanent/long-term lease arrangements that offer the OEF security of tenure; and
- Advocacy for State Government investment to support the leadership demonstrated to date by Knox Council at the local community level.

### **1.1 Kindergarten Infrastructure Service Plan (KISP) and Data**

A Kindergarten Infrastructure Services Plan (KISP) is a document that is developed in partnership with the Victorian Government and is an agreement of the future kindergarten supply of, and demand for 3 and 4-year-old funded kindergarten places against existing enrolment capacity for the municipality. A KISP was endorsed by Council in September 2021 to inform the roll-out of 3-year-old kindergarten in accordance with the State Government reform up until 2029. Subsequently, the State Government introduced the Best Start, Best Life (BSBL) reform which



further impacts on kindergarten infrastructure through the offering of free kindergarten and the roll-out of an increase to hours for 4-year-old kindergarten from 15-30 hours per week by 2036.

In response to this reform, Council officers have commenced work to update the KISP in collaboration with the State Government which was scheduled for completion in 2024 to update the current and forecast demand for kindergarten up until 2036. Due to delays from the State Government the KISP has not yet been finalised and the timeline for completion is anticipated to be in the second half of this year, when a report will be provided to Council from the Early Years Department.

#### **1.1.2 Templeton Orchards Kindergarten**

Templeton Orchards Kindergarten was included in the tender process Council undertook in 2024 to source kindergarten providers to operate the provision of kindergarten from Council facilities. Due to the extension of the BSBL reform roll out dates, now pushed out a further five years to 2036, and this site being suspended (no demand for kindergarten) the interested providers did not ultimately express interest in using the Templeton site for kindergarten provision.

There were also seven other Council owned early years facilities which the providers did not seek to use.

At the Council Meeting held on 22 July 2024 at which Council awarded the leases to the recommended kindergarten providers, the accompanying report indicated that the best future management options of the eight suspended kindergarten sites that were not leased to kindergarten providers via this tender process would be considered following the finalisation of the KISP and the implementation of Council's Strategic Property Prioritisation Framework.

#### **1.1.3 KISP Initial Data Analysis**

Preliminary estimated data for the revised KISP indicates that within the Wantirna region, there is no future demand for kindergarten places beyond what is currently available until the year 2035. Alongside this the neighbouring Wantirna South region is showing an estimated oversupply.

Whilst this preliminary data indicates that the Templeton Orchards Kindergarten site would not be required to support the delivery of kindergarten for some years, the estimates are subject to change should Knox experience changes in demographics over the life of the KISP, such as new housing developments that can influence demand and need for services such as kindergarten.

In accordance with the BSBL roll-out schedule, certain cohorts of 4-year-old children become eligible to access more hours of kindergarten in coming years:

- In 2026, 4-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from a refugee or asylum seeker background and children who have had contact with child protection children are eligible to access additional hours of kindergarten; and
- In 2028 4-year-old children who have (or have a parent/guardian who has) a Commonwealth concession card and children who are multiple births (triplets or more) become eligible to access additional hours of kindergarten.

Providing for these additional hours of kindergarten will require additional kindergarten places to be available, and should Knox see a rise in the number of children who meet the above eligibility

requirements due to changes in demographics and influences such as cost of living pressures, there may be additional demand for kindergarten places in the municipality sooner than currently predicted.

Other factors that could influence a change in the demand for kindergarten within the municipality include housing developments and planning reforms, however, these impacts may not be felt in Knox for some time.

Should demand for kindergarten present in coming years in the Wantirna region and as predicted in later years, current data estimates show that there will be capacity for Wantirna residents to attend kindergarten in Wantirna South due to the over-supply, however these families will have to travel to Wantirna South to access a kindergarten place where there is oversupply predicted.

## **1.2 Lease and License Considerations**

There are two options for consideration in relation to the tenure of OEF at Templeton Orchards Kindergarten:

### **Option 1: Enter into a 5-Year Lease (Until 31 August 2030)**

- When the current License Agreement expires on 31 August 2025, Council can offer a 5-year Lease Agreement to Outer East Foodshare.
- The Lease Agreement would offer similar terms and conditions to the existing License Agreement however it would provide Outer East Foodshare with exclusive occupation of the site. Council's Standard Lease template will form the basis of the new agreement taking into consideration the special conditions of their current agreement.

#### **Benefits of a 5-Year Lease**

- Security of longer-term tenure increases the opportunities for OEF to secure grants for fit-for-purpose refurbishments from State, Federal and philanthropic organisations.
- Exclusive occupation of the licensed area

#### **Risks of a 5-Year Lease**

- The facility may be identified as being required for future kindergarten services, depending on the outcome of the KISP.
- The building was not designed for the purpose of being a food relief distribution hub and may present operational limitations for the tenant.

### **Option 2 – Extend the Current Licence Agreement for 1-Year (Until August 2026)**

- When the current Licence Agreement expires on 31 August 2025, Council could offer a further Licence Agreement for a period of 12-months, expiring on 31 August 2026 to allow for the appropriate strategic investigations to take place (including KISP), prior to a decision being made about a longer-term arrangement.
- If this option is pursued, officers would need to seek an exception to the Leasing and Licencing Policy (as the group are exclusively occupying the site and this would not comply with our current Policy)
- The Licence would continue under similar terms to the current terms and conditions of Council's current Licence Agreement template.

#### **Benefits of a 1-Year Licence**

- Allow time for the strategic work of the KISP to be completed.

- OEF secure the site for a further 12 months whilst alternative, suitable options are investigated.

#### **Risks of a 1-Year Licence**

- KISP investigations may not be completed by this date, dependent on further delays from State Government.
- OEF do not receive security of longer-term tenure, impacting on their ability to secure grants for fit for purpose refurbishments.
- The Licence Agreement does not formalise exclusive occupation of the licensed area (a Lease Agreement would provide exclusive occupation)
- A Licence Agreement in this instance is not in alignment with Council's Leasing and Licencing Policy when the group are exclusively occupying the site.

It is important to note that any refurbishment or fit-for-purpose works required by OEF would not be the responsibility of Council and this would be seen as an opportunity for OEF to apply for grants from State, Federal and philanthropic organisations.

If a 5-year lease is resolved by Council, it would be proposed in line with standard practice that Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to finalise the lease negotiations and execute a 5-year lease with OEF.

#### **1.2.1 Building Condition and Renewal**

A condition audit was conducted at Templeton Orchards Kindergarten in 2024. The results from the audit show that there is no significant work required at the site. Other forms of investigation such as feedback from Facilities officers, building advocates, tenants and our various subcontractors has been valuable in assessing and responding to repair and renewal works and may at times contradict the condition data resulting in a reactive renewal of certain elements.

Overall, the building is sound, and intervention may not be needed for some time, however, every year the condition of the building will decline without active renewal and maintenance and ultimately will cost more later to renew. Routine maintenance is ongoing, there is no plan for renewal at this stage in the financial year 2025-26.

It is officers understanding that OEF would like to install solar panels on the roof to assist in reducing their electricity bills. There is in principal support from officers for solar panels to be installed, subject to structural engineers' assessment and recommendations.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT**

A survey was sent to all 46 food relief providers in the Outer East to ascertain their levels of satisfaction with the pilot project and determine the impact that this pilot has had on their organisation. One-on-one interviews also took place with OEF to understand the impacts and challenges of the pilot project.

## **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The OEF has significantly impacted the accessibility and availability of food relief within Knox and surrounding municipalities. The growth in this area of need is continuing on a trajectory that will still see the need for services such as OEF now and into the future. Council has highlighted food

security and access to affordable and nutritious food as key priorities in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

#### **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

#### **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

No environmental implications are associated with this report.

#### **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

#### **7. RISKS**

A risk identified is the inability of Council to continue to offer OEF the use of Templeton Orchards Kindergarten, should the KISP determine that the building will be required to be returned for use as a kindergarten. Council will need to investigate other opportunities and locations for a base for OEF.

#### **8. KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025**

##### **Opportunity & Innovation**

Strategy 1.3 - Support organisations in Knox to navigate recovery and new ways of working.

##### **Natural Environment & Sustainability**

Strategy 3.3 - Lead by example and encourage our community to reduce waste.

##### **Connection, Resilience & Wellbeing**

Strategy 4.1 - Support our community to improve their physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.

Strategy 4.2 - Foster inclusivity, equality, belonging and safety within the community.

Strategy 4.4 - Support the community to identify and lead community strengthening initiatives.

#### **9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

#### **10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

#### **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - OEF Hub Review - FINAL REPORT - 2025-03-03 [8.2.1 - 53 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - OEF Hub Review - Infographic A 4 - 2025-03-03 [8.2.2 - 1 page]

# Outer East Foodshare Food Hub

## Review Report

FEBRUARY 2025

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## Executive Summary

Food insecurity is an issue of growing need across the nation as communities face increasing financial hardship with cost-of-living pressures and are impacted daily by escalating grocery costs, higher utility costs, increasing rents and consecutive interest rate rises. In Knox, community members are presenting to food relief providers to access basic groceries, cooked meals and food vouchers to make ends meet and reduce their risk of homelessness.

Knox Council's Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria (July 2024) details the increase in complexity of food insecurity in Knox and refers to widespread reports received from Knox food relief providers: where food relief was once a stop-gap measure providing 'emergency' relief, the structural and systemic barriers to financial security are increasingly seeing food relief services become a way of life for a growing number of community members, notably for a new cohort, the 'working poor'.

The issues faced by Knox community members and local food relief providers have been of concern to Council which has demonstrated leadership in supporting a local response. Knox Council undertook an audit of food relief providers in 2022 to profile the service response at the community level. Then in January 2023 Council convened the Knox Food Relief Taskforce which brought together over 30 local food relief providers to consider opportunities for an effective co-ordinated response to growing community need and to increasing issues of supply and demand of food supplies in food relief services.

Through the Taskforce 2023 meetings, Knox food relief providers continued to report that demand outstripped supply, with many providers working around the clock to meet community need. Knox Council collected data at different stages to capture more detailed information on the municipality's food relief system. A comparison of

2022 data and 2024 data paints a stark picture of growing community need. By May 2024, each week Knox food relief providers were:

- Serving or distributing 2,000+ cooked meals

**167% increase in less than 2 years**

- Assisting with 2,200+ grocery packs/pantry visits

**550% increase in less than 2 years**

In mid-2023, Knox Council facilitated the Taskforce's workshop to develop an Advocacy Strategy which identified as a key priority the establishment of a local Food Hub for large-scale food collection and distribution. At the same time, the Outer East Foodshare (OEF) had commenced discussions with Knox Council on the possibility of a suitable Council owned site for food collection, storage and distribution.

Outcomes of Council's Kindergarten Service Review had rendered several sites vacant and Templeton Orchards Kindergarten and Preschool was flagged by Council as a potential site for the OEF to operate a Food Hub. The possibility to occupy a site for this purpose was widely considered a game changer to addressing food insecurity in the municipality.

Importantly, Knox Council saw that partnering with OEF to establish the Hub within Knox aligned with the Knox Council Plan 2021-25, Key Direction: Connection, Resilience and Wellbeing. It also supported Healthy Eating and Food Security, as one of six priorities identified in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. After extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders, and with no kindergarten tenancy prospect of the Templeton site, the Food Hub license agreement was signed as a 12month trial and commenced operations in September 2023.



Quantifiable measures demonstrate the successes of the Hub's operations to date – in a period of 15 months (from September 2023 to December 2024) the number of:

- Food relief providers accessing food from the Hub grew from 6 to 46 organisations
- Drivers grew from 3 to 14, and volunteers from 7 to 43, delivering 250-300 volunteer hours per week
- Hub food supplies received per month went from 400kgs to 26 tonnes
- Kilos of Knox's annual grocery deficit have significantly reduced by 109,500 kg, based on Foodbank's 2022 estimated 167,000+kg annual grocery deficit for Knox

The vastly increased volume of food, the major growth in providers sourcing Hub supplies, and the large increase in Hub volunteers highlight the expanded impact of the Hub's capacity to support the local food relief system. Food relief providers have widely reported the strengths of the Hub and the strong impact that the Hub has had at the community level, which has been manifold. Knox Council's survey findings, collected from food relief providers in December 2024, detail the key areas of the Hub's impact on community food relief programs. As a result of accessing the OEF Hub, providers have:

- Strengthened their capacity to provide food relief to an increased number of community members
- Significantly reduced costs of provider food purchases, which subsequently has increased provider capacity to support a larger number of community members
- Provided more fresh and chilled foods being provided to community members through providers' food relief service
- Strengthened capacity to provide a variety of foods for community members with diverse dietary requirements
- Improved knowledge of, and engagement with, other providers

- Improved knowledge of how to effectively extend the use of Hub food supplies
- Greatly improved the utilisation of staff and volunteer time; only small improvement in use of volunteer transport costs and/or use of private vehicles.
- Reduced food relief providers' reliance on other sources of food supplies

Although the Templeton site offered a suitable facility at the time of OEF's commencement of the Food Hub, the fast growth of the Hub's service has raised major storage challenges and questions.

The Hub's impact on the community is indisputable, having rendered important economic, social and environmental benefits to the Knox community and beyond. Its future operation by the OEF at the Templeton site presents Knox Council with questions on how to maintain and support such an important, effective and impactful community service with appropriate infrastructure. The future of the Hub is now reliant on Council decisions for:

- The possibility of suitable site investigations to support a fit-for-purpose facility
- The provision of permanent/long-term lease arrangements that offer the OEF security of tenure
- Advocacy for State Government investment to support the leadership demonstrated to date by Knox Council at the local community level.

With the OEF licence agreement due to expire in August 2025, an extension of the current licence, or the provision of a long-term lease agreement, would provide opportunity for the OEF Food Hub continuation of service while infrastructure options for a fit for purpose OEF Food Hub are explored further.

# PREFACE

The Outer East Foodshare (OEF) Food Hub has been operating as a trial since August 2023 at a Knox Council owned site at 51 Templeton Street Wantirna. At a Council Meeting on 26 August 2024, a motion was passed to prepare a report with findings on the OEF Food Hub trial, with reference to:

**a. Data on the volume and impact to the Knox and broader community of the trial to date**

**b. An analysis of the capacity of the current site at Templeton Orchards Preschool to serve the ongoing needs of the service**

Although there is discussion of the capacity of the current site to serve the OEF Food Hub service, this report does not include detailed information on options for a fit-for-purpose site nor does it refer to costings for improvements required at the current Knox Council owned site.

The focus of this OEF Food Hub Review Report details current findings of the OEF Hub trial and responds to the Notice of Motion's request for specific data and an analysis of the OEF Food Hub site's capacity to serve the ongoing needs of the OEF Hub service.

In December 2024, Kass Halastanis (Diverse Works) was engaged by Knox City Council to prepare the OEF Food Hub Review Report. Data and information collected for the purpose of this report was provided by Knox Council Officers in the Community Strengthening Department and was sourced through:

- Knox Council correspondence and documents – memos, emails, council data, internal meeting notes, minutes from the Knox Food Relief Taskforce meetings and the Knox Council-OEF Licence Agreement
- Knox Council's Submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria – July 2024
- Data from the Knox food relief provider survey – December 2024
- Transcript of Council's focused discussion with the OEF – January 2025

# BACKGROUND

## 1.1 Why a Food Hub?

In 2022, the Knox Council Community Strengthening Department undertook an audit of food relief providers in Knox, to better understand the supports available to local residents amidst growing demand. As a key recommendation arising from the audit, the Knox Food Relief Taskforce (KFRT) was established in January 2023 to increase collaboration between providers and build the sustainability of the food relief support system in Knox. At the time, Council had identified more than 30 services providing food relief, ranging from small, church-based providers to home based providers, as well as larger and well-established organisations. (Appendix 1: OEF Food Hub Key Stages – Timeline)

A key concern raised through the Taskforce, was the need for logistical support to secure, store and transport food. The opportunity to store collected food donations for distribution was considered pivotal to address issues faced by providers, including:

- Extensive travel across Melbourne's east/south to collect food
- Growing pressure placed on already limited staff and volunteers
- Increases in travel costs
- Pressure for immediate distribution of large-scale food donations due to limited onsite storage (including refrigeration) for many providers.

In June 2023, Knox Council engaged CPR consultants to work with the KFRT to develop the KFRT Advocacy Strategy which identified priority areas ('asks'), the first of which was that the Taskforce asks the Victorian Government to:

'Work with the Taskforce to identify and convert an appropriate building or site to become an Eastern Region Food Hub. Access to a warehouse or hub has been identified as the single biggest game-changing initiative for food security in the east of Melbourne, as it would allow providers such as Foodbank to deliver much larger quantities of fresh and chilled food into the region for distribution.'

At the same time, the Community Strengthening Department undertook internal and external consultations regarding the proposed licence agreement for the Outer East Foodshare (OEF) to commence food collection and distribution operations at the Templeton Orchards Children and Family Centre in Templeton Street Wantirna.

The Taskforce and Knox Council's Community Strengthening Department, as well as Council's Family and Children's Services, provided support for the establishment of a 12month Food Hub trial within Knox that would result in:

- Expanded capacity for Outer East Foodshare to source and provide food to agencies within Knox
- Enhanced sustainability and capacity of Knox food relief providers to meet growing community demand
- Ability for all food relief providers in Knox to have greater access to Foodbank supplies, notably fresh and chilled food items which are currently difficult to source
- Reduce costs and demands on the volunteers supporting Knox food relief providers
- Significant environmental and sustainability benefits through food rescue and reduced transport.

While advocacy continued through the Taskforce to support the long-term objective of establishing a fit-for purpose permanent Outer East Food Hub, the opportunity presented by the OEF to commence operation of a Food Hub trial at the vacant premises of a former kindergarten site was much welcomed by Knox food relief providers and by Knox Council.

## 1.2 Why Knox?

The economic consequences of the Covid pandemic marked the beginning of a stark and steady increase in the cost of living, significantly impacting the most vulnerable people across the Knox municipality.

**According to a 2022 independent analysis by Foodbank, Knox was experiencing a 167,000+ kg grocery deficit per year.**

Knox was identified as one of only two 'red zones' in the Foodbank Eastern catchment, which stretches 500 kilometres from Hawthorn to Mallacoota. 'Red zone' is defined as the widest gap between supply and demand and in reality, the gap is likely to be larger given the significant economic shifts and increases in cost of living that have occurred since the last Census.

The KFRT administered a survey in September 2023 to better understand the lived experience and profile of community members accessing food relief, their patterns of help-seeking and areas of concern. In total, 235 survey responses were collected from across 11 local providers. The survey findings were consistent with those of the Foodbank Hunger Report 2023, which highlighted that the prevalence of food insecurity increased significantly to 36% in 2023. Knox survey findings include:

- 70% of survey respondents cut back on quality and variety of food due to cost in previous 12 months
- 44% skipped meals due to not being able to buy enough food
- 23% went without food for a day or longer due to not being able to buy enough food
- 56% were accessing food relief because their Centrelink payments were insufficient to cover the rent, food and bills
- 33% were accessing food relief because their wage was insufficient to cover the rent, food and bills

Knox Council's Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria in July 2024 details the increase in complexity of food insecurity

in Knox and refers to widespread anecdotal reports received from Knox food relief providers – **where food relief was once a stop-gap measure providing ‘emergency’ relief, the structural and systemic barriers to financial security are increasingly seeing food relief services become a way of life.**

As the cost of living has continued to increase, the increase in demand for food relief has seen a major shift in those accessing food relief from lower socio-economic residents to full time workers struggling to meet other costs. Knox food relief providers across the municipality have described the community they are assisting as the ‘working poor’.

In April 2024 the Council to Homeless Persons report ‘Employed and at Risk: The new face of homelessness’ placed **Knox in the top 10 Victorian LGAs where homelessness services were in the most demand by employed people in 2022-23.** Of the most affected LGAs, Knox is among the five most impacted metropolitan LGAs and 71% of employed people requiring homelessness services in Knox are women.

Through the KFRT 2023 meetings, Knox food relief providers continued to report that demand outstripped supply. Knox Council collected data at different stages to capture more detailed information on the municipality's food relief system. The 2022 Knox Council audit of food relief providers identified 21 Knox providers of emergency food relief offering a range of programs: eat-in community meals, take-away meals, pantry/grocery pack service and food vouchers. At the 2022 audit, approximately 1,200 meals were served or distributed each week and pantries provided just under 400 grocery packs/pantry visits a week.

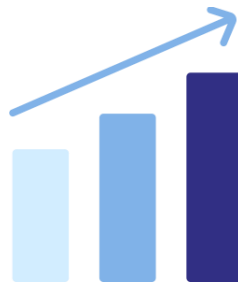
The number of providers had increased to more than 35 by May 2024. Knox Council collected data from Knox food relief providers in early 2024 – by May 2024, each week Knox food relief providers were distributing

2,000+ cooked meals: **167% increase in less than 2 years**

2,200+ grocery packs/pantry visits: **550% increase in less than 2 years**



In recognition of growing severity of financial hardship faced by the 'working poor', several providers started opening after-hours pantries to allow people in full-time employment to access pantry parcels. In past years, food relief providers requested that community members present their Centrelink concession card in order to access support – universally, this is no longer a requirement among Knox food relief providers.



## 1.3 Why Knox Council and OEF?

OEF first approached Knox Council in August 2022 seeking support for a proposed food distribution centre in the Outer East, with Knox as the preferred location. The organisation commenced in 2013 and is an incorporated association and registered charity. Their primary role is to collect food from donors such as Foodbank Victoria, OzHarvest and local food growers and businesses. They would then sort and distribute the food to local emergency/food relief providers.

OEF had established partnerships with service providers in Knox, Yarra Ranges and Maroondah. By 2022, OEF had established a relationship with Foodbank Victoria which, at the time, had indicated their ability to immediately increase the supply of fresh and frozen produce with delivery directly to a Hub in the Outer East, should it be established. Knox food relief providers at the time reported that accessing fresh food (such as fruits, vegetables and dairy products) was difficult and limited their capacity to provide a balanced and healthy range of options to service users.

The opportunity to collect, store and distribute food from a specifically dedicated site presented OEF with a pathway to responding more effectively to food insecurity and to work much more collaboratively with food relief providers across Knox and the Outer East.

The key step to expansion for OEF was their capacity to store donated and collected food. The possibility to occupy a site for this purpose was widely considered a game changer to addressing food insecurity in the municipality and across the Outer East.

The possibility of a site for collection, storage and distribution responded clearly to the well documented issues which were identified by the KFRT and its Advocacy Strategy (prepared by CPR Consultants). Importantly, Knox

Council considered that partnering with OEF to establish the Hub within Knox aligned with the Knox Council Plan 2021-25, Key Direction: Connection, Resilience and Wellbeing. It also supported Healthy Eating and Food Security, as one of six priorities identified in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Given the strong level of community need and the unique nature of the services provided by the proposed tenant, an expression of interest process had not been undertaken for this license agreement. Both internal and external consultation took place with: Knox Council Family and Children's Services, Property Department, Health Services, Leisure Services; Knox Food Relief Taskforce members; Foodbank Victoria; Oz Harvest; Second Bite; and Yarra Ranges and Maroondah Councils.

The opening of the Food Hub attracted media attention with Channel 7 News reporting on the OEF Food Hub opening after the official launch in November 2023. Reporting and interviewing of Knox Mayor, Cr Jude Dwight captured the commitment and collaboration between Knox Council and the OEF in commencing the Food Hub service and highlighted the growing need for food relief in the local area.



The Outer East Foodshare Food Hub trial has rendered multiple benefits to the Knox food relief system.

## 1.4 Snapshot of the Hub

### 1 License Agreement

Aug  
2023-  
24

The OEF Licence Agreement was signed for a 12month trial from 14 August 2023 to 14 July 2024, at a fee of \$239.00 per annum (GST inclusive), with the possibility of a longer-term licence

Aug  
2024-  
25

agreement to be reviewed in June 2024 or when a decision was to be made about the intended future use of the facility, whichever was to be earlier.

A second licence agreement was reviewed and signed in July 2024 for a further 12 months from 1 August 2024 to 31 August 2025.

### 2 Location

Templeton Orchards Children and Family Centre (CB210 – see Appendix 2) identified as a suitable site for OEF due to key features that support the collection, sorting and distribution of large-scale food supplies:

Central location with proximity to Burwood Hwy and Eastlink, size and floor plan, double-width access gate at the front of the facility, location amongst other community facilities, sports grounds and open space.

### 3 Operating Hours

The licence agreement stipulates that operating hours are at the discretion of OEF however all noise emanating from this premises must: cease by 11pm and the facility vacated by midnight on Fridays and Saturdays; and cease by 10pm and the facility vacated by 11pm Sunday to Thursday.

OEF's daily hours of service are

- weekdays 9am to 1.30pm, open for food relief providers
- weekends 11am to 12.30pm, not open for food relief providers

### 4 Hub Resources

- 2 Refrigerated Vans: 1x 1tonne and 1x4tonne
- 43 Volunteers: sorting, packing, cleaning, distributing and records/administration
- 14 Volunteer Drivers: collecting 300kgs daily from Costco, regular collections from SecondBite, Foodbank, Coles, Aldi, farmers and caterers
- 3x commercial 2door freezers, 1xlg chest freezer,
- 2x commercial 2door refrigerators, 1xcommercial 3door refrigerator

### 5 Distribution

46 Outer East food relief providers accessing the Hub

- 25 providers based in Knox
- 11 providers based in Yarra Ranges
- 10 providers based in Maroondah

## 2.1 Volume of Food Supplies

The supply of food to the Hub in the first few months of operations was reliant on OEF volunteer collections from Foodbank, caterers and farmers. Three months into the licence agreement, in December 2023, OEF signed the Costco contract. This afforded the OEF Food Hub to be in a position to collect, sort and distribute at a scale not previously reached in the region.

The OEF went from receiving 400 kilos of food per month from Foodbank, caterers and farmers to receiving 10 tonnes of food per month once the Costco contract commenced. This quantity has more than doubled in the 12month period from December 2023 to December 2024.

**By Jan 2025 OEF Hub was receiving 26 tonnes food per month.**

The Costco contract was conditional on OEF volunteer drivers collecting food supplies from Costco seven days per week, which has been achieved every morning since December 2023. In addition to the growth of Costco supplies over time, the number of suppliers has grown and OEF now receives food supplies from:

- Costco
- Foodbank
- Second Bite
- Coles
- Aldi
- Farmers in the Yarra Valley
- Caterers
- FOFA frozen meals
- Foodshare frozen meals
- Forest Hill Mosque frozen meals
- Knox Council Meals on Wheels frozen meals



## 2.2 Food Products

With the largest amount of food supplies sourced from Costco, the types of food products collected for distribution has varied on a daily basis. One of the conditions of the OEF Costco contract requires that OEF volunteer drivers collect all items of food that have been assigned by Costco for OEF collection. There is no option of selecting from the foods assigned to OEF as a condition of the contract. Of the 300+ kilos collected from Costco, food products include:

- ☐ Fresh fruit and vegetables
- ☐ Bakery goods – bread, donuts, deserts
- ☐ Pantry goods – pasta, sauces, canned foods, rice
- ☐ Dairy – eggs, cheese, milk
- ☐ Meat – high quality beef, chicken, pork, lamb
- ☐ Culturally specific foods – spices, tofu



Importantly, OEF has reported on the high quality of the Costco food supplies. Although the contract requires collection of all assigned food products, the donated fruit, vegetables, bakery, dairy and meat products included in Costco's OEF assigned collection are edible and of high quality. Foods are mostly allocated because Costco have received additional supplies of these lines and need to rotate store supplies; by and large, foods are not compromised and rarely need to be discarded for poor quality.

Although the Costco 'bulk deal' contractual arrangement sometimes results in the supply of sugary foods (donuts, cakes), Knox food relief providers have welcomed the collection and distribution of these foods as occasional treats for community members accessing food relief. OEF has a strong



commitment to collecting and distributing healthy and nutritious food and thus, actively pursues relationships with farmers, growers and producers.

Additionally, OEF have been proactive in communicating with Coles to emphasise the importance of supermarket fresh food donations being edible and of high quality. Recent discussions with Coles have been supported through OEF's collaboration with SecondBite, advocating for the value of improved quality of food products and avoiding the donation of food that is of poor quality and not edible.

Given that foods collected from supermarket retailers are not of the same consistently high quality as those supplied by Costco, sorting through supermarket food donations has occasionally resulted in the redirection of non-edible foods to pig farmers, goat farmers or chicken farmers. OEF's commitment to zero landfill sees a small amount of non-edible foods going to compost (FOGO bins). OEF's strategies for no waste and zero landfill has earned OEF an award as a Keep Australia Beautiful 2024 Community Finalist.

Healthy foods are also donated to OEF from organisations which cook and pack frozen meals: Feed One Feed All (FOFA), Fairshare, Forest Hill Mosque, Knox Council Meals on Wheels. Relationships with these organisations have grown over time and OEF have invested time in building rapport to support access to suppliers of single person frozen meals.

## 2.3 Hub Transport Vehicles

When OEF commenced the Food Hub operation at the Templeton site, an OEF owned Hyundai iLoad refrigerated van with one tonne capacity was utilised to collect and distribute food. An additional vehicle (an E-van) had been used throughout 2024 on a regular as-needs hire basis through Eastern Volunteers to support sourcing of more food supplies. In January 2025, OEF purchased a second vehicle, a Renault Master with 4 tonne capacity and with refrigeration being fitted and ready for use by the end of January 2025.

OEF's transport vehicles in early 2025 include:

- 1x Hyundai iLoad refrigerated van  
1 tonne capacity – OEF owned vehicle
- 1x Renault Master refrigerated van –  
4 tonne capacity – OEF owned vehicle
- 1x E-van - hired on as needs basis  
0.6 tonne capacity – hire from Eastern  
Volunteers

- Private vehicles – small collections from  
supermarkets – OEF volunteers' private  
vehicles



**The current use of the two OEF refrigerated vans (1x one tonne and 1x four tonne) on a permanent and consistent basis has significantly increased the capacity for collection of large quantities of food.**

The purchase of the two OEF vans has been made possible through funding from:

- Feed Melbourne and Bendigo Bank with each organisation contributing equal amounts for the purchase of the one-tonne vehicle
- The Lilydale Revitalisation Project for the purchase of the four-tonne vehicle

Capacity for collection is further strengthened by the use of OEF volunteers' private vehicles for small supermarket collections and by the continued use of Eastern Volunteers' E-van on an occasional basis, particularly for the delivery of FOFA frozen meals, which are packed and loaded into big eskies into the E-van for delivery to OEF.



## 2.4 Distribution

In the first few months of the Hub operations, there was only a handful of food relief providers receiving food supplies through the OEF Hub.

**In a span of 15 months the number of food relief providers accessing food regularly from the OEF Food Hub grew from 6 to 46 organisations.**

Food is distributed through the Hub five days per week with restrictions on weekend distribution as per the licence agreement. The majority of food relief agencies collect from the Hub with their own transport and OEF volunteers deliver food supplies to other food relief providers. Arrangements for distribution are based on:

- Memoranda of Understanding between OEF and individual food relief providers, outlining best intentions of food collection from the OEF Food Hub – that food collected from the Hub is edible food, that food is suitably stored by the food relief provider (in fridge, freezer, in line with food hygiene practices)
- Established relationships between OEF and food relief providers that inform OEF profiles of food relief providers; OEF written profiles capture information on each provider's food relief services (eat-in cooked meals and/or pantry parcels), number of clients, client demographics (e.g. cultural backgrounds and needs for culturally appropriate foods), upcoming special events, provider's access to other food suppliers, days that provider collects and/or receives food supplies from the OEF Food Hub; summary profiles are posted on a board inside the Hub for OEF team of volunteers to view readily on a daily basis, while detailed profiles are maintained electronically in Excel spreadsheet.

Based on the profile of each of the regular food relief providers accessing the Hub, food supplies are distributed with the objective of matching supply

with need in an equitable way. Achieving equitable distribution, although an overall objective, presents challenges with unknown quantities and types of food being delivered to the Hub daily. OEF's communication of available foods and surplus quantities supports the distribution strategy and OEF volunteers have been flexible and agile in ensuring that food collected is efficiently distributed across all 46 regular food relief providers, especially for food that cannot be stored for long periods, e.g. supply of large quantities of cheese needs to be distributed within short turnaround times to avoid spoilage.

In December 2023, OEF set up a WhatsApp group for communication with all known food relief providers in Knox and the Outer East. This opened the breadth of distribution significantly, with approximately 99% of known food relief providers registered in the WhatsApp group. Setting up the WhatsApp group coincided with the growth of food supplies received at the OEF Hub marked by the commencement of the Costco-OEF contract. The WhatsApp group serves multiple purposes for communication, including communication for:

- Detailing the quantify and types of food available for collection/distribution at the OEF Food Hub subsequent to daily morning deliveries received from Costco and other suppliers
- Detailing the quantify and types of food available from Knox food relief providers to share across the network of food relief providers – e.g. on occasions that a provider has received a bulk supply and has surplus, this is communicated through the WhatsApp group and providers reply with request for collection of surplus food that is delivered to OEF Food Hub for pick up

## JAN 2025 OEF FOOD HUB DISTRIBUTION TO FOOD RELIEF PROVIDERS

### KNOX BASED PROVIDERS

Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Boronia  
 ADRA Ferntree Gully  
 ADRA Wantirna  
 Australia Church for Christ Rowville  
 Ben's Place The Basin (currently closed)  
 Boronia Uniting Church  
 CHAMPION Bayswater  
 Elm St Mission Bayswater  
 Feed One Feed All Scoresby  
 Foothills Community Care Ferntree Gully  
 Indian Community Centre Rowville  
 Knox Infolink Boronia  
 Mountain District Learning Centre Ferntree Gully  
 Restore Church Rowville  
 Salvation Army Boronia  
 Salvation Army Ferntree Gully  
 St Vincent de Paul Boronia  
 St Vincent de Paul Ferntree Gully  
 St Vincent de Paul Wantirna  
 Share Space Rowville  
 The Orchard Uniting Church Boronia  
 Wellington Community Care Centre Rowville  
 Local schools: Wantirna College, Bayswater College, Indie School

### YARRA RANGES BASED PROVIDERS

ADRA Warburton – Redwood Centre  
 Dandenong Ranges Emergency Relief Service, Belgrave  
 Discovery Community Care Mt Evelyn  
 FoodStop Lilydale  
 Foothills Community Care Upwey/Tecoma  
 Hope in the Hills Tecoma  
 LinC Yarra Valley  
 Monbulk Care Works  
 Soupee's Upwey  
 St Luke's Cockatoo  
 Tecoma Uniting Church - Food is Free  
 The Philanthropic Collective Mt Dandenong

### MAROONDAH BASED PROVIDERS

Chin Community Ringwood  
 Croydon Hills Baptist Church  
 Empower Ringwood  
 Glen Park Community Centre Bayswater North  
 Helping Hands - Croydon Uniting Church  
 The Freedom Initiative Croydon  
 Uniting Homelessness Service Ringwood  
 Shop 16 Mooroolbark  
 Goodness Gracious Mooroolbark  
 Mitcham Bread Pantry

**OTHER LGAs and PROGRAMS** · Dawoodi Bohra Community Forest Hill · SGNSS  
 Gurdwara Blackburn · Winter Shelter (and summertime community meals) · local bread pantries across Knox & Maroondah (OEF deliver surplus bread)

## 2.5 Hub Personnel

The Hub model has been reliant on the invaluable contributions of volunteers who are responsible for sorting, packing, unpacking, storing, cleaning, driving, loading and unloading vehicles and recording communicating with food relief providers. Through the OEF's Hub sign-in sheets and the driver log books, OEF report that the Hub operations are currently supported by 250-300 volunteer hours per week.

**In a span of 15 months the number of OEF Food Hub**

**Drivers has grown from 3 to 14**

**Volunteers has grown from 7 to 43**

In its early days at the Templeton site, the OEF Food Hub attracted volunteers with the support of Knox Council's mailout to residents living in the local area of the Hub to attend the November 2023 Hub Opening event. OEF have also recruited volunteers through:

- Referrals from Volunteer for Knox
- Advertising on GoVolunteer and Seek Volunteer
- Showcasing the OEF Food Hub on local community radio
- Advertising on Facebook by the former Knox Mayor, Cr. Marcia Timmers-Lietch

Volunteers undergo Working with Children Checks and an induction which includes:

- Food safety training
- Manual handling training
- Briefing on the environmental and social benefits of the OEF Food Hub service
- Provision of wet weather gear, high-vis vests and aprons

The work of volunteers is recognised by providing volunteers with a small amount of food for their households (many volunteers are facing cost of

living pressures themselves) and through special events, such as volunteer lunches.



Apart from the work undertaken by the volunteers, the OEF Hub is supported by the work of the OEF Board members who contribute on a voluntary basis and dedicate many hours in preparing grant applications, organising fundraising events, securing donations, building relationships with stakeholders and progressing advocacy.



### 3. STRENGTHS AND IMPACT

Over a 15month period, the OEF Food Hub trial has clearly demonstrated signs of being able to improve the access that food relief providers in Knox and the Outer East have to an increased supply of food and in particular, to fresh and chilled foods. The growth of food supplies collected by OEF – from 400 kilos per month to 26 tonnes per month – has been matched by the growth of food relief providers receiving food from the Hub – from 6 providers in September 2023 to 46 providers currently.

In addition to this significant increase in the volume of food being distributed for food relief programs, the impact to food relief providers has been manifold. To provide a complete picture of the community impact that the OEF Food Hub trial has had on the provision of food relief in the region, Knox Council administered a survey to food relief providers in December 2024 with 20 questions, comprised of close-ended and open-ended questions seeking provider information across the following themes:

- Profile of food relief providers – name, location of service, geographical reach of service, type of food relief provided (pantry/grocery parcels, eat-in community meal, take-away meal)
- Access to the OEF Hub – date of commencement, method of collection, frequency of collection, ease of access to the Hub, type of food supplies collected and proportion of OEF food collected of provider's total food supplies
- Food relief provider's experience of the Hub and effects of this experience to provider's food relief service – changes to provider's food relief service as a result of OEF Hub access and views on improving the OEF Hub, including on the capacity of the current site

Knox Council's survey provided responses from 26 food relief providers of which 23 are located in Knox, two in Maroondah and one in Yarra Ranges. Of the 26 provider survey respondents,

- 42% provide food relief to community members who only reside in Knox

- A further 41.5% provide food relief to community members across Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges and
- A small number (17%) provide food relief to community members in the Outer East as well as from municipalities further away (e.g. Casey)

The type of food relief provided by survey respondents varies: the majority (83%) provide pantry parcels or grocery packs and other providers facilitate community meals (42%) and take-away cooked meals (38%) in addition to providing pantry items.



## 3.1 Access to OEF Food Hub

Although the OEF Food Hub has established relationships with 46 providers which regularly access food supplies, this number does not include all food relief providers in the local area. There is still a small number of providers in Knox and across the Outer East who do not access the Hub (Appendix 4 – OEF and Knox Food Relief Providers Map). Of the Knox Council surveyed food relief providers, 83% access the OEF Hub. Of those providers that access the Hub and completed the survey,

- 85% collect food supplies from the Hub with their own transport vehicles
- 70% collect food supplies from the OEF Hub once a week, while 20% collect more than once a week
- 90% reported access to the Hub as 'easy' or 'very easy'

The quantity of foods collected from the OEF Hub is varied among survey respondents, with the representation of OEF food supplies as a proportion of providers' total food supplies varying:

- Almost one third (32%) of survey respondents sourced less than 25% of their total food supplies from OEF Hub
- Almost half (47%) of survey respondents sourced 25-50% of their total food supplies from the OEF Hub
- A small number of providers rely on OEF Hub supplies for the majority of their food supplies

The types of foods collected varies among providers, however, the overwhelming number of survey responses demonstrate highest collections of food supplies from the categories of fresh fruit and vegetables, non-perishable pantry items, bakery goods and frozen chilled foods. Dairy foods, protein/meat foods and ready-made meals are also frequently collected by providers but to a lesser degree.

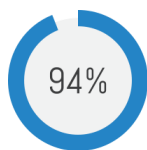
## 3.2 Provider experience of the Hub: effects on service

Survey responses highlight overwhelmingly that their access to OEF Hub food supplies has positively affected their food relief services in several ways.

### **3.2.1 – Food relief providers strengthened their capacity to provide food relief to an increased number of community members as a result of accessing the OEF Hub.**



All survey respondents either agreed (42%) or strongly agreed (58%) that their access to the OEF Hub has expanded their organisation's ability to support the community members who engage in their services



94% confirmed that their access to the Hub has resulted in a larger number of community members receiving food relief through their service: 47% agreed, 47% strongly agreed

Several food relief providers described the ways in which their access to the OEF Hub has impacted their organisation's capacity to support the community members in need of support:

*The Hub has enabled us to provide expanded support to more people as a result of significant food cost savings. (Australia for Christ Community Care, Rowville)*

*They have supplied fresh fruit and vegetables, deserts, cakes and also collect our Foodbank orders (Share Space Inc, Rowville)*

*Our community that we provide this service to have said that by having access to this service they are able to save \$50+ per week (Mountain District Learning Centre, Ferntree Gully)*

*The Hub has contributed immensely to enable us to share a wider variety of food and toiletries with the community in need (Restore Community Care, Rowville)*

*...we have grown from 85 clients to 210 clients per week from the yarra junction site only (LinC Yarra Valley)*

When asked to identify the challenges faced by providers prior to the Hub's opening, the increasing costs of purchasing food for their organisation's food relief service was identified as an issue, as was the lack of, or irregularity of, food donations in the local area.



Providers referred to these challenges in the survey:

*Cost of purchasing foods or infrequency of donated goods (Foothills Community Care, Ferntree Gully-Upwey-Tacoma)*

*We had very limited options in Ferntree Gully/Knox (Mountain District Learning Centre) Ferntree Gully*

*Lack of food, unable to pack as many food parcels, or serve as many clients (LinC Yarra Valley)*

*Access to donated foods (The Orchard Church of Christ, Boronia)*

*Cost of food (The Orchard, Boronia-Bayswater)*

*Not enough fresh produce (Salvation Army, Ferntree Gully)*

### **3.2.2 – Providers' significant reduction of costs for food purchases, which subsequently has increased provider capacity to support a larger number of community members**

Providers describe the ways in which their access to the OEF Hub has allowed their organisations to address these challenges and strengthen their programs:

*We were buying food from retail stores. With the Hub, our food costs have fallen some 90% meaning we can offer more items to more people. It also means we can invest more funds into social support programs...We are now able to focus on diversified support programs to meet the growing social problems impacting our community. (Australia for Christ Community Care, Rowville)*

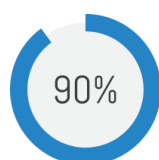
*Significant amount of food – in particular meat (Foothills Community Care, Ferntree Gully-Upwey-Tacoma)*

*Reduced our cost by 70% (The Orchard, Boronia-Bayswater)*

*Additional food supplies (The Salvation Army, Boronia)*

### **3.2.3 – More fresh and chilled foods being provided to community members through providers' food relief service**

The distribution of fresh and chilled foods to food relief providers through the OEF Food Hub is highly valued by providers.



90% either agreed or strongly agreed that their access to the Hub resulted in more fresh and chilled foods being provided to community members through their food relief service:

53% agreed and 37% strongly agreed

*OEFS has allowed us to provide fruit and vegetables for most of the week instead on just on Mondays & Tuesdays, has filled some of our gaps (Knox Infolink, Boronia)*

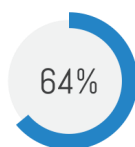
*Supplying fresh fruit and vegetables has been greatly appreciated by our clients (St Vincent de Paul, Boronia)*

*Also, we are able to offer fresh fruit and vegetables as well as a limited amount of fresh dairy items (Australia for Christ Community Care, Rowville)*



### **3.2.4 – Strengthened capacity to provide a variety of foods for community members with diverse dietary requirements**

Given the growing cultural diversity of Knox's residents, survey respondents were asked to consider their strengthened capacity to provide a variety of foods for community members with diverse dietary requirements, as a result of accessing the OEF Hub.

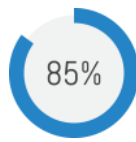


64% Agreed that sourcing food from the Hub has allowed their food relief service to offer foods to community members with dietary requirements – for example vegan, vegetarian, halal, kosher or gluten free foods:

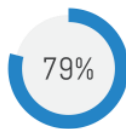
32% agreed, 32% strongly agreed, while 37% neither agreed nor disagreed.

### **3.2.5 – Improved knowledge of, and engagement with, other providers through the OEF Food Hub**

OEF have facilitated communication through information sharing in the Hub's WhatsApp group and through OEF's active advocacy role in the Knox Food Relief Taskforce, the Knox Emergency Relief Network and the Outer East Regional Food Dialogue. OEF's communication and networking role has been widely considered as integral to the capacity of providers for improved knowledge of, and engagement with, other providers.



85% agreed that their access to the OEF Hub improved their knowledge of other Knox food relief providers  
32% agreed, 53% strongly agreed



79% Confirmed that their access to the OEF Food Hub has improved their collaboration and/or partnerships with other Knox food relief providers  
37% agreed, 42% strongly agreed.

The value of connecting with other providers and building partnerships through, and with, the Hub is described by survey respondents as a positive effect on their service. The role of OEF is considered as central to the provision of food relief by many providers and is described as integral to the Knox community:

*We are working on strengthening our partnership with OEFS and applying for funding together. Bringing in the Pop-Up Markets over Christmas this year I think has been very beneficial. (Knox Infolink, Boronia)*

*The Hub provides excellent quality food for free. It also provides connection to others in the sector. I personally don't have expertise in this space but I'm a passionate volunteer who loves others. (Australia for Christ Community Care, Rowville)*



*OEFS are a wonderful and very much needed part of Knox community (Mountain District Learning Centre, Ferntree Gully)*

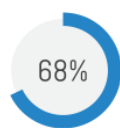
*OEF has assisted us in more ways than asked. They are an integral part of our community and our organisation (Share Space Inc, Rowville)*

*Can't do without them (Salvation Army Ferntree Gully)*



### **3.2.6 – Improved knowledge of how to effectively extend the use of Hub food supplies**

The capacity of providers to support a growing need in the Knox community and beyond has not only been strengthened by the access to the volume and variety of foods through the Hub, but also by the improved knowledge of how to effectively extend the use of Hub food supplies. The facility's kitchen has been used to demonstrate diverse uses of foods.



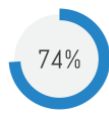
68% agreed that their access to the Hub improved their knowledge of how to extend the use of foods for example, which foods can be refrigerated or cooked in different ways

47% agreed, 21% strongly agreed

On occasions that the Hub has received large volumes of particular foods, OEF volunteers have provided information and demonstrations of how to utilise foods with a range of recipes. For example, when the OEF Hub has received pallets of strawberries, advice is provided on using large quantities to make smoothies; when a large amount of frozen cauliflower rice was received, OEF Hub volunteers conducted cooking sessions in conjunction with FOFA to demonstrate and offer tastings of cauliflower fried rice along with simple recipes to follow while providers collected supplies from the Hub.

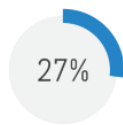
### **3.2.7 – Food relief providers greatly improved utilisation of staff and volunteer time; only small improvement in use of volunteer transport costs and in use of private vehicles.**

The impact of OEF Hub access on food relief providers' resources has seen an improvement in the utilisation of staff and/or volunteer time as many providers refer to the amount of time that they have saved in their efforts to secure food supplies.

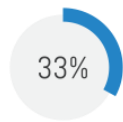


74% of survey respondents agreed that their access to the Hub has improved the use of staff/volunteer time.

However, Hub access has only seen a shift in transport costs and use of private vehicles among a small number of providers. With 85% of survey respondents indicating that they collect food supplies from the Hub with their own transport vehicles, it is not surprising that:



Only 27% of providers report a reduction of transport costs for their volunteers



Only 33% of food relief providers report a reduction of volunteers' use of private vehicles

The contribution of the OEF volunteers has been highly valued by food relief providers and it is likely that the work undertaken by OEF volunteers and drivers has positively impacted the use of provider staff/volunteer time. Although a majority of providers continue to use their own vehicles to collect supplies from the Templeton OEF site, the support rendered to their own organisation's programs by the OEF volunteers has been greatly appreciated with survey respondents providing such feedback:

*Your volunteers are a great help to our members. (St Vincent de Paul Society – Boronia Conference)*

*The HUB and their volunteers are WONDERFUL! (Boronia Road Uniting Church)*

*Also grateful for the great team who always welcome us with lovely smiles and always try to be so helpful and caring. Marilyn has a beautiful team of volunteers. (LinC Yarra Valley)*

### **3.2.8 – Food relief provider reduced reliance on other sources of food supplies**

Recent changes to Foodbank's decision to close the accounts of some providers which order small quantities of food supplies has resulted in a new role for the OEF Hub. Although not a function of OEF at the commencement of the Hub service, OEF is now undertaking the ordering and collection of Foodbank supplies for Knox's smaller food relief providers, hence providing them with this important lifeline to Foodbank. In the absence of OEF, several Knox small food relief providers would have lost the opportunity to receive Foodbank supplies.

OEF have utilised their buying power as a larger Foodbank customer and their collaborative relationships with small food relief providers to buy collectively and then share the food purchases which are sorted and collected from the Templeton site. Furthermore, the location of the Templeton site and its capacity for sorting and storage has empowered smaller Knox food relief providers to access food supplies which they may not have otherwise been able to collect. This recent function of OEF has been greatly welcomed by providers:

*For some agencies who have had their Foodbank memberships cancelled the Hub has now become more important than ever for them. (Knox Infolink, Boronia)*

*Greater ability to meet community need in spite of less access to Foodbank food (The Freedom Initiative, Bayswater North)*

*Foodbank in Dandenong was too far away and not convenient. Their restrictions on quantities made things difficult. (St Vincent de Paul Society, Boronia Conference)*

Interestingly, when asked whether their access to the OEF hub had reduced provider reliance on Foodbank, only one third (32%) of survey respondents agreed, while half (53%) neither agreed nor disagreed. Although many food

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relief providers continue to source food supplies directly from Foodbank, others now rely on OEF as an alternative means to secure Foodbank supplies.

At least half of survey respondents indicated that their access to the OEF Hub has reduced their reliance on other food suppliers of discounted or donated foods. Although providers continue to access Foodbank and other suppliers, their access to the OEF Hub is still considered integral to their increased capacity to respond to growing community need.



## 4. SITE CAPACITY FOR CONTINUED SERVICE

At the commencement of the lease agreement, the Templeton Orchards Children and Family Centre (CB210) was identified as a suitable site for OEF due to its:

- Central location – convenient delivery and collection point with proximity to Burwood Highway and Eastlink (see Appendix 2 – Location map)
- Size and floor plan (see Appendix 3 – floor plan) with storage, including capacity to accommodate:
- 2 x 9m<sup>2</sup> freezer units
- Large rooms for processing deliveries, sorting and shelving for non-perishable items
- Kitchen and amenities
- Volunteer meeting space
- Outdoor space for composting, and growing vegetables
- Double-width access gate at the front of the facility with suitable ramps to the entry point to receive deliveries on pallets.
- Location within the Templeton Reserve amongst other community facilities, sports grounds and open space
- Ample car parking providing access for larger vehicles and access to load/unload deliveries

An analysis of the capacity of the current site at Templeton Orchards Preschool to serve the ongoing needs of the service is based on:

- Food relief provider feedback received in Knox Council's December 2024 survey of food relief providers, and
- Information provided in a Knox Council focused discussion with the Manager of the OEF Food Hub, Marilyn Lambert, on the daily operation of the Hub at the current site

With significant increases in the volume of food received at the site over the past 15 months, coupled with the major growth in distribution to 46

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providers, the capacity of the site to continue supporting the OEF Food Hub service requires consideration of the site's amenity for such an important community service. The following considerations reflect the feedback from the OEF and food relief providers and provide a basis for a detailed future investigation.



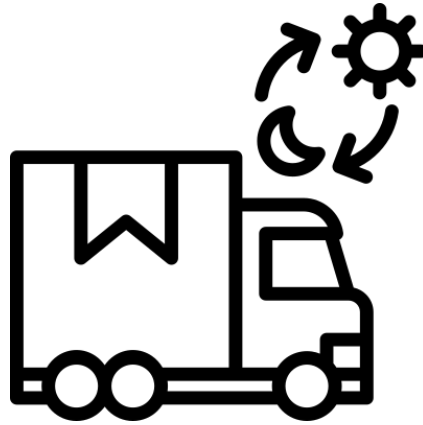
## 4.1 Site Location

The Hub location is considered as suitable and convenient to access by the majority of food relief providers with only 17% of survey respondents indicating that a change to a different suburb would be better for their food relief service. With a large majority of survey respondents and Hub food supply recipient providers located in Knox (Appendix 4 – location of OEF and Knox providers), the Wantirna location's proximity to providers has reduced the time and costs associated with providers collecting from locations outside the region (such as Dandenong and Yarraville Foodbank sites, Heidelberg SecondBite site, markets and farmers in Yarra Ranges and beyond).

The location's available ample parking space has benefited food relief provider volunteers to enter the premises with ease – 90% reported access to the Hub as 'easy' or 'very easy'. Food relief providers have been able to drive in and park their vehicles to collect food supplies without any difficulties. The OEF transport vehicles have utilized the parking area to efficiently unload collections and re-load food supplies for distribution.

The spacious parking area of the location has supported the key functions of the OEF Food Hub model and its shared space with the Tennis Club and the Cricket Club have presented little hindrance. The only occasion that has presented difficulty has been the Sunday morning OEF Costco delivery to the Hub over a limited period during the winter season when the Football Club use of the carpark. There is no dedicated parking allocation for the OEF transport vehicle on Sunday mornings.

An ongoing issue for OEF vehicle use is the lack of on-site overnight secure parking at the Templeton site. The lack of access to the space with secure gates at the rear of the building has resulted in the overnight parking of the vehicles at the rear of a local church with use of a key safe. Given the high asset value of the OEF transport vehicles, the OEF has utilised this risk mitigation option for safe storing of the vehicles but would benefit greatly from secure onsite overnight parking at the Hub's Templeton premises.



The OEF Hub's location has supported the engagement and retention of volunteers. The location's proximity to Burwood Highway, Eastlink and public bus service offers ease of transport access that has attracted volunteers with some volunteers being Knox residents living within walking distance of the Hub. The location's security within a safe family friendly precinct has also supported volunteer engagement and retention, further strengthening the Hub model.



## 4.2 Fit-for-purpose facility

### 4.2.1 – Size of facility at current premises

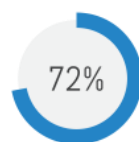
With the increased volume of food supplies – from 400 kilos to 26 tonnes per month currently being delivered to the Hub, there are growing storage capacity challenges. The OEF Hub Manager refers clearly to the amount of storage currently available as inadequate for the amount of goods going in to the Hub.

As food relief providers collect food supplies on a frequent basis, it is also their observation that a bigger facility would provide an enhanced service, with 67% of survey respondents indicating that the Hub would benefit from a location with a larger facility.

### 4.2.2 – Inadequate storage capacity for fresh, chilled and frozen food supplies

The collection of larger volumes of food has seen a marked increase in the amount of fresh, chilled and frozen foods being delivered to the Hub. However, there is now insufficient refrigeration and freezer capacity in the Hub to store such supplies.

*We have more food that needs refrigeration than we can fit into the refrigerated units, and we have more food that needs freezing than we have space for. It has changed over time. It is currently inadequate. When we started, it was OK. We had a three-door commercial fridge, two commercial freezers, and a chest freezer, plus a few borrowed fridges and freezers – a big domestic one. (Marilyn Lambert, OEF Hub Manager)*



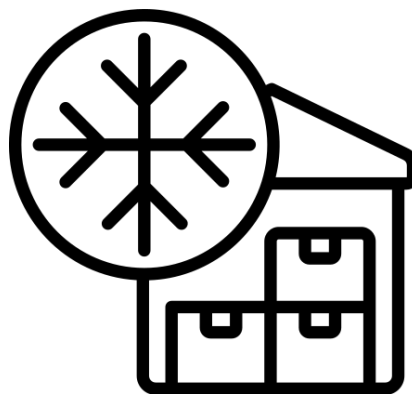
A fit for purpose facility is considered by 72% of survey respondents as a requirement for a better Food Hub service.

OEF have provided a brief outline on the specific features of a strengthened Hub service at the site and a suitably fitted facility with capacity to store the volume of food supplies that are currently being delivered to the OEF Hub:

- A walk-in cool room to accommodate the large volumes of fresh, chilled, frozen foods being delivered
- Improved/suitable pantry storage that is vermin proof to store large volumes of non-perishable foods (prior to Christmas 2024, SecondBite provided 1.5 tonnes of food which could not be stored in the Hub pantry)
- Suitable ventilation to prevent the spoiling of foods – all the windows in the current site cannot be opened, which is problematic on hot days with fridges and freezers running 24/7 and consequently heating the whole building
- Adequate key access for OEF volunteers – currently there are only four keys to share among 43 volunteers and 6 drivers with no availability of additional keys from Knox Council

*OEFs have provided a great service to agencies in Knox, and they do it well with the facilities they have, but future planning for increased demand means that a fit for purpose building would be helpful for the team. The location for us is great. (Knox Infolink, Boronia)*

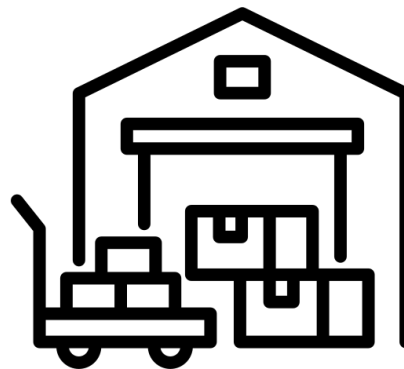
The storage of fresh, chilled and frozen foods is a priority for the OEF Hub. OEF have secured State Government grant funding to install a walk-in cool room at the Templeton site. However, the implementation of such plans cannot be realised in the absence of a permanent site for ongoing use. Any plans to install a walk-in cool room are currently inhibited by the lack of security of tenure post August 2025.



## 4.4 Security of Tenure

The lack of security of tenure presents OEF and food relief providers with concerns about the future of this highly valued community service. The impact of the OEF Hub to the local community is indisputable - the sheer volume of food being distributed through the Hub, the frequent access to high quality fresh, chilled and frozen foods, and the reduction of providers' time allocated to accessing food are just some of the measures of the Hub's impact. The OEF Food Hub trial has been instrumental in strengthening the capacity of food relief providers to deliver more food to more community members.

The Hub's capacity for increased collection and storage is strongly tied to its security of tenure. With 89% of survey respondents indicating that the Hub service could be improved if more food growers donated fresh food to the Hub and if more supplies were donated to the Hub (83%), plans for improved storage capacity cannot be progressed without Council providing security of tenure to the OEF.



*The opportunities for increased impact would come from having some security about to stay – premises where we can better storage, like a walk-in fridge and freezer. We could make more impact because we'd be able to supply more agencies with more fresh stuff. But we're full. We can't fit any more in the fridges, freezers, or pantry. (Marilyn Lambert, OEF Hub Manager)*

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The continued Hub service is now at an important juncture with both a fit-for-purpose facility and the security of an extended permanent lease agreement considered integral to the Knox and Outer East food relief system.



## CONCLUSION

A key concern raised through the Knox Food Relief Taskforce in 2023, was the need for logistical support to secure, store and transport food. The issues faced by providers are well canvassed in the KFRT Advocacy Strategy and in Knox Council's Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria. Prior to the commencement of the OEF Food Hub trial, the biggest challenges to the food relief system in Knox and the Outer East were those related to access to food supplies:

- Extensive travel across Melbourne's east/south to collect food from large distribution points, such as Foodbank warehouses in Dandenong or Yarraville.
- The growing pressure placed on already limited staff and volunteers
- Increases in travel costs
- On occasions of large donations from local businesses, producers or manufacturers, there was pressure for immediate distribution due to limited onsite storage (including refrigeration where required) for many providers.

The Knox pilot of a the OEF Hub at the Templeton Street Wantirna site has been instrumental in making inroads to the supply of rescued/donated food and in addressing the identified challenges faced by local food relief providers, primarily in Knox but also in the neighbouring municipalities of Yarra Ranges and Maroondah.

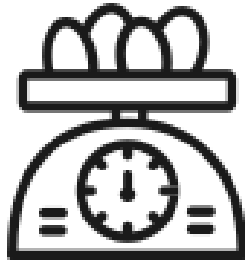
Although many providers continue to collect food from Foodbank warehouses, they have been able to diversity their sources of food supplies by accessing large quantities of food sourced by OEF. Furthermore, Foodbank's recent account closures of small food relief providers has seen some providers unable to directly access Foodbank. OEF have bridged this by incorporating the Foodbank orders of small providers with those of OEF and empowering access and inclusion for all providers.

Providers' experience prior to the OEF Hub service saw staff and volunteers dedicating long hours to sourcing food and unable to extend their service to offering other vital supports and social connection. Providers' access to the OEF Hub has had a strong impact on the time and pressures placed on the limited staff and volunteers who work in food relief services across Knox and the Outer East, with many providers reporting that they are now in a position to utilize staff and volunteer time toward important social support and financial support programs.

While many providers continue to face challenges with high transport costs as they use their own vehicles to collect OEF Hub food, their access to the Hub has also seen some improvement in the reduction of transport costs. Frequent access to the Hub site in Wantirna and reduced travel to further destinations has reduced travel time and consequently, has had a positive environmental impact, saving 100,000s kilometres of travel and kilograms of CO2.

Undoubtedly, the OEF Food Hub pilot's biggest impact has been on the strengthened capacity of food relief providers to access and provide much larger quantities of food – including much more fresh and chilled food options – to a bigger number of community members. The challenges faced by the Knox food relief system prior to the OEF Hub, in relation to the collection and distribution of large quantities of donated foods, has been effectively addressed by the OEF Hub's capacity to collect and store food. The Costco donations of 300+ kilos daily demonstrates the 'game changing' function of the OEF Hub for food relief providers. Prior to the OEF Hub commencing, the opportunity to collect and store 300+ kilos every day from one retailer would not have been possible.

Consideration of the volume of food supplies in Knox through the OEF Hub could further inform the degree of the Hub's impact. The 2022 Foodbank independent analysis pointed to a 167,000+kg annual grocery deficit in Knox. This estimate was based on 2021 Census data, and it is likely that if current data were to be used, the Knox deficit would be higher as the cost of living has continued to increase.



Based on the Foodbank estimated 167,000+kg annual grocery deficit for Knox, the OEF Hub's supply of approx. 109,500kg annual food supplies - has made significant inroads to reducing the 2022 Foodbank estimated deficit. The effects rendered by the OEF Hub to the Knox food relief system by volume of food supplies alone is significant.

By its own measures, over the past two years the OEF have quadrupled the amount of food sourced and distributed by their organisation. In the 2021/22 financial year, the OEF reports showed that they had sourced and distributed approximately 73 tonnes of food, at a time that the organization did not have a site in which to store donated and rescued food. At the Templeton site, OEF are now able to source 312 tonnes per year, resulting in a fourfold increase of supplies for distribution.

Knox Council's decision to facilitate the OEF Hub trial has rendered multiple benefits to the Knox food relief system and to a growing number of food relief providers throughout the Outer East. Its impact is profound, but it has simultaneously highlighted and clearly confirmed the need for both regional hub infrastructure and investment in local partnerships. The future of the Hub will require consideration for the provision of permanent or long-term lease arrangements, and it will require further site investigation and partnership with the State Government to invest into food relief and support the leadership demonstrated by Knox Council.

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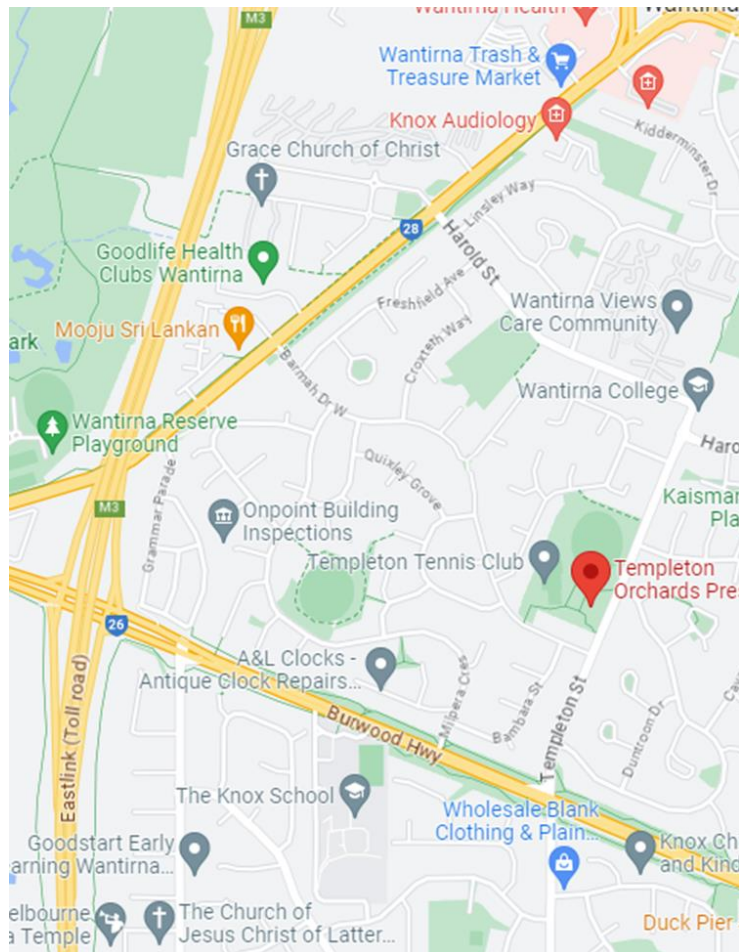


# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: OEF FOOD HUB KEY STAGES – TIMELINE

2022	<p>Foodbank analysis rates Knox as 'red zone' with 167,00kg grocery deficit, flagging significant gap in food supply and demand</p> <p>Knox City Council Audit of Food Relief Providers</p> <p>OEF first approach Knox Council seeking support for food distribution centre in the local area</p>
2023	<p>JAN: Knox Food Relief Taskforce established</p> <p>JUNE: Knox Council engage CPR Consultants to develop the Taskforce Advocacy Strategy</p> <p>JUNE: Knox Council engagement with internal &amp; external stakeholders re proposed OEF Licence Agreement for Templeton site</p> <p>AUG: OEF Licence Agreement signed to commence Food Hub</p> <p>SEP: Knox Council survey of 235 community members accessing food relief</p> <p>NOV: Official OEF Food Hub opening event; Channel 7 News report</p> <p>DEC: OEF Costco contract signed to deliver daily 300+kgs food supplies to OEF Food Hub</p> <p>DEC: OEF set up communication with all food relief providers in WhatsApp Group resulting in growth of providers accessing Hub</p>
2024	<p>APRIL: Knox Council develop advocacy collateral for Taskforce</p> <p>MAY: Knox Council facilitates Taskforce advocacy training on engaging government stakeholders</p> <p>MAY: Knox Council data collection on Knox food relief service increases and service mapping</p> <p>JULY: Knox Council Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria &amp; Council Officer witness at public hearings</p> <p>AUG: OEF Licence Agreement renewed for further 12 months</p> <p>DEC: Commence Council Review of OEF Food Hub trial</p>
2025	<p>FEB: OEF Food Hub Review Report completed</p> <p>AUG: OEF License Agreement Expires</p>

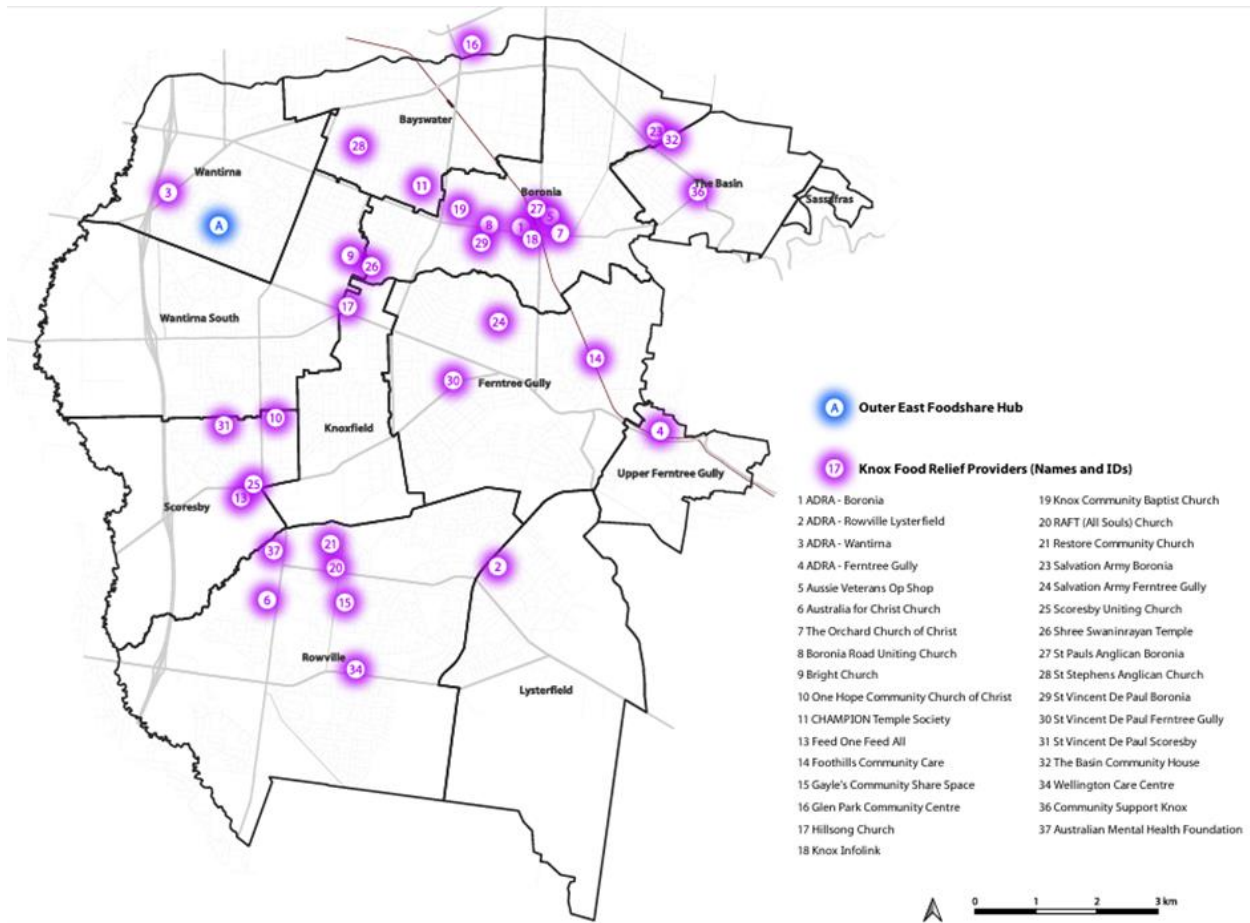
**Appendix 2:** Location map of Templeton Orchards Children and Family Centre, 51 Templeton Rd, Wantirna



**Appendix 3:** Floor Plan – CB210 Children and Family Centre, 51 Templeton Rd, Wantirna



### Appendix 4: OEF and Knox Food Relief Providers Mapping, May 2024



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## DIVERSE WORKS



## 8.3 Knox Sport and Leisure Awards 2025 Recipients

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Decision
<b>Author:</b>	Club Development and Active Communities Project Officer, Cesar Ortiz
<b>Manager:</b>	Manager Active and Creative Communities, Nicole Columbine
<b>Executive:</b>	Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

### SUMMARY

This report outlines the nominations received and provides the recommendations of the Evaluation Panels for the winner(s) of each category in the Knox Sport and Leisure Awards 2025. The Knox Sport and Leisure Awards are designed to recognise the contribution of volunteers in community sporting clubs and leisure groups; recognise good governance structures and inclusive practices amongst community sporting clubs and leisure groups within Knox; and to acknowledge programs initiated by community sporting clubs and leisure groups that have a positive impact on the local municipality.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. Approve the Knox Sport and Leisure Awards Report 2025 and the recommendations as presented.
2. Approve the organisations and individuals set out in Confidential Attachment 1 as the 2025 Knox Sport and Leisure Award winners in the following categories:
  - a. Club of the Year;
  - b. Best Club Initiated Program;
  - c. Club Person of the Year (Adult);
  - d. Club Person of the Year (Junior); and
  - e. Women in Sport Leadership.
3. Note the individuals also set out in Confidential Attachment 1 for their Years of Service.
4. Note that the approved award winners will be announced and made public at the Knox Sport and Leisure Awards event that will occur on 18 June 2025.

### 1. DISCUSSION

The Knox Sport and Leisure Awards have been in place since July 2016, where Council endorsed the Knox Sport and Leisure Awards (KSLA) Guidelines. These guidelines outline the aim of the KSLA which includes:

- Promotion of a culture of volunteer reward and recognition in sporting clubs and leisure groups;
- Encourage and reward attendance at Council's Club Development Program seminars and workshops, which focus on good governance structures for sporting clubs and leisure groups;
- Recognise sporting clubs and leisure groups that actively engage in best practice;
- Recognise the sporting clubs and leisure groups that have implemented skills learnt through Council's Club Development Program; and

- Recognise programs initiated by local sporting clubs and leisure groups that have a positive impact on the community and its residents.

The ranking criteria for these awards was reviewed in October 2022.

### **1.1 Nominations Received**

Nominations opened on 17 January 2025 to all sporting clubs and leisure groups within Knox. The Awards were promoted to the broader community via Council's website, via a series of social media posts, Knox News, Ferntree Gully News, the Leisure Services Newsletter, "A Note from Leisure", printed posters put on sporting pavilions and regular direct email correspondence with clubs and groups.

Nominations were made by completing an application, which prompted nominators to answer questions relating to the criteria of each specific award. Nominations closed on 7 March 2025.

One nomination in the Club of the Year category did not meet the following eligibility criteria: the club must be incorporated and must report annually to Consumer Affairs Victoria. The person who submitted the nomination was contacted and provided with an explanation of the decision which they understood and were receptive to.

One nomination in the Club Person of the Year – Adult category was split into two separate nominations. The nominator originally submitted one nomination for two people, however, for clarity, they requested that it be divided into two nominations while maintaining the same information in each.

One nomination in the Years of Service – 50 Years recognition did not meet the criteria. The nominator confirmed that the nominee has been in the club for 49 years, therefore, they accepted that the recognition will be given in the 40 Years of Service category instead of 50.

In total, 73 nominations were submitted (22 more than last year), which consisted of:

- Club of the Year – six nominations;
- Best Club Initiated Program – four nominations;
- Club Person of the Year (Adult) – 26 nominations;
- Club Person of the Year (Junior) – six nominations;
- Women in Sport Leadership – 16 nominations; and
- Years of Service – 15 nominations.

### **1.2 Evaluation Committee**

Due to the large volume of nominations, the KSLA Evaluation Panels (Panel) consisted of two groups: Group A and Group B.

Group A included Councillor Chris Duncan, a representative of the Recreation and Leisure Committee (RLC), along with three community members (Carol Syer, Caitlin Syer, and Stephen Box) who also represent the RLC. This group was responsible for ranking three KSLA categories: Best Club Initiated Program, Years of Service, and Club Person of the Year (Adult). The Panel discussed the rankings of each nomination based on pre-determined criteria during a meeting held on Wednesday, 19 March 2025.

Group B consisted of Deputy Mayor Glen Atwell, a representative of RLC and three community members (Fenton Coull, Mardi Solomon and Meagan Edwards) who are also representatives of the RLC. This group ranked three KSLA categories: Club of the Year, Women in Sport Leadership, and Club Person of the Year (Junior).

The second Panel Group also discussed the rankings of each nomination based on pre-determined criteria during a meeting held on Thursday, 20 March 2025.

It is important to note that the evaluation process was conducted using the abovementioned method to mitigate evaluation panel fatigue, a risk identified in previous years and referenced in last year's KSLA Council report.

The Evaluation Committee has recommended to grant joint winners in two distinct categories: Club Person of the Year – Junior (six winners), and Women in Sport Leadership (two winners). The prize money will be equally divided among all winners in each category where there are multiple winners. It is important to note that the Club Person of the Year – Junior category is awarded to all nominees as a strategy to promote, recognise, and encourage young individuals to continue contributing to their clubs.

Both Evaluation Panels agreed to recognise those individuals and clubs who did not win but whose contributions, as demonstrated through their nominations, were significant and well detailed. These individuals and clubs will be recognised as “Finalists” with a separate slide during the presentation night and a certificate as “Finalists”. This will apply to the Club of the Year, Women in Sport Leadership, and Club Person of the Year – Adult categories due to the higher number of nominations received compared to other categories.

Based on the Panels' rankings, the recommended candidates in each Award category are provided in Confidential Attachment 1 and the Panels' recommend the candidate winners for consideration by Council.

The ranking criteria is attached at Confidential Attachment 2. The overall nominations received, which includes all rankings, are available upon request.

### **1.3 Award Ceremony**

An Awards Ceremony is planned to be held on 18 June 2025 at the Knox Civic Centre to recognise and acknowledge all nominees from the Knox sporting and leisure community. Formal invitations will be distributed to all nominees and the nominators following endorsement by Council.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT**

The KSLA are supported by Council's Recreation and Leisure Committee. Council officers from Leisure have reviewed the procedure and administration associated with the receipt of awards.

It was also noted during the review and a broader discussion with the RLC that the guidelines are due for a refresh during 2025/2026.



The ranking criteria, as provided in Confidential Attachment 2, was reviewed by officers within Leisure Services and the Recreation and Leisure Committee in 2022 and updated to Councillors in a memo dated 26 October 2022.

### **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The KSLA contribute to the development of the social environment and health and wellbeing within Knox by developing community connection and promoting active lifestyles. The KSLA also recognises the work undertaken by volunteers within local sport and leisure groups, to encourage retention of existing volunteers and attracting new volunteers. The KSLA evening is also seen as a great networking opportunity and one where all sport and leisure groups come together.

### **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

### **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental or amenity issues associated with this report.

### **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The KSLA ceremony will cost approximately \$15,000 to host (catering, Award prizes, trophies, guest speaker, light entertainment, decoration and photographer for the event). This is funded through Council's adopted annual operational budget.

The Award prizes are distributed as follows:

- Club of the Year Award - \$1,000;
- Best Club Initiated Program - \$500;
- Club Person of the Year Award, Adult - \$500;
- Club Person of the Year Award, Junior - \$600/six winners = \$100.00 each winner (joint winners); and
- Women in Sport Leadership Award - \$600/two winners = \$300.00 each winner (joint winners).

### **7. RISKS**

The KSLA nominations fields currently do not have a word limit, which may lead to lengthy submissions. Introducing a word limit in the open-ended questions of the nomination questionnaire could enhance clarity, fairness, and time efficiency, while also preventing the Panel from being overloaded with excessive and irrelevant information.

### **8. KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025**

#### **Connection, Resilience & Wellbeing**

Strategy 4.1 - Support our community to improve their physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.

Strategy 4.2 - Foster inclusivity, equality, belonging and safety within the community.

Strategy 4.4 - Support the community to identify and lead community strengthening initiatives.

**Civic Engagement & Integrity**

Strategy 5.3 - Ensure our processes are transparent and decisions are accountable.

**9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

**10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

This report is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, as it does not raise any human rights issues

**11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidential Attachments 1 and 2 are included in the Confidential Agenda, as it contains confidential information pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, as it relates to personal information, being the names and details of Award winners which would be unreasonable to disclose publicly, or to disclosure before they are awarded.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## 8.4 Citizenship Dress Code Policy

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Decision
<b>Author:</b>	Coordinator Arts and Cultural Services, Emma Bentley
<b>Manager:</b>	Manager Active and Creative Communities, Nicole Columbine
<b>Executive:</b>	Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

### SUMMARY

Knox City Council is the sole host of citizenship ceremonies in the municipality, fulfilling legal requirements under Australian citizenship law. The ceremonies follow the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code 2022 (The Code), overseen by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), which mandates key legal and procedural requirements, including the verbal pledge.

As part of these requirements, Council must maintain a Dress Code Policy for Citizenship Ceremonies. The current Policy has been reviewed and updated for endorsement.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to adopt the proposed Citizenship Ceremonies Dress Code Policy as set out in Attachment 2 of this report.

#### 1. DISCUSSION

Citizenship ceremonies fulfil legal requirements under Australian citizenship law. Knox City Council is currently the sole host of citizenship ceremonies within the municipality. These events present a valuable opportunity to officially welcome new citizens into our community and provide a favourable interaction with Council and the services Council provides.

The fundamental purpose of citizenship ceremonies is to enact the legal requirement of the verbal pledge, a declaration made by conferees that they share Australia's democratic beliefs and respect the rights and liberties of the people of Australia.

The legal requirements and ceremony protocols are outlined within the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code 2022 (the Code), which is overseen by the Australian Department of Home Affairs (DHA).

Council is required under the Code to develop a Dress Code for Citizenship Ceremonies. The Code states:

- The attire of attendees at citizenship ceremonies should reflect the significance of the occasion.
- A Dress Code is to be set by individual councils. Councils must provide a current copy of their Dress Code to the Department of Home Affairs

Council's Dress Code Policy was due for review and has now been updated. Once endorsed, it will be submitted to DHA and updated on Council's website.

Updates to the Policy are included in the tracked changes version at Attachment 1. The Policy has remained consistent with the previous version. Minor updates and changes have been made for the responsible areas within Council, references, the implementation and monitoring and administrative updates section. A clean copy of the Policy is included at Attachment 2.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT**

Consultation has been undertaken with DHA to ensure the Dress Code Policy aligns with their requirements for citizenship ceremonies under the Code.

## **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Dress Code Policy may have social implications regarding inclusivity and cultural sensitivity. It is important to ensure the Policy is non-discriminatory and respectful of diverse attire. Clear communication will help reinforce its intent which is to uphold the significance of the occasion while being inclusive.

## **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

## **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications resulting from the adoption of this policy.

## **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial and resource implications resulting from the adoption of this policy.

## **7. RISKS**

Risk – DHA requires Councils to have a Dress Code Policy for citizenship ceremonies, not having one in place could result in non-compliance.

Treatment – Ensure the Policy meets DHA requirements and is formally adopted and communicated to maintain compliance. Regularly review and update the Policy as required and in consultation with DHA.

## **8. KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025**

### **Connection, Resilience & Wellbeing**

Strategy 4.2 - Foster inclusivity, equality, belonging and safety within the community.

### **Civic Engagement & Integrity**

Strategy 5.3 - Ensure our processes are transparent and decisions are accountable.

## **9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

## **10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - Citizenship Dress Code Policy - (with tracked changes) [**8.4.1** - 2 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Citizenship Dress Code Policy - (clean version) [**8.4.2** - 2 pages]



# Citizenship Dress Code

Policy Number:	2020/03	Directorate:	<del>Corporate Services</del> <u>Connected Communities</u>
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	<del>Manager Governance</del> <u>Manager Active &amp; Creative Communities</u>
Approval Date:	<del>Listed for 30/3/2020</del> <u>28 April 2025</u>	Version Number:	<del>12</del>
Review Date:	<del>30/3/2023</del> <u>28 April 2028</u>		

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the appropriate attire to wear to a Citizenship Ceremony.

## 2. Context

The Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code requires Council to develop a Dress Code for Citizenship Ceremonies.

## 3. Scope

This Policy applies to attendees at a Citizenship Ceremony.

## 4. References

Each of the following headings must be completed. Examples are provided below each heading.

### 4.1 Community & Council Plan ~~2017-2021~~-2025

- ~~• We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity.~~
- Civic Engagement and Integrity

### 4.2 Relevant Legislation

- Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code 2022

### 4.24.3 Charter of Human Rights

- This policy has been assessed against and ~~is compatible~~complies with the charter of Human Rights.

### 4.34.4 Related Council Policies

- Nil

### 4.44.5 Related Council Procedures

- Nil

### 4.5 Other

- ~~• Australian Citizenship Ceremony Code~~

## 5. Definitions

Council	means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.
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## 6. Policy Statement

The attire of attendees at Citizenship Ceremonies should reflect the significance of the occasion both to the attendee themselves, and to other patrons attending the ceremony.

Council strongly encourages Citizenship Ceremony attendees to wear smart casual attire, or national / traditional / cultural dress.

The following are strongly discouraged:

- Beach wear (i.e bathers)
- Bare feet
- Clothes with slogans or images that may cause offence or distress to other ~~participants~~attendees.

## 7. Implementation and Monitoring

Should an attendee at a Citizenship Ceremony, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer (or their representative at the Ceremony), be dressed in a manner which poses a risk to the attendee's health and safety they may be refused entry to the Citizenship Ceremony.

If an attendee at a Citizenship Ceremony, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer (or their representative at the Ceremony) and the Mayor, is dressed in a manner which poses an unreasonable risk of causing significant offence and/or distress to other attendees, they may be asked to modify their dress and on refusal of such a request may be refused entry to the Citizenship Ceremony.

A representative on behalf of the CEO will normally be the VIP Liaison, Team Leader Festivals and Events or Coordinator Arts and Cultural Services.

For all queries or feedback regarding this policy, please contact ~~Mr Phil McQue~~Nicole Columbine, Manager—Governance Active & Creative Communities on 9298 ~~8204 8267~~ or via email at phil.mcque@knox.vic.gov.aunicole.columbine@knox.vic.gov.au

## 8. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy.

Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the Chief Executive Officer. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.



# Citizenship Dress Code

Policy Number:	2020/03	Directorate:	Connected Communities
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Manager Active & Creative Communities
Approval Date:	28 April 2025	Version Number:	2
Review Date:	28 April 2028		

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the appropriate attire to wear to a Citizenship Ceremony.

## 2. Context

The Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code requires Council to develop a Dress Code for Citizenship Ceremonies.

## 3. Scope

This Policy applies to attendees at a Citizenship Ceremony.

## 4. References

Each of the following headings must be completed. Examples are provided below each heading.

### 4.1 Community & Council Plan 2021-2025

- Civic Engagement and Integrity

### 4.2 Relevant Legislation

- Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code 2022

### 4.3 Charter of Human Rights

- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights.

### 4.4 Related Council Policies

- Nil

### 4.5 Related Council Procedures

- Nil

## 5. Definitions

Council	means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.
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## 6. Policy Statement

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For all queries or feedback regarding this policy, please contact Nicole Columbine, Manager Active & Creative Communities on 9298 8267 or via email at [nicole.columbine@knox.vic.gov.au](mailto:nicole.columbine@knox.vic.gov.au)

## 8. Administrative Updates

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## 8.5 Contract 3460 - Establish Allied Health Partnerships Within Early Years Sites

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Decision
<b>Author:</b>	Early Years Strategic Projects Lead, Robyn Renkema
<b>Manager:</b>	Manager Early Years, Sarah Kleine
<b>Executive:</b>	Director, Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

### SUMMARY

Knox Council finalised the construction plans for what is now known as the Children and Family Centres (Early Years Hubs) located in Bayswater and Wantirna South in 2017-2018. This project was co-funded with the Department of Education's Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) formally known as Victorian State Government Children's Facilities Capital Program. The two Early Years Hubs, officially opened in 2019, had a vision not only confined to the provision of early years education and care programs, but to be flexible, and provide holistic support to families and children with multi-purpose spaces inclusive of consulting rooms to meet the needs of the local community into the future.

Existing services from these localities include long day care, kindergarten, supported and community playgroups and maternal child health services. Therapy allied health services would complete a suite of services that provide holistic support for families and children in the locality and surrounds occupying the vacant consulting rooms.

Council officers have undertaken a procurement process to secure a suitable allied health professional organisation to operate therapy allied health disciplines from the vacant consulting rooms located in both Early Years Hubs. The focus of the procurement process was to secure a socially minded organisation that is able to provide multi-disciplinary services to support the health and wellbeing of children and their families.

A Request for Proposal commenced in October 2024, receiving one conforming application from a local allied health organisation. The Request for Proposal process included providing information packs, site visits and a negotiation meeting conducted throughout October 2024 - February 2025.

The Evaluation Panel unanimously recommends Interchange Outer East to Council to enter into an occupancy agreement (per Confidential Attachment 1 - Request for Proposal Evaluation Report).

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. Accept the tender submitted by Interchange Outer East (per Confidential Attachment 1) for the leasing of consulting rooms located in the Early Years Hubs, Bayswater and Wantirna South under Contract 3460: Establish Allied Health Partnerships within Early Years Sites.
2. Enter into a lease with Interchange Outer East (per Confidential Attachment 1) for approximately 16.88m<sup>2</sup> at Wantirna South Children and Family Centre, 81 Argle Way, Wantirna South 3152; and approximately 21m<sup>2</sup> at Bayswater Children and Family Centre, 41 Phyllis St, Bayswater 3153, for a consulting room for an initial term of 3 years, with

terms in accordance with this report and otherwise satisfactory to the Chief Executive Officer; and:

- a. Noting an extension option of the lease for a further 2-years, up to a total term of 5 years, subject to satisfactory review.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer delegates) to negotiate and execute the required lease for the consulting rooms for the terms outlined (per Confidential Attachment 1), for the purpose of providing allied health programs to the appointed tender.
4. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person the Chief Executive Officer delegates) as per Section 125 of the Local Government Act 2020, to communicate the content of the confidential attachments to the extent necessary at their discretion, including for the purpose of informing staff and the community about the content of the report and/or Council's decisions.
5. Note that following the execution of the lease:
  - a. Communications to announce the appointed (tenant) will commence, notifying staff, families and the wider community.
  - b. Officers will commence activities to ensure the allied health provision can commence from Monday 5 May 2025.

## **1. DISCUSSION**

In 2019, the official opening of the two Early Years Hubs vision and concepts were to expand on the single-entry long day care/kindergarten services, historically available to the community, and focus on the complex socio-economic and child developmental needs in the local communities.

The aim of the two Early Years Hubs has always been to maximise the community's ability to access at no cost and/or affordable comparable and sustainable family support services. As a result of the Early Years Hubs, the respective community already gain access to maternal child health, supported and community playgroups, long day care and kindergarten.

This lease agreement will offer additional supporting family services, in turn providing much needed support for local families, inclusive of but not limited to counselling and occupational therapy. This support will continue to build inclusive, cohesive and equitable communities.

Providing convenience for local families is the key benefit, attending consultations with professionals that support children's developmental needs or their family's needs, whilst their child may be attending services in the same location and provide a place for services and professionals to connect with each other as they work with children from birth to school age.

The location of allied health services on site at the two Early Years Hubs will enable Maternal and Child Health Nurses and Early Childhood Educators working on site to build multi-disciplinary professional relationships and refer families directly to supports and services that they need. There is also the opportunity that existing clients of the allied health provider will in turn engage with Knox services provided on-site and connect with other Knox led community activities.

Council officers undertook a tender (Request for Proposal) process in October 2024 for the provision of Allied Health Services within Early Year sites, specifically the two consulting rooms located at Bayswater and Wantirna South Early Years Hubs.

The occupancy of professional consulting office spaces within the two Early Years Hubs by an allied health service provider completes the funding guideline arrangement with the Department of Education and the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) (formally known as the Victorian State Government Children's Facilities Capital Program) and completes the planned vision for the Early Years Hubs as being flexible and holistic support for families and children with multipurpose spaces that will meet the needs of the local community.

### 1.1 Procurement (Tender) Process

The tender (Request for Proposal) was publicly advertised on Saturday 26 October 2024 and upon closing, one compliant tender response was submitted.

This lease is proposed to commence on Monday 5 May 2025. The tender requires an early award decision to allow the preferred tender to plan and fit out the space with the required resources to operate allied health disciplines from the identified consulting rooms.

The tender (Request for Proposal) process was undertaken in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy. This process was identified as appropriate, allowing for a broad variety of potential providers to be identified, followed by an evaluation process.

The Procurement Plan was prepared prior to procurement engagement with the evaluation report finalised at the end of the procurement process.

The procurement activities occurred from October 2024 through to February 2025 and comprised of information packs, site visits, and a negotiation meeting. The Evaluation Panel assessed the application against the pre-established criteria set out in Table 1 and Table 2 below with the completed matrix attached to the evaluation report (as per Confidential Attachment 1 - Request for Proposal Evaluation Report). Each Panel member was required to determine their own individual scores for each evaluation criterion. At a subsequent meeting individual scores were collated and consensus scores agreed on.

The one Request for Proposal applicant was deemed compliant and met the mandatory and comparative criteria.

**Table 1 – Request for Proposal – Mandatory Evaluation Criteria and Weighting**

<b>Mandatory Criteria</b>	<b>Pass/Fail</b>
Up to date registration of business and ABN number	Pass/Fail
Latest Annual Report including audited financial statements	Pass/Fail
Evidence of insurance (public liability minimum \$20 million)	Pass/Fail
Compliance with appropriate Early Years Services legislation and regulations including Child Safe Standards	Pass/Fail
No Conflict of Interest	Pass /Fail

**Table 2 - Request for Proposal – Comparative Evaluation Criteria and Weighting**

<b>Comparative Criteria</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Ability to utilise the space with a range of allied health services	40%
Capability and Capacity (experience, past performance, equipment, resources, skills and qualifications)	30%
Methodology and Work Program	20%

Comparative Criteria	Weighting
Local, social and environmental considerations	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

The evaluation process achieved consensus scores for the applicant as recorded in the consensus assessment matrix contained in the Request for Proposal evaluation report (as per Confidential Attachment 1).

### **1.2 Recommended Allied Health Provider**

With all procurement processes completed, the Evaluation Panel reviewed all information and provided scores on the application against the established criteria. The Evaluation Panel's meeting discussed and determined the consensus scores.

The Request for Proposal evaluation report (as per Confidential Attachment 1) contains further detail of the Evaluation Panel's conclusions and that the recommended applicant Interchange Outer East demonstrated the ability to successfully deliver allied health programs to the Knox community for the term of the lease.

The recommended applicant Interchange Outer East provides strong evidence of their long history of 30 years of service, supporting families with disabilities within the Knox community and is a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider. Success is demonstrated in the diversity of their programs, the ongoing engagement of participants and their families, and the stability of their dedicated staff.

### **1.3 Tender Evaluation Report**

A signed evaluation report for Request for Proposal (as per Confidential Attachment 1) outlines: The processes undertaken; including:

- Information packs and site visits; and
- Negotiation and Evaluation meeting and scores.

Key Governance arrangements include:

- Conflict of interest; and
- Confidentiality arrangements.

The final consensus matrix assessment and summation of the evaluation outcomes for the applicant.

### **1.4 Lease Arrangement**

An appropriate lease has been drafted by Council officers to allow Interchange Outer East to operate out of Council's two Early Years Hubs in accordance with Council's Leasing and Licensing Policy. As a not-for-profit organisation, the lease does not attract commercial rent. Interchange Outer East have provided evidence of their not-for-profit governance obligations and current certificate of currency outlining their responsibility for insurance of \$20M public liability.

This lease agreement includes a Building Maintenance Framework developed by Council officers through consultation including the Facilities department. The framework in the lease outlines

Council (landlord) and the tenants ongoing responsibilities for managing the facilities over the term of the lease. Interchange Outer East have provided evidence of their governance obligations and current certificate of currency outlining their responsibility for insurance of \$20M public liability.

In principle, agreement on the lease has been reached with the recommended applicant Interchange Outer East. These negotiations will be completed and the lease prepared for execution should Council endorse the recommendation.

Table 3 below highlights the proposed terms and conditions of the lease should Council endorse the recommendation, inclusive of an annual rent of \$450 (excl GST) and outgoings with the lease commencing Monday 5 May 2025.

**Table 3 – Proposed Terms and Conditions of the Lease**

	<b>Baywater Children and Family Hub</b>	<b>Wantirna Children and Family Hub</b>
<b>Address</b>	41 Phyllis Street, Bayswater 3153	81 Argle Way, Wantirna South 3152
<b>Square Meter</b>	21m2	16.88m2
<b>Term of Lease</b>	3 years plus 2-year option	3 years plus 2-year option
	<b>Proposed Outgoing Charges (to be reviewed annually)</b>	<b>Proposed Outgoing Charges (to be reviewed annually)</b>
<b>Rent - \$450 (excl GST)</b>	In line with Council fees and charges schedule. 4% increase annually	In line with Council fees and charges schedule. 4% increase annually
<b>Rates</b>	* Exempt under APVCC code 821 (Outdoor Sports Ground own or suburban facilities)	Rates Charge Rates Levy
<b>Utilities – Water / Electricity</b>	Charge and use per m2 Annual consumption per m2	Charge and use per m2 Annual consumption per m2
<b>Security/Cleaning</b>	Annual charge per m2	Annual charge per m2
<b>Annual Total Charges for two consulting rooms approx. \$3,900.00 (reviewed annually)</b>		

## 2. ENGAGEMENT

The request for proposal was advertised in The Saturday Age, to ensure a wide variety of potential allied health providers were identified.

The procurement process engaged applicants including the provision of information packs, conducting on-site visits and a negotiation meeting.

Consultation occurred on the design and function of the Early Years Hubs, including discussion on the buildings' intended purpose and how it would incorporate consultation meeting rooms to meet community expectations, whilst working through the aesthetic practical design and visual appeal of the building.

The lease arrangement complies with the statutory process in accordance with Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020, therefore, it does not require formal community engagement.

### **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Operating within a human rights framework, Interchange Outer East has a commitment to respecting the dignity of all individuals. All children and young people have a right to acquire opportunities to foster relationships, have fun, develop skills, enhance their health and wellbeing and build independence – principles that are embedded in the services that Interchange Outer East provides.

Family wellbeing is central to Interchange Outer East and their primary focus is on building strong, trusting relationships between families (their clients) and allied health team members in active listening and mutual respect.

A NDIS provider, Interchange Outer East offers a range of services, including early intervention programs. They support and guide families through the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) access and eligibility requirements, ensuring families understand their rights and options. The organisation is set up to provide support to families who cannot access NDIS or Medicare services, providing pro-bono services where necessary to help the most vulnerable families access the vital services they need.

Mental health is a significant concern, particularly for individuals aged 12 to 54 in the Knox area. Through tailored services and ongoing support, Interchange Outer East addresses mental health challenges and contributes to a healthier, more resilient community.

Having the services on site with Maternal Child Health, Long Day Care, Kindergarten and Playgroups will support the building of collaborative professional networks that in turn will support positive outcomes for children and families through seamless service delivery, referral and access to services and support.

### **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

### **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendations are considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impact on environmental issues.

### **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Table 3 above outlines the proposed terms and conditions of the lease should Council endorse the recommendation.

The financial implications for the tenant are inclusive of an annual rent of \$450.00 (excl GST) with an annual 4% increase in line with Council fees and charges. Annual outgoings set out in Table 3 (proportion of the total cost of the service) to the approximate value of \$ 3900.00 will be charged to the tenant as per lease arrangements.

Interchange Outer East have provided evidence of their current certificate of currency outlining their responsibility for insurance of \$20M public liability.

Council will continue to pay the Essential Safety Service charges if applicable to these consulting rooms. No additional expenditure from Council is expected following the execution of the lease.

## **7. RISKS**

Finalising negotiations under CEO delegation will minimise the risk of delays.

## **8. KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025**

### **Opportunity & Innovation**

Strategy 1.2 - Encourage and support opportunities for skills development and lifelong learning for all people in Knox.

### **Connection, Resilience & Wellbeing**

Strategy 4.2 - Foster inclusivity, equality, belonging and safety within the community.

Strategy 4.4 - Support the community to identify and lead community strengthening initiatives.

### **Civic Engagement & Integrity**

Strategy 5.3 - Ensure our processes are transparent and decisions are accountable.

## **9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

## **10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

This report is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, as it does not raise any human rights issues.

## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Attachment 1 is included in the Confidential Agenda, as it contains confidential information pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, as it relates to:

- Council business information, that will prejudice Council's position when negotiating this contract if prematurely released.
- Confidential meeting information (being the records of the Evaluation Panel's various meetings that were closed to the public).

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil



9      Supplementary Items  
Nil

## 10 Notices Of Motion

### 10.1 Notice of Motion No. 180 - Fire Services Property Levy

The following notice of motion was lodged by Councillor Williams in accordance with Council's Governance Rules:

I hereby give notice that it is my intention to move the following motion at the Council Meeting on 28th April 2025:

That Council resolve to:

1. Write to The Hon Vickie Ward, Minister for Emergency Services and the Premier, the Hon. Jacinta Allan calling on the State Government:
  - a. to abandon the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF) proposed to replace the Fire Services Property Levy; and
  - b. If the ESVF is implemented, for the State Government to fully fund the costs incurred by the Local Government sector to implement and collect the EVSF on behalf the State Government.
2. That the letter also sets out:
  - a. Across the sector the increase could be as much as 1.85 times the existing levy, this could be far higher for individual properties.
  - b. All ratepayers will incur the tax, with the exception of emergency service volunteers who are active volunteers and life members on their primary place of residence (such as a house or farm).
  - c. In Knox this could mean \$5.8 million in additional property-based tax revenue due to the levy in 2025/26.
  - d. Recognise that while these essential services require funding, it should not come at the expense of increasing the burden on ratepayers.

## 11 Urgent Business

## 12 Questions Through the Chair

## 13 Confidential Items

### 13.1 Council's Library Reserve Account

A confidential report is circulated under separate cover as it contains confidential information pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, as it relates to: Council business information, that will prejudice Council's position when finalising the lease if prematurely released