MINUTES

Meeting of Council

Held at the

Civic Centre

511 Burwood Highway

Wantirna South

On

Monday 23 June 2025

The Agenda for the Meeting of Council, Monday 23 June 2025, forms part of these Minutes and is attached in full at the end of the Minutes.

These Minutes are considered draft until adopted and confirmed at the next Meeting of Council.

The meeting commenced at 7:07pm.

PRESENT:

Cr Lisa Cooper (Mayor)	Scott Ward
Cr Glen Atwell (Deputy Mayor)	Tirhatuan Ward
Cr Chris Duncan	Collier Ward
Cr Robert Williams	Dinsdale Ward
Cr Meagan Baker	Dobson Ward
Cr Parisa Considine	Friberg Ward
Cr Peter Lockwood	Baird Ward
Cr Susan Pearce (attended via Zoom)	Taylor Ward
Cr Paige Kennett	Chandler Ward
Bruce Dobson	Chief Executive Officer
Grant Thorne	Director – Infrastructure
Matt Kelleher	Director - City Livability
Gail Power	Acting Director – Connected Communities
Greg Curcio	Director - Customer and Performance
Navec Lorkin	Chief Financial Officer
Andrew Dowling	Manager, Governance and Risk
Saskia Weerheim	Head of Governance

THE MEETING OPENED WITH A STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND A STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land, and meets on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people. We pay our respects to elders both past and present.

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1 Apologies And Requests For Leaves Of Absence

Nil.

2 Declarations Of Conflict Of Interest

Councillor Baker foreshadowed making a transparency statement for Item 6.1 - Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 May 2025 to 31 May 2025.

3 Confirmation Of Minutes

The Chairperson, Mayor Lisa Cooper invited Councillors to raise any opposition to the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on Monday 26 May 2025. There being none, the Chairperson declared the Minutes be confirmed.

4 Presentations, Petitions And Memorials

4.1 Petition - Traffic Safety Issues on Dobson Street, Ferntree Gully

Councillor Considine noted Council has received a petition with 4 signatures, as at 28 May 2025, calling for action to address traffic safety issues and aggressive driving on Dobson Street, Ferntree Gully. The petition was circulated to all Councillors and was presented for noting.

Councillor Considine outlined that the lead petitioner is seeking action from Council to:

- Conduct a comprehensive traffic and safety audit of Dobson Street and its intersections;
- Install additional traffic-calming infrastructure such as more speed humps, raised pedestrian crossings or a permanent speed camera;
- Enforce heavy vehicle restrictions in residential areas;
- Seek to increase Police presence or mobile traffic monitoring to deter honing and loud vehicles; and
- Conduct an urgent review of traffic flow to prevent Dobson Street from functioning as a cut-through route.

Councillor Considine noted that in submitting the petition, the lead petitioner argues that Dobson Street is being used as a cut-through route for drivers between Burwood Highway and Ferntree Gully Road, which has led to increased traffic on this street and dangerous driving which is threatening the safety of residents and pedestrians.

Councillor Considine noted that the petitioners are still actively collecting signatures and updates to the petition may yet be received.

Councillor Considine advised the petition does not raise any matters which can be considered as items of urgent business on tonight's agenda and she will be liaising with her colleagues to provide a response on behalf of Councillors to the lead petitioner in due course.

4.2 - Petition - Issues Created by Roadworks on Station Street, Ferntree Gully

Councillor Baker noted that Council has received a petition with 13 signatures, as at 20 June 2025, calling for action to address concerns regarding the ongoing roadworks that have resulted in the full closure of Station Street, Ferntree Gully in front of the premises of some businesses on the street.

The petition was circulated to all Councillors and was presented for noting.

Councillor Baker outlined the lead petitioner is seeking action from Council to:

- Install highly visible signage at key intersections and entry points, clearly indicating that Station Street businesses remain open;
- Improve pedestrian access and provide alternative parking options for customers;
- Provide regular updates and transparent timelines regarding the progress and expected completion of the works;
- Consider financial relief and assistance such as rate reductions or grants to help mitigate the commercial loss; and
- Engage with affected business owners directly to discuss concerns and solutions.

Councillor Baker noted that in submitting the petition, the lead petitioner argues that the current roadworks on Station Street in Ferntree Gully has led to a serious decline in revenue for local businesses.

Councillor Baker also noted that the petitioners are still actively collecting signatures, and updates to the petition may yet be received.

Councillor Baker advised that the Petition will be referred to the Director Infrastructure who will provide a response to the lead Petitioner.

4.3 Memorial - John Pernu

Councillor Kennett acknowledged the recent passing of John Pernu - who sadly passed away on 27th May 2025. Mr Pernu was The President of the Basin and Boronia Community News for the past 4 years.

Councillor Kennett noted Mr Pernu will be remembered for his demonstration of great commitment to the community through his leadership and connectedness, and his belief in the importance of keeping the community informed.

Councillor Kennett extended Council's sympathies to his family, friends, colleagues and the entire team at The Basin and Boronia Newspaper.

5 Reports By Councillors

5.1.1 Councillor Baker

Councillor Baker reported attending the following:

- 'Radiant' Event at Stamford Park
- Terry Hopkins Luncheon at Upper Ferntree Gully Football Club
- Your Library Board Meeting
- Knox Sport and Leisure Awards
- The launch of the Knox Dementia Alliance in Bayswater which marks an important step in Council's ongoing work to become a dementia-friendly city. Through a shared commitment with Dementia Australia, Council is focused on building a more inclusive community where people living with dementia can continue to participate in local life. This initiative also aims to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and strengthen partnerships across the community. Cr Baker thanked Council officers for creating a supportive environment to ensure people with dementia feel welcomed and respected.
- Knox Historical Society 60th Anniversary
- Meeting with Knox District Scouts
- Knox Disability Advisory Committee Meeting

5.1.2 Councillor Kennett

Councillor Kennett reported attending the following:

- World Environment Day Planting Event at Dandenong Creek with Councillor Williams and Councillor Duncan, with 120 community members planting over 3000 Indigenous plants.
- Knox Environment Advisory Committee Meeting where the Domestic Animal Management Plan and Climate Response Plan was discussed prior to community engagement.
- Opened the Art Beyond Waste Exhibition in The Basin and encouraged people to vote in the People's Choice Award at the event which is open until the 16th July 2025.
- Attended the Knox Police Forum at the State Basketball Centre with Councillor Atwell along with Police and the community where issues of crime, family violence, drugs and road accidents were discussed. Police shared the initiatives they are working on to address these issues, and there was discussion about how Council can support them
- Met with Boronia Police with Councillor Williams and Councillor Lockwood and discussed ways Council and Police can work together in Boronia, The Basin and Ferntree Gully.

- Knox Sport and Leisure Awards, highlighting the announcement of the Women in Leadership Awards, won by Dale Mitts (Golden Cobra Martial Arts Club) and Kyllie Moore (Ferntree Gully Tennis Club) who were recognised for their inclusive support of women In leisure.

5.1.3 Councillor Atwell

Councillor Atwell reported attending the following:

- Knox Historical Society 60th Anniversary Celebration at Miller's Homestead— an organisation dedicated to preserving, educating, conserving, and promoting the history of Knox. Highlighted a publication put together by Karin Orpen and Ray Peace to honour the occasion, made possible by a Council Minor Grant.
- Knox Sport and Leisure Awards – noting it was the best Council event he has attended. Mateship and leadership were celebrated and long-term service was recognised through the Unsung Heroes Awards for club members who have gone above and beyond in serving their clubs, such as Kay and Mick Kimmitt with 50 Years of Service at the Boronia Football Club.
- Police Safety Forum - encouraged people to use Crime Stoppers to report antisocial behaviour or speeding issues and allow the Police to collate intelligence while also suggesting the formation of a new Community Safety Committee of Council to address crime and youth engagement.
- Knox Community Safety Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee Meeting
- A meeting with Rowville Men's Shed where their work in mental health awareness was discussed. Encouraged people to contact to Men's Shed if they need anything fixed.

Councillor Atwell also:

- Congratulated the Knox Dog Obedience Club who won the Club of The Year Award at the Knox Sport and Leisure Award; the only not-for-profit dog obedience club in Knox with over 750 active members.
- Praised Council staff for their work in holding the Knox Sport and Leisure Awards.

5.1.4 Councillor Considine

Councillor Considine reported attending the following meetings:

- Ferntree Gully Cemetery Site Tour with Councillor Cooper and Councillor Williams
- Council Health and Wellbeing Plan Workshop as part of the Knox Recreation and Leisure Committee with Councillor Duncan and Councillor Lockwood
- Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee Meeting with Councillor Lockwood
- Meeting with the President of Knox Churches Soccer and Cricket Clubs

5.1.5 Councillor Duncan

Councillor Duncan reported attending the following:

- Knox Youth Advisory Committee Meeting where the Domestic Animal Management Plan was discussed, including matters not considered in the Draft Plan
- Recreation and Leisure Committee Meeting with Councillor Considine and Councillor Lockwood where the Health and Wellbeing Plan was reviewed – noting there was a free flow of ideas
- Met with the Fairpark Junior Football Club with Councillor Williams who noted they are struggling for participant numbers and discussed ideas to rectify this issue.
- Wantirna South Junior Football Club Cocktail Event, noting they are a great club.

5.1.6 Councillor Williams

Councillor Williams reported attending the following:

- 'Radiant' Event at Stamford Park – enjoying the exhibitions and lights
- Knox Sports and Leisure Awards which were well-received
- Youth Advisory Committee Meeting with an upcoming Summit to look forward to.
- Talking Café at Bayswater Medical Centre
- World Environment Day Tree Planting Event along Dandenong Creek with Councillor Duncan and Councillor Kennett.
- Knox City Tennis Club Management Meeting, who recently received a Council grant for lights and facilities
- Met with Boronia Police with Councillor Lockwood and Councillor Kennett to discuss opportunities to address local crime issues.
- Played Football with the Bayswater CFA against the Bayswater Auskick.
- Orana Neighbourhood House Meeting with Manager, Emily Harnett
- Met with residents to discuss issues relating to trees and footpaths which have been passed on to Council officers.
- Met with Scouts Representatives.
- Met with Fairpark Junior Football Club with Councillor Duncan and noted they are struggling for numbers but achieved some good outcomes.

5.1.7 Councillor Lockwood

Councillor Lockwood reported attending the following:

- Environment Advisory Committee Meeting
- Tour of SLAMS Music Theatre Company Warehouse Performing Arts Group. Noted they are currently experiencing financial problems
- Advisory Committees Workshop facilitated by Jenny Scicluna
- Meeting with Boronia Police
- Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee Meeting, discussing the Domestic Animal Management Plan
- Ngarrgoo Library Multicultural Week event which included a Refugee guest speaker from Afghanistan who was outstanding in telling his remarkable story.
- Rowville Men's Shed, highlighting that the organisation supports suicide-prevention initiatives such as the 'Black Dog' campaigns along with prostate cancer awareness campaigns, noting the group also has female members.

5.1.8 Councillor Pearce

Councillor Pearce reported attending the following:

- Knox Disability Advisory Committee Meeting which had a free flow of ideas and viewpoints, including representatives from Knoxbrooke.
- Meeting with Scouts Representatives along with Councillor Duncan, Councillor Williams and Councillor Cooper concerns were discussed regarding the leases up for renewal.
- Meeting with Rowville Men's Shed, outlining that they actively look for work to help community groups and they only charge a minimal fee for labour and material costs while also raising mental health awareness.
- Knox Audit and Risk Committee Meeting

Councillor Pearce also:

- Received a reply from the State Government regarding Wellington Road, with the speed limit on the road in Rowville and Lysterfield dropping to 70km/h. Noted there will be further advocacy for lights and speed cameras installed along with further speed restrictions.
- Received enquiries from residents regarding roads, trees and footpaths which will be responded to.

5.1.9 Councillor Cooper

Councillor Cooper reported attending the following:

- Ferntree Gully Cemetery Site Tour – with Council currently discussing the Cemetery Masterplan.
- Radio Eastern 98.1FM Interview where the following issues were discussed including: trees; Knox Community Awards and the 24,000 volunteers we have in Knox; the Council Plan; the Council Budget; and a free film screening in support of the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Event that was held in Bayswater with speakers, Peter Ware (Managing Lawyer at Eastern Community Legal Centre) and Ray Baird who talked about elder abuse.
- 'Radiant' Winter Festival Event at Stamford Park.
- Rowville Men's Shed meeting
- Knox Audit and Risk Committee Meeting.
- Knox Historical Society 60th Anniversary, noting it was great to hear the contributions of community members.
- Knox Sports and Leisure Awards, highlighting it was a well-planned and well-received event from Council officers.

Councillor Cooper also:

- Thanked the community for being patient with the rollover of the bin lid changes, with 43,000 completed. Encouraged people to leave their bins out until 6pm if their lids have not yet been changed.
- Noted community feedback has been received regarding parking management issues.
- Discussed some of the challenges that Scouts are facing and acknowledged their community contributions.

6 Planning Matters

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

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 01 May 2025 to 31 May 2025 as set out in the officers' report.

Councillor Baker noted that one of the addresses mentioned in the Report is located near a relative, but did not believe this to be a conflict of interest as these decisions were made under delegation.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: **Councillor Baker**
SECONDED: **Councillor Atwell**

That Council note the planning applications decided under delegation 01 May 2025 to 31 May 2025 as set out in the officers' report.

CARRIED

6.2 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully

SUMMARY
This report considers Planning Application P/2024/6269 for the use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre, reduce the number of car parking spaces required under Clause 52.06-5 and removal of vegetation at 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for the use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre and removal of vegetation at 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully, 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 A dividing line included along the driveway inside the property boundary and the parking aisle.

    1.2 The Coldstream toppings area to be sealed and suitable for use in all weather conditions.

    1.3 Delete reference to signage on the plans.

    1.4 Update correct number of car parking spaces on the plans.

    1.5 Update children numbers in each room to no more than 90 children for all rooms.

    1.6 A detailed plan showing compliance with the maximum building and impervious surfaces requirements of the Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1 of the Knox Planning Scheme.

    1.7 A notation on the plans stating no artificial grass to be used within the ground level outdoor play areas.

    1.8 The location of Tree Protection Fencing and Tree Protection Zones, which is to be consistent with the Landscape Plan detail, in accordance with Conditions 17-23.

    1.9 All levels to be to AHD (Australian Height Datum).

    1.10 Waste Management Plan in accordance with Condition 16.

    1.11 An amended Acoustic Report to consider mechanical plant (such as air conditioning units, exhaust fans, flues etc.) with any recommendations to be shown on the plans for screening and acoustic purposes.

1.12 The existing crossover to be fully reconstructed to current Council standard and match internal driveway width.

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 Car Parking Management Plan in accordance with Condition 25.

2.4 Construction Management Plan in accordance with Condition 30.

2.5 Noise Management Plan in accordance with Condition 35.

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 pursuant to the approved Sustainable Design Assessment.

3.6 Location of fencing in accordance with the Development Plans.

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 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.

4.7 Landscaping and planting within all open areas of the site (including additional planting within open space areas of the existing dwelling/s).

4.8 The landscape plans must show the provision of at least 19 additional indigenous or native canopy trees and 16 additional large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5m chosen from Plant List 1, 2 or 3 of Council's Landscape Plan Guidelines for Planning Permits. These canopy trees must be a minimum 1.5 metres tall when planted and are to be in the following areas:

4.8.1 Front setback – 2 large indigenous canopy trees, 2 small indigenous trees or native canopy trees and 3 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5m.

4.8.2 Southern boundary – 5 small canopy trees and 6 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5m.

4.8.3 Western boundary – 2 medium canopy trees, 3 small canopy trees and 5 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5 metres.

4.8.4 Northern boundary (adjacent car parks) – 4 small canopy trees.

4.8.5 Northern boundary (rear) – 1 small canopy tree and 2 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5 metres. (Select narrow, upright cultivar).

4.9 Planting of this site to comprise 60% of the vegetation species to be indigenous (across all plant forms) from plant list 1 of the 'Landscape Plan Guidelines' and 30% additional native species (across all plant forms) from plant list 2 of the 'Landscape Plan Guidelines'. Remaining plant species (10%) can be indigenous, native or exotic (across all plant forms) provided they are not listed as weeds.

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.

General

7. All use and development must be in accordance with the endorsed plans.

8. The layout of the site and the size, levels, design and location of buildings and works shown on the endorsed plans must not be modified for any reason without the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority.

9. Once the development has started it must be continued and completed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

10. Prior to the use commencing, the development must be completed in accordance with the endorsed plan/s to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

11. All pipes (excluding downpipes), fixtures, fittings and vents servicing any building on the site must be concealed in service ducts or otherwise hidden from view to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

12. All basic services, including water, electricity, gas, sewerage, telephone, NBN and cable TV but excluding any substation, meters or hydrants, to the site must be installed underground and located to the satisfaction of the relevant servicing authority and the Responsible Authority.

13. No plant, equipment, services or architectural features other than those shown on the endorsed plans are permitted above the roof level of the building/s without the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority (unless the Knox Planning Scheme specifies that a permit is not required).

14. All walls on the boundaries of adjoining properties must be cleaned and finished to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, in accordance with the endorsed plans.

Sustainable Design Assessment

15. Prior to the occupation of the development, the development must be constructed in accordance with the Sustainable Design Assessment.

Waste Management Plan

16. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a Waste Collection and Management Plan must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority, demonstrating how waste collection will be undertaken on site, including the operation of the garbage and recyclables storage area. Garbage and recyclables storage and collection must be undertaken in accordance with the approved plan/documentation, and must be undertaken to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Tree Protection

17. All works, including excavation, within the critical root zone areas of the tree/s to be retained and other critical root zones on the land must be undertaken under the supervision of a qualified Arborist to ensure that there is no unreasonable damage to the root system of

trees to be retained and/or protected, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. Before the development starts, the owner must submit to the Responsible Authority details of the name of the Arborist who will supervise the works and the tasks to be undertaken by the Arborist, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

18. Prior to any works commencing on the site (including demolition and tree removal), all trees and vegetation to be retained including other critical root zones must be fenced off to create a protection zone. The protection zone must extend around the trees canopy drip-line unless an alternative tree protection zone has been approved by the responsible authority.

19. The tree protection fence is to be chain link or wire mesh, comprise either wooden or steel posts set into the ground or on concrete pads, and be a minimum height of 1.8 metres. Signage is to be affixed to the fence advising that the area is a tree protection zone and a no-go development area.

20. The tree protection fence and signage is to be maintained throughout the construction period and removed at the completion of all works.

21. No temporary removal of the tree protection fence, or encroachment into the protection zone is permitted without the written consent of the responsible authority.

22. Prior to erecting the tree protection fence around the tree protection zone, all unwanted vegetation and weed species must be removed from within the zone, and the ground within the protection zone must be covered with a layer of well composted organic mulch (maximum 100mm depth). The area is to be watered at least fortnightly throughout the construction period.

23. The following activities are prohibited from the tree protection area, without the written consent of the responsible authority:

    23.1 Construction activities.

    23.2 Dumping and/or storage of materials, goods and/or soil.

    23.3 Trenching or excavation.

    23.4 Lopping branches, nailing or affixing signs, service lines, lights etc. to the trees.

24. Prior to any works commencing on site, the Responsible Authority must be contacted to inspect the Tree Protection fencing.

Car Parking Management Plan

25. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a Car Park Management Plan prepared by a suitably qualified professional must be submitted to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. When approved, the Car Park Management Plan will be endorsed and will form part of the permit. The Car Park Management Plan must include:

    25.1 The allocation of car parking between staff, pick-up/drop-off and visitor parking.

    25.2 Measures to ensure all staff and parents will use the car park and will not use on-street parking in the surrounding area.

    25.3 Measures to manage pick-up and drop-off times to minimise impacts on the adjacent service road area.

25.4 The provision of directional and instructional signage.

25.5 Measures to minimise any queueing of cars accessing the car parking area.

25.6 The provision of lighting.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

26. At all times car parking must be managed in accordance with the endorsed Car Park Management Plan to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. No alterations to the Car Park Management Plan may occur without prior written consent of the Responsible Authority.

Car Parking & Accessways

27. Before the development is occupied, driveways and car parking areas must be:

27.1 Fully constructed in accordance with plans submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority.

27.2 Properly formed to such levels that they can be used in accordance with the plans.

27.3 Constructed to the absolute minimum standard of 125 mm depth of reinforced concrete or other approved hardstanding sealed surface as shown on the approved Drainage Plan.

27.4 Line-marked to indicate each car space, all access lanes and traffic direction.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

28. Parking areas and driveways must be kept available and maintained for these purposes at all times to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

29. Before the development is occupied vehicular crossing(s) must be constructed to align with approved driveways to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. All redundant crossing(s), crossing opening(s) 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

30. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a Construction and Traffic 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:

30.1 A detailed schedule of works including a full project timing;

30.2 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.

30.3 The location for the parking of all construction vehicles and construction worker vehicles during construction;

30.4 A fully detailed plan indicating where construction hoardings would be located;

30.5 A waste management plan including the containment of waste on site, disposal of waste, stormwater treatment and on-site facilities for vehicle washing;

30.6 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;

30.7 Site security;

30.8 Public safety measures;

30.9 Construction times, noise and vibration controls;

30.10 Restoration of any Council assets removed and/or damaged during construction;

30.11 Protection works necessary to road and other infrastructure (limited to an area reasonably proximate to the site);

30.12 Remediation of any damage to road and other infrastructure (limited to an areas reasonably proximate to the site);

30.13 An emergency contact that is available for 24 hours a day.

30.14 All contractors associated with the construction of the development must be made aware of the requirements of the Construction Management Plan.

31. During the construction, the following must occur to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority:

31.1 Any stormwater discharges into the stormwater drainage system is to comply with EPA guidelines;

31.2 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;

31.3 Vehicle borne material must not accumulate on the roads abutting the site;

31.4 The cleaning of machinery and equipment must take place on site and not on adjacent footpaths, roads or parks;

31.5 All litter (including items such as cement bags, food packaging and plastic strapping) must be disposed of responsibly; and

31.6 All site operations must comply with the EPA Publication 1254 (including all revisions or replacement guidelines).

Fencing

32. All costs associated with the provision of the fencing are to be borne by the owner/developer under this permit.

Noise

33. At all times noise emanating from the land must comply with the requirements of the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (as amended from time to time) as measured in accordance with the Noise Protocol to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

34. No external sound amplification equipment or loudspeakers are to be used for the purpose of announcement, broadcast, playing of music or similar purpose.

35. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a Noise Management Plan must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The Noise Management Plan must address, but is not limited to, the following:

    35.1 Management measures to minimise noise impacts to neighbours at drop-off and collection times.

    35.2 Procedures for management of noise from outdoor play and activities.

    35.3 Procedure for handling noise complaints.

    35.4 Waste collection noise.

    35.5 Commercial delivery noise.

    35.6 Body Corporate gardening, cleaning and maintenance times.

    35.7 Noise from fixed domestic plant.

    35.8 Audible intruder alarms.

    To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority

36. The use and development must comply with the endorsed Noise Management Plan at all times to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

37. At the request of the Responsible Authority, the operator will within thirty (30) days supply an assessment of the noise levels emitted from the site by a qualified acoustic consultant / engineer with readings taken at times specified by the Responsible Authority. The Assessment will document environmental noise impacts detected at residential properties . All costs associated with this assessment are to be borne by the permit holder.

Amenity

38. All external lights must be designed, baffled and located so as to prevent nuisance or light spill to adjoining land to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

39. All fixed plant and equipment (including air-conditioning units) must be located and screened to visually integrate into the development to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Acoustic Report

40. Prior to the commencement of the use, a report must be prepared and submitted to certify that barriers have been constructed in accordance with the requirements in Section 5 (Recommendations and Conclusion) of the Acoustic Report prepared by Enfield Acoustics Pty Ltd dated 13 August 2024 Document Reference V1968-01-P Acoustic Report (r0). The use must not commence until the acoustic barriers have been installed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Amenity During Construction

41. 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:

    41.1 the appearance of building, works or materials on the land

    41.2 parking of motor vehicles

    41.3 transporting of materials or goods to or from the site

    41.4 hours of operation

    41.5 stockpiling of top soil or fill materials

    41.6 air borne dust emanating from the site

    41.7 noise

    41.8 rubbish and litter

    41.9 sediment runoff

    41.10 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

42. 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.

External Materials

43. The external materials of the development hereby permitted (including the roof) must be non-reflective and finished in subdued tones and/or colours to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Number of Children

44. Unless with the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority, the number of childcare places associated with the permitted use must not exceed 90 children at any one time.

Childcare Centre

45. Unless with the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority, the use permitted by this permit must operate only between the hours of:

    45.1 7:00am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday.

46. All fencing associated with the childcare centre is to meet the requirements for Children's Services Centre Outdoor Play Spaces and comply with AS1926.1.

Permit Expiry

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

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

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

47.3 The use does not start within 2 years of completion of the development.

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 for the property including all dwellings is 8.0L/s to the existing Council drainage system for a 10 year ARI event.
- Applicant is to direct all stormwater to the north-east of the property as this represents the Legal Point of Discharge (LPD) for the property. Applicant is to verify this on site. Connect all stormwater discharge from the site to the LPD via an Onsite Detention (OSD) system. The internal drains for the dwellings are to be independent of each other.
- 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.
- Council records indicate that the development is in an area where Council has flood mapped. Contact Council's Stormwater Team for advice on flooding.

Landscape Notes:

- The plan must incorporate Raingardens and/or Bioswales to treat the water runoff from the hard surfaces (car parks and driveways). The surface area of the proposed raingarden should be 3-5% of the surface area of the catchment feeding it. The levels should be

shown on the plan and the concrete pavement should be shaped to drain into the raingarden (at the lowest point) through gaps in the kerbing. Details of the raingarden should be shown on drainage and landscape plan in accordance with Knox City Council's standard. The roof water is to be captured by rainwater tanks and reused for toilet flushing and garden.

- At least 50% of the vegetation species located in the raingarden should comprise of some or all of the following; Carex sp, Juncus sp, Melaleuca and Goodenia. This ensures adequate removal of Nitrogen and Phosphorus. Low and tufting plants proposed for the raingarden should be planted at a minimum density of 6 plants/m2.

Other Notes:

- The DDO1 requires that the site area covered by buildings must not exceed 40%, and the site area covered by buildings and impervious surfaces must not exceed 60%. Planning permission cannot be granted to construct or carry out further buildings or works which are not in accordance with the requirements of the DDO1.
- A building permit must be obtained before development is commenced.
- To arrange an inspection of the Tree Protection fencing please contact Council Landscape Team on 9298 8125.
- 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.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker
SECONDED: Councillor Duncan

That Council issue a Notice of Refusal to Grant a Planning Permit for application P/2024/6269 for the use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre, reduce the number of car parking spaces required under Clause 52.06-5 and removal of vegetation at 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully on the following grounds:

1. **The proposal fails to satisfy the Planning Policy Framework and the Municipal Planning Strategy, in particular Clause 2.03-2 (Environmental and Landscape Values), Clause 2.03-4 (Built Environment and Heritage), Clause 11.01 (Settlement), Clause 12.05 (Significant Environments and Landscapes including Dandenong Foothills at Clause 12.05-2L) and Clause 13.07-1L (Non-residential and development in residential areas).**

2. **The proposed use and development is inconsistent with the purpose of the Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 1, as the proposed development is not responsive to the identified neighbourhood character, environmental or landscape characteristics of the area.**

3. **The proposed development will result in unreasonable amenity impacts to the adjoining residential properties and surrounds, through noise, car parking and built form impacts.**

4. **The reduction in car parking is not supported. An inadequate number of car parking spaces has been provided having regard to the demand likely to be generated, the activities on the land and the nature of the locality.**

5. **The proposal will not result in a built form outcome consistent with the Significant Landscape Overlay – Schedule 2.**

6. **Site coverage does not comply with the mandatory maximum site coverage requirements in the Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1.**

CARRIED

7 Public Question Time

Question Time commenced at 7:55pm.

The following questions were raised with Council:

Councillor Lockwood left the meeting at 7:56pm during Public Question Time.

Councillor Pearce left the meeting at 7:57pm during Public Question Time.

Councillor Lockwood returned to the meeting at 7:58pm during Public Question Time.

Councillor Pearce returned to the meeting at 8.01pm during Public Question Time.

7.1 Question One – Darren Wallace

Can the Knox Community have absolute confidence that all Councillors have been made fully aware of the exponential financial consequences to Council, with respect to local laws listed weeds spread throughout the municipality, in light of the failure to proactively address the issue of a part time Weed Officer, in tonight's budget, as previously recommended by Council for consideration last year?

The Director Infrastructure, Grant Thorne responded:

- In developing the 2025/26 Budget, Councillors carefully considered a range of service priorities, including the potential funding of an Environmental Weed Officer at 0.6 FTE. While this proposal was discussed, ultimately a decision was made to not include the position in the draft 2025/26 budget which Council will consider later in the agenda tonight.
- The management of environmental weeds will continue to be reviewed as part of ongoing service planning.

Councillor Cooper noted Councillors understood the importance of addressing weed issues and will look for ways to address them.

7.2 Question Two - Ruby Neil

My friends and I are very sad the council is stopping overnight activities in our scout halls, can we please start doing these activities again?

Councillor Lisa Cooper responded:

- Council is not actually stopping overnight activities in Scout halls. The existing lease with Scouts Victoria that has been in place since 2021 does not allow for overnight activities because the building classification does not allow for that purpose.
- Scouts are able to apply for temporary access permits to enable overnight activities; or undertake building classification change or upgrade for overnight activities to occur at any time.

- For overnight activity to occur in any buildings, including Scout halls, the building must have the appropriate building classifications to ensure safety for all building occupants. It is really important you and everyone else are safe.
- Council are not making any decision on Scouts Leases and tenancy agreements this evening and discussions are continuing.

7.3 Question Three - Greg Lipschitz

How does Council feel that a proposed $450 fee per Scout Hall is fair and just, when Council does not own the building? We only lease the land which our halls sit and scouting receives no maintenance benefit for the proposed fee.

Councillor Lisa Cooper responded:

- The Budget being considered tonight does not propose a specific fee for scout facilities. It includes a proposed fee generally for community organisation tenants occupying Council land or premises.
- The leasing arrangements between Scouts Victoria and Knox City Council remain in negotiation and will be presented for Council consideration at a later time, which will include confirmation of all conditions and associated fees.
- The current fee regime remains in place until a new agreement is agreed by both parties.

7.4 Question Four - Greg Lipschitz

Why is Council using rate payer funds to duplicate Essential Safety Measures (ESM), when halls are not owned by Council and Scouting undertakes all maintenance, including ESM measures?

Councillor Lisa Cooper responded:

- Regardless of the building ownership, Council has some role in regards to appropriate building safety measures being in place. The current lease between Council and Scouts sets out the maintenance responsibilities for both parties. These matters are also being considered in preparation for a future lease to be considered by Council in the upcoming months. Similarly, the building maintenance responsibilities will be clearly stipulated in the new agreement at a future time.

7.5 Question Five - Robert Mason

Council has recently prepared draft Council Plans and an Asset Management Plan, in both documents, Council offers little commitment to the community, relating to its Service Leave Standards and the responsiveness in actioning requests for service and communications to Council.

In accordance with Part 5 and clause 106 of the Local Government Act 2020, Council services should be provided equitably and responsively to the diverse needs of the community.

What are the Service Performance and the timeline to respond to customer requests for maintenance and repair works and what are Council response timelines for responding to written requests and complaints?

The Director Infrastructure, Grant Thorne responded:

- In relation to the first question, Council is committed to delivering services in line with the service performance principles set out in Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2020, which include equitable access, responsiveness to community needs, value for money, continuous improvement, and fair complaints processes.
- In terms of specific service standards, different to service performance principles, Knox Council maintains several documents that outline our expected response times and service commitments. For road maintenance and repair works, the current timelines are detailed in our Road Management Plan, which sets out inspection schedules and response times based on the type and severity of the issue.
- We are currently reviewing the Road Management Plan, with a report scheduled to be presented to Council in July for a process of wider community engagement. This review will provide an opportunity to consider updates to service levels, informed by community input and operational performance.
- In relation to the second question, Council is committed to providing timely and accessible responses to community enquiries and complaints. Our current response timelines are as follows:
    - phone calls are answered within 2.5 minutes
    - visitors to the Civic Centre are attended to within 5 minutes of arrival.
    - For email, online forms, and social media messages, we acknowledge receipt within 1 business day.
    - For written correspondence, such as emails or letters, our target is to provide a response to general enquiries within 10 business days.
    - Where possible, we aim to resolve complaints at the time of contact. If further investigation is needed, we escalate the matter to the relevant Council officer and provide a response within 20 business days.
    - Requests for internal reviews of complaints are also responded to within 20 business days.
- Council's website provides more detailed information on how to contact Council and our Complaints Policy, along with Road Management Plan response times.

7.6 Question Six - Seamus Smith

Is Council going to consult with the traders and local community regarding the potential permanent loss of parking spaces in Forest Road to accommodate the continued use of the spaces for a parklet, including its design, before coming to a final position?

The Director City Liveability, Matt Kelleher responded:

- Council's resolution on 10 June 2025 for the Outdoor Dining Parklets allowed for the retention of the parklet in Forest Road on a temporary basis until 31 October 2025 to allow officers to prepare further advice for Council.
- This advice will be in the form of a report to be considered at a future Council meeting, including advice to Council on the process to facilitate ongoing or permanent provision of an outdoor dining parklet benefiting the proprietors at 34-36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully.
- This also required the proprietors to confirm their intention to continue to operate the parklet by the 10 July 2025 so it is not yet clear if they will wish to follow such a process.
- This is noted on Part 2 A to E and 3 of that resolution.
- You may be aware that the officer report provided to Council acknowledges concerns around the potential ongoing loss of parking of the parklets were established permanently, while noting that the car parks currently occupied in Ferntree Gully are both a combination of public and private land.
- The process that will be presented to Council will consider the statutory approvals required to operate a parklet on Council land or private land. A number of the approvals required may include consultation in their own right, which may include a potential lease.

7.7 Question Seven - Seamus Smith

Should this parklet permanently remain, will this negate the identified objective for Council to provide gateway signage at this entrance to the Village as per the Ferntree Gully Village Structure plan?

The Director City Liveability, Matt Kelleher responded:

- In response to your question about whether the retention of the parklet would negate the objective in the Ferntree Village Gateway Structure Plan to provide signage at this entrance to the village, it is not quite clear how that may be the case.
- The location of the current parklet is further north of the Forest Road entrance point and it is not clear how it remaining may compete with an objective for gateway treatments. The Structure Plan references strengthening gateway landscaping to the south of this site and upgrading the streetscape along Forest Road adjacent to this location. Officers would be happy to consider further details you may wish to share about this concern.

7.8 Question Eight - Mal Washfold

In relation to the Levande Knox Village redevelopment proposal, where do they propose that the construction driveway on Council Land will be made?

The Director City Liveability, Matt Kelleher responded:

- Council does not have a proposal or application for development at this location.

- As mentioned in April 2025, if Council does receive an application, its considerations of the application and its merits will be limited to how it complies with the Knox Planning Scheme. It would be improper for Council to use its planning role to refuse an application for reasons outside the scope of its decision making powers.
- Again, in relation to your concerns about the operations or future of the retirement village, we recommend you address these concerns to the retirement village operator, or the appropriate consumer affairs body, or seek independent legal advice. These do not appear to be matters within Council's jurisdiction.

7.9 Question Nine - Paulina Miszczyszyn

The acoustic report and officer assessment claim that noise from the proposed childcare centre (application P/2024/6269) will be managed within acceptable limits and will not adversely affect neighbouring properties.

However, over the past few weeks, I have taken regular noise measurements directly behind the fence of a nearby childcare centre (Nido). These consistently exceed 70 dB — significantly above the permitted 50 dB limit. This level of noise would directly affect our outdoor area, where residents are entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of their property.

Given this precedent, how does Council intend to respond to breaches of noise limits once the proposed centre is operational?

What processes will be in place to handle noise complaints from neighbours? What specific enforcement actions will Council take if those limits are breached? And critically, what further measures will be implemented if noise levels continue to exceed acceptable thresholds despite council intervention?

The Director City Liveability, Matt Kelleher responded:

- Council has now considered this application and resolved to refuse the application on a number of grounds.
- This matter may still be the subject of a VCAT Appeal, should the applicant lodge an appeal against the refusal of the application.
- In response to the first question, it was noted that Council would respectfully treat your noise measurements of a nearby childcare centre with caution, as experience has shown that obtaining and interpreting accurate noise measurements is a task best undertaken by appropriately qualified and experienced experts.
- Regardless of the measurement of noise, it is recognised that noise emissions can have an impact on the residential amenity of properties. The officer report on the application recommended a number of conditions in relation to noise, in particular:
    - Requirement to Comply with the EPA Noise Protocol (Condition 33)
    - No external amplification of announcements, broadcasts or music (Condition 34)
    - The submission and approval of a Noise Management Plan (Condition 35)

- Requirement to comply with Noise Management Plan at all times (Condition 36)
- Requirement for the operator to provide a noise level assessment (by a qualified acoustic consultant/engineer within 30 days of a request by Council (Condition 37)
- Provision of an Acoustic Report certifying that the noise barriers have been constructed in accordance with requirements of the Acoustic Report submitted with the proposal (Condition 40); and
- Limited hours of operation for the centre (Condition 45).

- Any noise complaints received are investigated by a Planning Investigation Officer – in the same way that all planning complaints are investigated – and if necessary planning enforcement action (such as Planning Infingement Notices, VCAT Enforcement Order Application, or Prosecution at the Magistrates Court) will be taken to achieve compliance with permit conditions.

7.10 Question Ten - Paulina Miszczyszyn

Council has requested that a Car Park Management Plan, Construction Management Plan, and Noise Management Plan be prepared before the building permit is issued.

- **How and when will these plans be made available for public review?**
- **What opportunity will the public have to submit objections or feedback on these plans?**
- **Finally, what mechanisms will council have in place to ensure these plans are properly implemented and enforced during construction and ongoing operation?**

The Director City Liveability, Matt Kelleher responded:

- Your second question asks a number of questions regarding the approval process for plans required as part of an issued planning permit – noting that the application has been refused.
- In response to your questions, the following is noted, based on the premise that a permit was issued:
  - Plans such as Car Park Management Plan, Construction Management Plan and Noise Management Plan are assessed and determined by officers;
  - There is no provision for public notification of plans or documents required as part of a planning permit;
  - If approved and endorsed under a planning permit, the plans would be considered as a public document and can be made available upon request;
- Council has a small Planning Investigation and Enforcement Team which is responsible for investigating and actioning planning enforcement matters and complaints.

7.11 Question Eleven - Jakub Skomial

The report in relation to Planning Application P/2024/6269 states that "The Knox Planning Scheme does not stipulate the number of childcare centres permitted within an area." However, this response fails to address the broader planning responsibility of council.

Why was the existing saturation of childcare services not considered a relevant planning issue? Isn't it the role of council to ensure that essential services are distributed appropriately across the municipality, rather than clustered in one location — especially when such clustering causes traffic, parking, and amenity issues for local residents?

We rarely see multiple primary schools built next to each other — why is childcare planning treated differently?

The Director City Liveability, Matt Kelleher responded:

- Council has now considered this application and resolved to refuse the application on a number of grounds.
- This matter may still be subject of a VCAT Appeal, should the applicant lodge an appeal against the refusal of the application.
- Your question notes that there are already three childcare centres within the immediate area of 7 Francis Crescent; and expressed a view that Council should be ensuring essential services are distributed across the municipality rather than being clustered in one location. You refer to Primary Schools as an example.
- Child care centres are generally provided by the private sector in Knox. It has been long established in Victoria that it is not the intent of the Act nor of Planning Schemes to stifle competition. In other words, decisions are not meant to operate in such a way to prevent a business commencing in an area even if there was a lack of demonstrated need or if the effect was to make a similar business unviable.
- In this case, Council found that the proposal was not acceptable on planning grounds, but it is not within Council's discretion to refuse proposal only on the basis that there are similar businesses nearby.
- Your example of primary schools is an interesting one. It is certainly true that State Government Primary Schools do not cluster around other State Government Primary Schools – this will be because the State Government as the provider of State Schools will be looking to provide that service spatially and equitably across the community where the population is based. However, if the argument is extended to include Private Primary Schools (which often do require planning permission), which introduces an element of competition to the provision of primary school services – you will note that there are many examples across Melbourne and Victoria where schools exist in close proximity to other schools that compete to provide the same service.

7.12 Question Twelve - Jakub Skomial

The officer's response in relation to Planning Application P/2024/6269 states that the proposal is consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy, noting that the development is generally respectful of the preferred character of the area due to colours, materials, setbacks, and landscaping. However, the proposal includes a concrete car park for 19 cars on a residential street, an elevated balcony structure, and a two-storey building within a predominantly single-storey neighbourhood.

Can the Council please clarify how this industrial-style design will not impact, and will maintain, the residential and preferred neighbourhood character of Francis Crescent?

The Director City Liveability, Matt Kelleher responded:

- This question seeks that Council clarify the position of the officer report that the design of the building will not impact the preferred neighbourhood character of Francis Crescent.
- Council has decided to refuse the application as the proposal was found not to be acceptable against the provisions of the Knox Planning Scheme. Planning assessments are, by their nature, subjective assessments and the submitter may have a different view about this proposal than the one articulated in the Council Officer's Report but there is no need to further clarify the officer's position. The Council report stands on its own merits as an assessment of the application, and it is quite reasonable for there to be different views on the suitability or otherwise of an application.

Question Time Concluded at 8:27pm.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: **Councillor Cooper**
SECONDED: **Councillor Duncan**

That Council resolve to take a 10 minute break from 8:28pm to 8:38pm.

CARRIED

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:28pm and resumed at 8:41pm with all Councillors present.

8 Officer Reports

8.1 Housing Monitoring Program Annual Report - 2024

SUMMARY
This report summarises the findings of Council's 17th annual Housing Monitoring Program for the 2024 calendar year. The program assesses Knox's alignment with the six objectives of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*.

The following are the highlights of the key findings in this report:

- **Since COVID, the number of new dwellings expected to be constructed in Knox has remained below the 11-year average of 684.** In 2024, 136 planning and subdivision permits were approved. Considering demolitions, if all these permits were fully enacted, Knox could see a net increase of 333 new dwellings. This figure is slightly below the numbers for 2021 (334), 2022 (373), and 2023 (384). In fact, the 2024 housing approvals represent the lowest number of net new dwellings in Knox in over a decade, since 2014.

- **New dwellings approved in 2024 were less aligned with the preferred character outlined in the *Housing Strategy 2015* compared to previous years.** In 2024, 68% of new dwellings approved were consistent with their Housing Strategy Area, a significant 20% decline from 88% in 2023. This marks the second lowest alignment since 2016 and falls below the nine-year average of 74%. The highest alignment was 88% in 2023, and the lowest was 64% in 2016. This decline is concerning, as it was expected that a significant share of approved dwellings would align with the preferred typology within a decade of implementing the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*.

- **Dwelling density significantly increased in the Bush Suburban area in 2024, while it decreased in Neighbourhood and Local Living areas compared to 2023.** Between 2023 and 2024, dwelling units per hectare decreased by 5% in Knox Neighbourhood areas and by 17% in Local Living areas, a departure from the previous year's trend of increases across all Housing Strategy Areas (HSAs). However, dwelling density in Bush Suburban areas increased significantly by 38% during the same period. If this growth continues, the density in Bush Suburban areas could surpass that of Knox Neighbourhood areas within a decade. This would not be the preferred growth pattern, as it could negatively impact Knox's significant biological (flora and fauna) and landscape values.

- **In 2024, approvals for residential aged care facilities rebounded, while apartment approvals declined compared to 2023**. In 2024, a 96-bed residential aged-care facility was approved, unlike in 2022 and 2023. This aligns with the trend in 2021, when 214 beds were approved. Additionally, planning permits approved in 2024 would result in 39 new apartments if enacted, a decrease from the 59 apartments approved in 2023. Despite this decline, the 2024 figure is an improvement over 2022, where no apartments were approved (only 4 apartments were approved in 2021).

- **In 2024, Knox achieved the minimum target of 78 residential aged care places per 1,000.** In 2024, Knox reached the minimum national benchmark of 78 residential aged care places per

1,000 people aged 70 and above, the lowest ratio since 2015. This decline has been ongoing since 2015, and without a significant increase in RACF[1], Knox will likely fall below this benchmark next year. The population aged 70 and over in Knox is growing by at least 2% every five years, rising from 10.2% in 2016 to 12.4% in 2021 (ABS, 2022). Urgent action is needed to address this decline.

- **Building permits issued in 2024 increased by 35% compared to the previous year.** In 2024, 869 building permits were issued, compared to 643 in 2023 and 588 in 2022. This figure is above the 8-year average of 800 approvals. While 2022 had the lowest number of approvals since 2017, 2017 saw the highest with 1,136 permits. Tracking building permits is crucial as they provide more certainty about future construction in Knox than planning permits, offering a clearer indication of whether the housing challenge can be addressed in the short term.

- **Escalating housing costs and a severe shortage of affordable rental options.** Access to affordable housing remained a critical issue in Knox in 2024. Only 0.1% of rentals and 1% of property sales were affordable to 'very low income' households. Rental affordability has consistently deteriorated since 2020. For instance, 42% of rental properties were affordable to 'very low' and 'low income' households in 2020, but this dropped to 29% in 2024. The rate of this decline is troubling. The *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027* identifies actions that should be progressed to mitigate this trend.

- **A significant shortfall in social and affordable housing supply remains a critical policy concern in Knox in 2024.** In 2024, Knox fell short of the minimum estimated supply of social and affordable housing by 298 dwellings, creating a significant gap between available housing and the estimated need. With 1,505 social and affordable housing dwellings currently available and an estimated need of 2,407, there is a substantial shortfall of 902 dwellings. The decline of 31 social housing dwellings in 2024 further exacerbates the issue. Considering this growing challenge, it may be beneficial for Council to consider complementing existing approaches with alternative advocacy and forward-looking strategies. Exploring new and creative pathways could help support meaningful progress in addressing this important issue.

- **Growth in small dwellings (≤2 bedrooms) fell by 11% in 2024.** In 2024, only 21% of approved dwellings in Knox were small (two bedrooms or less), totalling 69 dwelling units, down from 32% (122 units) in 2023. The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* and *Plan for Victoria* highlight the need for diverse housing, yet large dwellings dominate in Knox. Council could collaborate with landowners/developers in Strategic Investigation Sites to develop apartments, increasing the availability of small dwellings. This would help meet the housing needs of the growing number of lone person and couple-only households, which currently make up 45.7% of households in Knox.

- **VCAT decisions on planning permits slightly increased in 2024 after hitting a low in 2023.** VCAT decided 15 residential planning applications for Knox in 2023, up from 12 in 2023 and 14 in 2022 and 2021. The 2023 figure was the lowest since 2012. In 2024, the number of cases remained below the six-year average of 24. Since 2014, 66% of Knox's planning permit refusals were overturned by VCAT. In most cases where Council's refusals were overturned by VCAT, applicants submitted amended applications that Council officers supported. Continuing to encourage amendments to address concerns could reduce appeals, saving time and benefiting

[1] Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF)

both parties. It is noted that planning reform recently implemented by State Government to codify and streamline planning applications for multi-unit developments may impact future VCAT hearing numbers.

- **Knox achieved 100% of its ESD targets for potable water consumption and GHG emissions reduction in 2023-2024.** This implied that all permits for applicable new dwellings in 2022-2023 met both targets. This was equally the case in 2021-2022 financial year. In 2023-24, ESD data showed a 38% average reduction in potable water consumption and a 61% average reduction in GHG emissions for approved planning applications.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council:

1. Note the findings in the Knox Housing Monitoring Program Annual Report for 2024 (Attachment 1).
2. Adopt the Knox Housing Monitoring Program Annual Report for 2024.
3. Note that the outcomes of this report will be considered as part of the ongoing review of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* currently underway.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: **Councillor Baker**
SECONDED: **Councillor Atwell**

That Council:

1. **Note the findings in the Knox Housing Monitoring Program Annual Report for 2024 (Attachment 1).**
2. **Adopt the Knox Housing Monitoring Program Annual Report for 2024.**
3. **Note that the outcomes of this report will be considered as part of the ongoing review of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* currently underway.**

CARRIED

8.2 Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29

SUMMARY
Under the Local Government Act 2020, a Council must prepare and adopt a Council Plan for a period of at least the next four financial years after a general election in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices.

This report presents the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 ('The Plan'), incorporating the Community Vision 2035, Council Plan, and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, for Council endorsement. This document represents Council's promise to the Knox community and delivers on the community's aspirations and needs. The Plan is a vital commitment from Council to enhance the quality of life for all residents by addressing the key social, economic, and environmental challenges facing Knox. It also sets the path for how the Knox Community Vision 2035 can be achieved.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolve to:

1. Adopt the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 as set out in Attachment 1 in accordance with *s90 of the Local Government Act 2020* and s26 and s27 of the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.
2. Rescind the existing Community Plan 2021-2031 as the Community Vision has been integrated into the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Cooper
SECONDED: Councillor Williams

That Council resolve to:

1. **Adopt the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 as set out in Attachment 1 in accordance with *s90 of the Local Government Act 2020* and s26 and s27 of the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.**
2. **Rescind the existing Community Plan 2021-2031 as the Community Vision has been integrated into the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.**

CARRIED

8.3 Annual Budget 2025-26

SUMMARY
In accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Council is required to prepare and adopt an annual budget by 30 June each year.

Key components of the Annual Budget 2025-26 include:

- The Budget invests $122.4 million in a wide range of services to the community to ensure Knox is a place where people and businesses can thrive.
- A $57.8 million capital works program of which $39.3 million is allocated to maintaining and renewing community assets and $18.5 million is to be invested in new and upgraded community assets.
- Continuation of the $100 rebate in relation to rates and charges for all eligible recipients.
- The Budget includes a 3.00% increase in overall rates and charges (excluding the waste charges) in accordance with the rate cap requirements outlined in Section 94(3) of the Act, and in line with the increase in rates permissible under the State Government determined rate cap.
- Council's Residential Garbage Charge has been set at $415.15, which is a $13.05 reduction from last year's charge.
- The Budget includes new borrowings in 2024-25 of $6.000 million to fund capital works projects.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolve to:

1. Adopt the Annual Budget 2025-26 as set out in Attachment 1 in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and as defined by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*;
2. Declare the Rates, Levies and Annual Service Charges for the 2025-26 financial year provided in Attachment 2;
3. Grant rate rebates for the 2025-26 financial year as per Attachment 2, paragraphs 12 – 15.
4. Adopt the Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 as set out in Attachment 3;
5. Adopt the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029 as set out in Attachment 4;
6. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to procure up to $6.000 million of loan borrowings from Treasury Corporation of Victoria, up to 30 June 2026, within the following criteria:
    a. All loan parcels drawn down will be greater than $1 million; and
    b. All loan parcels will be fixed rate and over a period of 10-years; and
    c. All loan parcels will be drawn down progressively based on cash flow requirements.
7. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign and seal all relevant documents necessary to give effect to the above resolution.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: **Councillor Lockwood**
SECONDED: **Councillor Cooper**

That Council resolve to:

1. **Adopt the Annual Budget 2025-26 as set out in Attachment 1 in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and as defined by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* with the following amendment to the Description of Fees and Charges table on page 137 of Attachment 1:**

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase/ (Decrease) $	Fee Increase/ (Decrease) %
Service provided to Clients$					
Immunisation record charge	Per Client	$7.00	$8.00	$1.00	14.29%
Administration Charge - Under 18 and School Students (Non funded vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$15.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Under 18 and School Students (Funded vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$0.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Influenza Council Session (Funded Vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$ ~~20.00~~ 0.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Influenza Council Sessions (Non funded vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	~~$0.00~~ $20.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Corporate (Funded vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$15.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Corporate (Non funded vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$20.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Adult funded vaccine (non-influenza)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$20.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Adult non-funded vaccine (non-influenza)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$20.00	New Fee	New Fee
Overseas immunisation catch up schedule charge	Per Client	$22.00	$23.00	$1.00	4.55%

2. **Declare the Rates, Levies and Annual Service Charges for the 2025-26 financial year provided in Attachment 2;**
3. **Grant rate rebates for the 2025-26 financial year as per Attachment 2, paragraphs 12 – 15.**
4. **Adopt the Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 as set out in Attachment 3;**
5. **Adopt the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029 as set out in Attachment 4;**
6. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to procure up to $6.000 million of loan borrowings from Treasury Corporation of Victoria, up to 30 June 2026, within the following criteria:**
    a. **All loan parcels drawn down will be greater than $1 million; and**
    b. **All loan parcels will be fixed rate and over a period of 10-years; and**
    c. **All loan parcels will be drawn down progressively based on cash flow requirements.**
7. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign and seal all relevant documents necessary to give effect to the above resolution.**

CARRIED

8.4 Knox Asset Plan 2025

SUMMARY
Section 92 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to develop, adopt and keep in force an Asset Plan as a component of its Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework. The Asset Plan 2026 - 2035 sets out how we will acquire, build, look after, and use assets over the next 10 years and beyond. This version of the Asset Plan is a revision and update of the Asset Plan 2022-2032 adopted by Council in 2021. The revision has been completed in accordance with Council's deliberate engagement practices.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council:

1. Endorse the Draft Asset Plan 2026 - 2035, presented as Attachment 1 for community engagement.
2. Note that the content within the Asset Plan has been informed by a deliberative engagement process, utilising a 25 member Community Panel to inform the direction and outcomes as presented in the plan.
3. Note that following the community engagement the feedback will be assessed and the Asset Plan modified, where appropriate, with the final draft Asset Plan 2026-2035 to be presented to at a future Council meeting for approval.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker
SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council:

1. **Endorse the Draft Asset Plan 2026 - 2035, presented as Attachment 1 for community engagement.**
2. **Note that the content within the Asset Plan has been informed by a deliberative engagement process, utilising a 25 member Community Panel to inform the direction and outcomes as presented in the plan.**
3. **Note that following the community engagement the feedback will be assessed and the Asset Plan modified, where appropriate, with the final draft Asset Plan 2026-2035 to be presented to at a future Council meeting for approval.**

CARRIED

8.5 Knox Arts and Culture Committee - Annual Report and Terms of Reference

SUMMARY
The Knox Arts and Culture Committee (2023-2025) comprises 12 community members and four industry members, who provide a diverse range of specialist skills, experience and industry knowledge in arts and culture management. The Committee performs as a strategic consultative group who guides the planning, development and evaluation of Council's Arts and Cultural Services, and provides insight into the local arts and cultural sector's needs and interests.

The current Knox Arts and Culture Committee (the Committee) are nearing completion of their two-year term, having delivered some significant outcomes, including evaluating Arts and Cultural Services programming, advocating to the community on behalf of Council, assisting in the design, delivery and evaluation of Immerse, providing recommendations and strategic input for the inaugural Stage Scape event, contributing to the development of the Council Plan and participating in consultation of the Significance Assessment for Council's Art collections.

The current Committee term will be completed on 14 August 2025, which prompts the recruitment campaign for new membership to the Committee from 2025 to 2027.

The Committee's Terms of Reference have been updated (refer to Attachments 1 and 2) to ensure their continued relevance and to better support effective engagement of the group.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolve to:

1. Acknowledge the achievements of the Knox Arts and Culture Committee 2023-2025 and thank the outgoing members for their valuable contribution;
2. Adopt the changes proposed to the current Knox Arts and Culture Committee Terms of Reference 2025-2029 located in Attachment 1 and the updated clean version provided in Attachment 2.
3. Note that the recruitment process for new membership for the Committee will now commence for the term September 2025 – September 2027.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Lockwood
SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council resolve to:

1. **Acknowledge the achievements of the Knox Arts and Culture Committee 2023-2025 and thank the outgoing members for their valuable contribution;**
2. **Adopt the changes proposed to the current Knox Arts and Culture Committee Terms of Reference 2025-2029 located in Attachment 1 and the updated clean version provided in Attachment 2.**
3. **Note that the recruitment process for new membership for the Committee will now commence for the term September 2025 – September 2027.**

CARRIED

9 Supplementary Items

9.1 Council submission for Draft Planning Scheme Amendment to the Knox Planning Scheme – C194knox - 191 George Street, Wantirna and 1257 Ferntree Gully Road, Scoresby

SUMMARY
The purpose of this report is to seek adoption of the submission lodged by officers in response to Draft Amendment C194knox - 191 George Street, Wantirna South and 1257 Ferntree Gully Road, Scoresby (Boral Quarry site). The submission lodged by officers is provided at Attachment 1.

The Proponent (Mirvac) has requested the Minister for Planning to prepare, adopt and approve the Draft Amendment under section 20(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act* 1987 to facilitate development of the Boral Quarry site.

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) sought comment on the Draft Amendment and invited feedback by 16 June 2025. The Minister/DTP sent letters to adjoining property owners to advise of the public exhibition process and provide an opportunity for feedback. The Draft Amendment documentation included draft planning controls to facilitate development of the land for a residential community, a draft Stage 1 Development Plan providing 320 lots, active open space and supporting infrastructure, and technical reports to support the proposal.

Council's adopted position on the proposal was set out in the Council Report of 29 January 2024. Whilst the submission on the Draft Amendment considered Council's adopted position, the Minister for Planning has since taken over the process and has significantly revised the planning controls.

Key issues raised in Council's submission at Attachment 1 include:
- biodiversity impacts on Nortons Lane (proposed to be used to access the development) and shortcomings of the biodiversity assessment technical report prepared for the Amendment;
- possible road safety issues resulting from any construction of an upgraded road in Nortons Lane given the existing narrow carriageway width and projected traffic volumes;
- inadequate planning controls to address the long term management of landfill gas migration risk;
- traffic impacts, volumes and the requirement and timing for micro-simulation modelling (noting the complexity of access from George Street, High Street Road, Eastlink, Nortons Road);
- coordination and potential conflicts regarding proposed Responsible Authority arrangements;
- inadequate community consultation led by DTP for the Minister for Planning; and
- concerns with the planning requirements contained within the exhibited Development Plan Overlay Schedule 16 (DPO16). Council's submission proposes changes to DPO16 as indicated by the track changes within the DPO16 included in the submission.

Council's preferred DPO16 proposes various amendments including:

- geotechnical matters – refinement of the Geotechnical Strategy;
- incorporation of the requirement to include any relevant recommendations or conditions resulting from outstanding Environmental Audits on all permits;
- requiring greater certainty and consideration of ESD outcomes and initiatives across the site over the life of the development; and
- stipulating a maximum height of 5 storeys for apartment development in the proposed Mixed Use Zones.

Given the timeframes to consider the Draft Amendment, officers have not had the opportunity to present the submission for Council adoption prior to the submission deadline of 16 June 2025. DTP has confirmed receipt of the officer submission lodged on 16 June 2025 and advised it will accept an addendum to the lodged submission following Council's adoption if required.

Officers have requested that the Minister call a Priority Projects Standing Advisory Committee Hearing to further consider submissions given the complexity of the issues. If a Hearing is called, this is likely to occur in September 2025.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolve to:

1. Adopt the submission lodged on 16 June 2025 provided at Attachment 1 of the Officers report.
2. Seek a referral of Draft Amendment C194knox to the Knox Planning Scheme to a Priority Projects Standing Advisory Committee without limitation to the Terms of Reference.
3. Oppose any attempt by the Minister for Planning (or DTP) to pass through any risks to Council regarding gas migration.
4. Reserve the right not to take on the vesture of land that contains any gas migration measures without the inclusion of a requirement for a separate legal entity to manage risk.
5. Request that the Minister for Planning use their powers to insert the requirement for a legal entity in the proposed planning controls to assume gas migration risk, monitoring and maintenance obligations.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Cooper
SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council resolve to:

1. **Adopt the submission lodged on 16 June 2025 provided at Attachment 1 of the Officers report.**
2. **Seek a referral of Draft Amendment C194knox to the Knox Planning Scheme to a Priority Projects Standing Advisory Committee without limitation to the Terms of Reference.**
3. **Oppose any attempt by the Minister for Planning (or DTP) to pass through any risks to Council regarding gas migration.**

4. **Reserve the right not to take on the vesture of land that contains any gas migration measures without the inclusion of a requirement for a separate legal entity to manage risk.**
5. **Request that the Minister for Planning use their powers to insert the requirement for a legal entity in the proposed planning controls to assume gas migration risk, monitoring and maintenance obligations.**

CARRIED

10 Notices Of Motion

Nil.

11 Urgent Business

Nil.

12 Questions Through the Chair

Nil.

13 Confidential Items

Nil.

MEETING CLOSED AT 9:31pm

Minutes of Meeting confirmed at the
Meeting of Council
held on Monday, 28 July 2025

……
Chairperson

The Agenda for this meeting is attached in full at the end of the Minutes

AGENDA

Meeting of Council

To be held at the

Civic Centre

511 Burwood Highway

Wantirna South

On

Monday 23 June 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 26 May 2025.

4 Presentations, Petitions And Memorials

5 Reports By Councillors

6 Planning Matters

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

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Noting
Author: Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie
Manager: Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie
Executive: Acting Director, City Liveability, Jonathan McNally

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 01 May 2025 to 31 May 2025 as set out in the officers' report.

1. REPORT
Details of planning applications decided under delegation from 01 May 2025 to 31 May 2025 are attached. The applications are summarised as follows:

Application Type		**No.**
Building & Works:	Residential	7
	Other	2
Subdivision		15
Units		12
Tree Removal / Pruning		7
Single Dwelling		3
Aged care facility		1
Signage		2
Create and alter access to a road		1
Removal of a reservation		1
Removal and creation of easements		1
Change of Use		1
TOTAL		**53**

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

ATTACHMENTS
Nil

Knox City Council

Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation

1 May 2025 and 31 May 2025

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Baird	2025/6131	9 Woodvale Road BORONIA VIC 3155	7 lot subdivision (approved unit development)	16/05/2025 Approved
Baird	2025/6058	4 Dion Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of three (3) single storey dwellings pursuant to Clause 53.20	28/05/2025 Approved
Baird	2025/6160	141 Dorset Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Create and alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2	13/05/2025 Approved
Baird	2025/6102	20 Wattletree Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Three Lot Subdivision (Approved unit development)	7/05/2025 Approved
Baird	2024/6536	7 Maryville Way BORONIA VIC 3155	Development of the land for the purpose of a residential aged care facility	6/05/2025 Notice of Decision
Baird	2025/9047	1/7 Corporate Boulevard BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Buildings and works (extension of mezzanine floor area)	6/05/2025 Approved
Baird	2025/6112	329 Dorset Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal and creation of easements	20/05/2025 Approved
Baird	2025/9056	2A & 2B Piper Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Two Lot Subdivision (Approved Unit Development)	22/05/2025 Approved
Chandler	2024/6555	69 Albert Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	Buildings and works (two (2) Community Care Buildings) and removal of vegetation	16/05/2025 Approved
Chandler	2024/6580	16 Walker Street THE BASIN VIC 3154	Single storey dwelling and detached garage	20/05/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6092	9 Bambury Street BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Dead Eucalyptus cephalocarpa (Silver Stringybark) and one (1) Dead Liquidambar styraciflua (Sweetgum)	5/05/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6166	7 New Street BORONIA VIC 3155	Lopping of one (1) Eucalyptus sideroxylon (Red Ironbark)	27/05/2025 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Chandler	2024/6047	4 Augusta Road THE BASIN VIC 3154	Development of the land for three (3) dwellings (one double storey and two single storey to the rear) and removal of Easement	6/05/2025 Notice of Decision
Chandler	2025/6167	9 Sycamore Crescent BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus globulus (Southern Blue Gum)	27/05/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6135	5 Minton Close BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Alnus jorullensis (Evergreen Alder)	7/05/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6036	2 Liverpool Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Installation of an Automated Collection Point (Reverse Vending Machine Kiosk)	21/05/2025 Approved
Collier	2025/9054	76 Alderford Drive WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Buildings and works (construction of a double storey dwelling)	15/05/2025 Approved
Collier	2024/6399	566R Boronia Road WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Removal of the reservation under Section 24A of the Subdivision Act 1988 from Tree Reserve No.3 and Removal of part easements affecting Tree Reserve No.3 on LP95895, contained in Vol.9121 Fol.341 shown as lot 1 on the proposed plan	13/05/2025 Notice of Decision
Collier	2025/9051	48 Clarence Road WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Two Lot Subdivision (Approved Unit Development)	9/05/2025 Approved
Collier	2025/9055	13 Linsley Way WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Two Lot subdivision (Approved Unit Development)	20/05/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2023/6508	9 Peck Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of two (2) double storey dwellings	26/05/2025 Notice of Decision
Dinsdale	2025/6099	12 Maple Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Three Lot Subdivision (Approved Unit Development)	3/05/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/9058	23, 23A & 23B Kirrawee Avenue WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Two lot subdivision (Approved Unit Development)	29/05/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/6114	Knox City SC (MASTER) 425 Burwood Highway WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Construction and display of internally illuminated, high-wall, business identification sign	8/05/2025 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Dinsdale	2024/6229	85 Stud Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of two (2) double storey dwellings and one (1) single storey dwelling and create access to a Transport Zone 2.	27/05/2025 Notice of Decision
Dinsdale	2025/6126	39 Orange Grove BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Three lot subdivision (Approved Unit Development)	13/05/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2024/6602	91 Parkhurst Drive KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Use of the land for a restricted recreation facility (gymnasium) and externally illuminated business identification signage	23/05/2025 Notice of Decision
Dinsdale	2025/6129	3 Claude Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Three lot subdivision (Approved unit development)	15/05/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/9061	3 Chalmers Grove FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Buildings and Works (Construction of a pergola and deck within the TPZ of an existing significant tree)	30/05/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/9052	9 Beilby Close UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Buildings and Works (construct a carport)	15/05/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6187	49 Heritage Way LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Buildings and works (extension to the existing garage and construction of a shed) and removal of one (1) tree	8/05/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6103	11 Walbundry Avenue FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Buildings and Works (extension to existing dwelling)	19/05/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6123	Glengollan Village Nursing Home 97 Underwood Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus radiata (Narrow Leaved Peppermint)	6/05/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6106	1/6 Bergner Court LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Use and development of a dwelling, construction of a shed and consent to construct outside approved the building envelope	21/05/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/9023	416 Lysterfield Road LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Buildings and Works (Shed and associated excavation and filling)	5/05/2025 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Dobson	2025/6111	5/8 The Crescent FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus obliqua (Messmate)	5/05/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6163	64 McIver Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Buildings and works to construct a shed and removal of one (1) tree	20/05/2025 Approved
Friberg	2024/6546	5/718 Burwood Highway FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction and display of an Electronic Major Promotional Sky Sign	15/05/2025 Refused
Friberg	2025/6195	60 Kathryn Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Removal of two (2) Eucalyptus cephalocarpa (Silver Stringybark)	28/05/2025 Approved
Friberg	2024/6557	20 Conn Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of a double storey dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling	23/05/2025 Approved
Friberg	2025/9050	3A & 3B Holme Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Two Lot Subdivision (Approved Unit Development)	8/05/2025 Approved
Scott	2024/6299	87 David Street North KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Construction of two (2) double storey dwellings and one (1) single storey dwelling	20/05/2025 Notice of Decision
Scott	2024/6503	1 Jackson Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Construction of two (2) double storey dwellings on a lot	23/05/2025 Approved
Scott	2025/6083	10 White Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Three Lot Subdivision (approved unit development)	2/05/2025 Approved
Scott	2024/6453	57 Coromandel Crescent KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Construction of three (3) double storey dwellings and one (1) single storey dwelling on a lot, including associated vegetation removal	20/05/2025 Notice of Decision
Taylor	2025/9057	36A & 36B Goulburn Drive ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Two lot subdivision (approved unit development)	22/05/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2025/9048	35 Michele Drive SCORESBY VIC 3179	Two lot subdivision (Approved unit development)	1/05/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2024/6357	16 Beverley Street SCORESBY VIC 3179	Construction of two (2) single storey dwellings and subdivision of land into 2 lots	16/05/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2025/6133	714 - 716 Stud Road SCORESBY VIC 3179	12 Lot subdivision (approved unit development)	23/05/2025 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Tirhatuan	2025/6113	1 & 2/10 Seismic Court ROWVILLE VIC 3178	2 lot subdivision (Existing buildings)	8/05/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2024/6517	1108 Stud Road ROWVILLE VIC 3178	The construction of six (6) three storey dwellings and access to a road in a Transport 2 Zone	1/05/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2024/6450	13 Bridgewater Way ROWVILLE VIC 3178	The construction of two double storey dwellings on the land	26/05/2025 Notice of Decision
Tirhatuan	2024/6414	21 Nevana Street SCORESBY VIC 3179	Development of the land for two (2) double storey dwellings	29/05/2025 Approved

6.2 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Principal Planner, Nancy Neil
Manager: Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie
Executive: Director, City Liveability, Matt Kelleher

SUMMARY
This report considers Planning Application P/2024/6269 for the use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre, reduce the number of car parking spaces required under Clause 52.06-5 and removal of vegetation at 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully.

RECOMMENDATION (SUMMARY)
That Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for the use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre and removal of vegetation at 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully, subject to the conditions detailed in the full recommendation in section 10 below.

1. DISCUSSION

Application P/2024/6269 has been lodged with Council for the use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre, reduce the number of car parking spaces required under Clause 52.06-5 and removal of vegetation at 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully.

The application is being reported to Council as the site is located within the Dandenong Foothills Policy Area and more than 10 objections have been received from individual properties.

The proposal provides for a non-residential use in an appropriate location within an established residential area, while ensuring the amenity of adjoining properties is not unreasonably affected.

It is considered that the proposal will protect the visual dominance of vegetation through planting of new canopy trees consistent with outcomes for the Dandenong Foothills.

2. ENGAGEMENT

The application was advertised by way of two (2) signs on the site and notices were sent to adjoining property owners and occupiers. In total, 27 objections were received.

The application was referred internally to Council's Traffic Engineer, Stormwater Engineer, Assets Officer, Landscape Officer, Arborist, Building Team, and Health Officer. No major concerns were raised with the application.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no significant social implications associated with the proposed use and development. A thorough assessment of the application against all relevant considerations of the Knox Planning Scheme can be found at section 5 of 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 use and development. A thorough assessment of the application against environmental and amenity considerations can be found at section 5 of the Officer's Report at Attachment 1.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
There are no financial or economic implications associated with the proposed use and development for Council.

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

8. KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025
Opportunity & Innovation
Strategy 1.1 – Maximise the local economy by supporting existing businesses and attracting new investment.
Strategy 1.2 – Encourage and support opportunities for skills development and lifelong learning for all people in Knox.
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 landscapes.

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 use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre and removal of vegetation at 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully, 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 A dividing line included along the driveway inside the property boundary and the parking aisle.

1.2 The Coldstream toppings area to be sealed and suitable for use in all weather conditions.

1.3 Delete reference to signage on the plans.

1.4 Update correct number of car parking spaces on the plans.

1.5 Update children numbers in each room to no more than 90 children for all rooms.

1.6 A detailed plan showing compliance with the maximum building and impervious surfaces requirements of the Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1 of the Knox Planning Scheme.

1.7 A notation on the plans stating no artificial grass to be used within the ground level outdoor play areas.

1.8 The location of Tree Protection Fencing and Tree Protection Zones, which is to be consistent with the Landscape Plan detail, in accordance with Conditions 17-23.

1.9 All levels to be to AHD (Australian Height Datum).

1.10 Waste Management Plan in accordance with Condition 16.

1.11 An amended Acoustic Report to consider mechanical plant (such as air conditioning units, exhaust fans, flues etc.) with any recommendations to be shown on the plans for screening and acoustic purposes.

1.12 The existing crossover to be fully reconstructed to current Council standard and match internal driveway width.

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 Car Parking Management Plan in accordance with Condition 25.

2.4 Construction Management Plan in accordance with Condition 30.

2.5 Noise Management Plan in accordance with Condition 35.

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 pursuant to the approved Sustainable Design Assessment.

    3.6 Location of fencing in accordance with the Development Plans.

    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 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.

4.7 Landscaping and planting within all open areas of the site (including additional planting within open space areas of the existing dwelling/s).

4.8 The landscape plans must show the provision of at least 19 additional indigenous or native canopy trees and 16 additional large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5m chosen from Plant List 1, 2 or 3 of Council's Landscape Plan Guidelines for Planning Permits. These canopy trees must be a minimum 1.5 metres tall when planted and are to be in the following areas:

4.8.1 Front setback – 2 large indigenous canopy trees, 2 small indigenous trees or native canopy trees and 3 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5m.

4.8.2 Southern boundary – 5 small canopy trees and 6 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5m.

4.8.3 Western boundary – 2 medium canopy trees, 3 small canopy trees and 5 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5 metres.

4.8.4 Northern boundary (adjacent car parks) – 4 small canopy trees.

4.8.5 Northern boundary (rear) – 1 small canopy tree and 2 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5 metres. (Select narrow, upright cultivar).

4.9 Planting of this site to comprise 60% of the vegetation species to be indigenous (across all plant forms) from plant list 1 of the 'Landscape Plan Guidelines' and 30% additional native species (across all plant forms) from plant list 2 of the 'Landscape Plan Guidelines'. Remaining plant species (10%) can be indigenous, native or exotic (across all plant forms) provided they are not listed as weeds.

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.

General

7. All use and development must be in accordance with the endorsed plans.

8. The layout of the site and the size, levels, design and location of buildings and works shown on the endorsed plans must not be modified for any reason without the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority.

9. Once the development has started it must be continued and completed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

10. Prior to the use commencing, the development must be completed in accordance with the endorsed plan/s to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

11. All pipes (excluding downpipes), fixtures, fittings and vents servicing any building on the site must be concealed in service ducts or otherwise hidden from view to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

12. All basic services, including water, electricity, gas, sewerage, telephone, NBN and cable TV but excluding any substation, meters or hydrants, to the site must be installed underground and located to the satisfaction of the relevant servicing authority and the Responsible Authority.

13. No plant, equipment, services or architectural features other than those shown on the endorsed plans are permitted above the roof level of the building/s without the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority (unless the Knox Planning Scheme specifies that a permit is not required).

14. All walls on the boundaries of adjoining properties must be cleaned and finished to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, in accordance with the endorsed plans.

Sustainable Design Assessment

15. Prior to the occupation of the development, the development must be constructed in accordance with the Sustainable Design Assessment.

Waste Management Plan

16. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a Waste Collection and Management Plan must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority, demonstrating how waste collection will be undertaken on site, including the operation of the garbage and recyclables storage area. Garbage and recyclables storage and collection must be undertaken in accordance with the approved plan/documentation, and must be undertaken to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Tree Protection

17. All works, including excavation, within the critical root zone areas of the tree/s to be retained and other critical root zones on the land must be undertaken under the supervision of a qualified Arborist to ensure that there is no unreasonable damage to the root system of trees to be retained and/or protected, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. Before the development starts, the owner must submit to the Responsible Authority details of the name of the Arborist who will supervise the works and the tasks to be undertaken by the Arborist, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

18. Prior to any works commencing on the site (including demolition and tree removal), all trees and vegetation to be retained including other critical root zones must be fenced off to create a protection zone. The protection zone must extend around the trees canopy drip-line unless an alternative tree protection zone has been approved by the responsible authority.

19. The tree protection fence is to be chain link or wire mesh, comprise either wooden or steel posts set into the ground or on concrete pads, and be a minimum height of 1.8 metres. Signage is to be affixed to the fence advising that the area is a tree protection zone and a no-go development area.

20. The tree protection fence and signage is to be maintained throughout the construction period and removed at the completion of all works.

21. No temporary removal of the tree protection fence, or encroachment into the protection zone is permitted without the written consent of the responsible authority.

22. Prior to erecting the tree protection fence around the tree protection zone, all unwanted vegetation and weed species must be removed from within the zone, and the ground within the protection zone must be covered with a layer of well composted organic mulch (maximum 100mm depth). The area is to be watered at least fortnightly throughout the construction period.

23. The following activities are prohibited from the tree protection area, without the written consent of the responsible authority:

    23.1 Construction activities.

    23.2 Dumping and/or storage of materials, goods and/or soil.

    23.3 Trenching or excavation.

    23.4 Lopping branches, nailing or affixing signs, service lines, lights etc. to the trees.

24. Prior to any works commencing on site, the Responsible Authority must be contacted to inspect the Tree Protection fencing.

Car Parking Management Plan

25. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a Car Park Management Plan prepared by a suitably qualified professional must be submitted to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. When approved, the Car Park Management Plan will be endorsed and will form part of the permit. The Car Park Management Plan must include:

    25.1 The allocation of car parking between staff, pick-up/drop-off and visitor parking.

    25.2 Measures to ensure all staff and parents will use the car park and will not use on-street parking in the surrounding area.

    25.3 Measures to manage pick-up and drop-off times to minimise impacts on the adjacent service road area.

    25.4 The provision of directional and instructional signage.

    25.5 Measures to minimise any queueing of cars accessing the car parking area.

    25.6 The provision of lighting.

    To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

26. At all times car parking must be managed in accordance with the endorsed Car Park Management Plan to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. No alterations to the Car Park Management Plan may occur without prior written consent of the Responsible Authority.

Car Parking & Accessways

27. Before the development is occupied, driveways and car parking areas must be:

    27.1 Fully constructed in accordance with plans submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority.

    27.2 Properly formed to such levels that they can be used in accordance with the plans.

27.3 Constructed to the absolute minimum standard of 125 mm depth of reinforced concrete or other approved hardstanding sealed surface as shown on the approved Drainage Plan.

27.4 Line-marked to indicate each car space, all access lanes and traffic direction.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

28. Parking areas and driveways must be kept available and maintained for these purposes at all times to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

29. Before the development is occupied vehicular crossing(s) must be constructed to align with approved driveways to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. All redundant crossing(s), crossing opening(s) 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

30. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a Construction and Traffic 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:

30.1 A detailed schedule of works including a full project timing;

30.2 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.

30.3 The location for the parking of all construction vehicles and construction worker vehicles during construction;

30.4 A fully detailed plan indicating where construction hoardings would be located;

30.5 A waste management plan including the containment of waste on site, disposal of waste, stormwater treatment and on-site facilities for vehicle washing;

30.6 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;

30.7 Site security;

30.8 Public safety measures;

30.9 Construction times, noise and vibration controls;

30.10 Restoration of any Council assets removed and/or damaged during construction;

30.11 Protection works necessary to road and other infrastructure (limited to an area reasonably proximate to the site);

30.12 Remediation of any damage to road and other infrastructure (limited to an areas reasonably proximate to the site);

30.13 An emergency contact that is available for 24 hours a day.

30.14 All contractors associated with the construction of the development must be made aware of the requirements of the Construction Management Plan.

31. During the construction, the following must occur to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority:

31.1 Any stormwater discharges into the stormwater drainage system is to comply with EPA guidelines;

31.2 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;

31.3 Vehicle borne material must not accumulate on the roads abutting the site;

31.4 The cleaning of machinery and equipment must take place on site and not on adjacent footpaths, roads or parks;

31.5 All litter (including items such as cement bags, food packaging and plastic strapping) must be disposed of responsibly; and

31.6 All site operations must comply with the EPA Publication 1254 (including all revisions or replacement guidelines).

Fencing

32. All costs associated with the provision of the fencing are to be borne by the owner/developer under this permit.

Noise

33. At all times noise emanating from the land must comply with the requirements of the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (as amended from time to time) as measured in accordance with the Noise Protocol to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

34. No external sound amplification equipment or loudspeakers are to be used for the purpose of announcement, broadcast, playing of music or similar purpose.

35. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a Noise Management Plan must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The Noise Management Plan must address, but is not limited to, the following:

35.1 Management measures to minimise noise impacts to neighbours at drop-off and collection times.

35.2 Procedures for management of noise from outdoor play and activities.

35.3 Procedure for handling noise complaints.

35.4 Waste collection noise.

35.5 Commercial delivery noise.

35.6 Body Corporate gardening, cleaning and maintenance times.

35.7 Noise from fixed domestic plant.

35.8 Audible intruder alarms.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority

36. The use and development must comply with the endorsed Noise Management Plan at all times to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

37. At the request of the Responsible Authority, the operator will within thirty (30) days supply an assessment of the noise levels emitted from the site by a qualified acoustic consultant / engineer with readings taken at times specified by the Responsible Authority. The Assessment will document environmental noise impacts detected at residential properties . All costs associated with this assessment are to be borne by the permit holder.

Amenity

38. All external lights must be designed, baffled and located so as to prevent nuisance or light spill to adjoining land to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

39. All fixed plant and equipment (including air-conditioning units) must be located and screened to visually integrate into the development to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Acoustic Report

40. Prior to the commencement of the use, a report must be prepared and submitted to certify that barriers have been constructed in accordance with the requirements in Section 5 (Recommendations and Conclusion) of the Acoustic Report prepared by Enfield Acoustics Pty Ltd dated 13 August 2024 Document Reference V1968-01-P Acoustic Report (r0). The use must not commence until the acoustic barriers have been installed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Amenity During Construction

41. 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:

41.1 the appearance of building, works or materials on the land

41.2 parking of motor vehicles

41.3 transporting of materials or goods to or from the site

41.4 hours of operation

41.5 stockpiling of top soil or fill materials

41.6 air borne dust emanating from the site

41.7 noise

41.8 rubbish and litter

41.9 sediment runoff

41.10 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

42. 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.

External Materials

43. The external materials of the development hereby permitted (including the roof) must be non-reflective and finished in subdued tones and/or colours to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Number of Children

44. Unless with the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority, the number of childcare places associated with the permitted use must not exceed 90 children at any one time.

Childcare Centre

45. Unless with the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority, the use permitted by this permit must operate only between the hours of:

    45.1 7:00am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday.

46. All fencing associated with the childcare centre is to meet the requirements for Children's Services Centre Outdoor Play Spaces and comply with AS1926.1.

Permit Expiry

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

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

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

    47.3 The use does not start within 2 years of completion of the development.

    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 for the property including all dwellings is **8.0**L/s to the existing Council drainage system for a 10 year ARI event.
- Applicant is to direct all stormwater to the **north-east** of the property as this represents the Legal Point of Discharge (LPD) for the property. Applicant is to verify this on site. Connect all stormwater discharge from the site to the LPD via an Onsite Detention (OSD) system. The internal drains for the dwellings are to be independent of each other.
- 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.
- Council records indicate that the development is in an area where Council has flood mapped. Contact Council's Stormwater Team for advice on flooding.

Landscape Notes:

- The plan must incorporate Raingardens and/or Bioswales to treat the water runoff from the hard surfaces (car parks and driveways). The surface area of the proposed raingarden should be 3-5% of the surface area of the catchment feeding it. The levels should be shown on the plan and the concrete pavement should be shaped to drain into the raingarden (at the lowest point) through gaps in the kerbing. Details of the raingarden should be shown on drainage and landscape plan in accordance with Knox City Council's standard. The roof water is to be captured by rainwater tanks and reused for toilet flushing and garden.
- At least 50% of the vegetation species located in the raingarden should comprise of some or all of the following; Carex sp, Juncus sp, Melaleuca and Goodenia. This ensures adequate removal of Nitrogen and Phosphorus. Low and tufting plants proposed for the raingarden should be planted at a minimum density of 6 plants/m2.

Other Notes:

- The DDO1 requires that the site area covered by buildings must not exceed 40%, and the site area covered by buildings and impervious surfaces must not exceed 60%. Planning permission cannot be granted to construct or carry out further buildings or works which are not in accordance with the requirements of the DDO1.
- A building permit must be obtained before development is commenced.
- To arrange an inspection of the Tree Protection fencing please contact Council Landscape Team on 9298 8125.

- 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.

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 - 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully [**6.2.1** - 12 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Council Attachments - 7 Francis Crescent Ferntree Gully [**6.2.2** - 9 pages]

Attachment 1

Planning Application P/2024/6269 for the use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre, reduce the number of car parking spaces required under Clause 52.06-5 and removal of vegetation at 7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully.

1. Summary:

Subject Site:	7 Francis Crescent, FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156
Proposed Development:	Use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre, reduce number of car parking spaces required under clause 52.06-5 and removal of vegetation
Existing Land Use:	Single dwelling
Site Area:	1,701m^2
Planning Scheme Controls:	Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 1 (NRZ1)
	Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1 (DDO1)
	Significant Landscape Overlay – Schedule 2 (SLO2)
	Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 4 (VPO4)
Application Received:	5 June 2024
Number of Objections:	27 objections received
PCC Meeting:	Not Applicable
Ward:	Dobson

2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with the Council Planning Officer's assessment of Planning Permit Application P/2024/6269 to assist in making a decision on the application. It should be read in conjunction with the other attachments.

3. Background

3.1 Subject Site and Surrounds

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

- The subject site comprises a large, single allotment with dual street frontages. The primary frontage faces Francis Crescent, while the rear of the site adjoins Alma Avenue. The site contains an existing single dwelling with vehicle access from Francis Crescent.
- The site has an area of 1,701m^2 with a slope of 7.1m from Alma Avenue to Francis Crescent. The site does not contain any easements.
- The site is located just beyond the Ferntree Gully Village Activity Centre, separated by an area of Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) and an existing unit development.

knox your city

Attachment 1

- The site is moderately vegetated, featuring a mix of protected trees and environmental weed species.
- There are no restrictive covenants registered on the copy of title.

3.2 The Proposal

The proposal seeks permission for the use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre, reduce number of car parking spaces required under clause 52.06-5 and removal of vegetation. The details of the proposal area as follows:

- Construction of a two-storey building with a maximum height of 6.87m. The building contains one (1) activity room with an outdoor play area on the ground floor level, and three (3) activity rooms on the first floor level. An outdoor area on the first floor level extends over the car park. The building also contains a kitchen and associated amenities.
- Vehicle access to the site will be via a new 6m wide crossover from Francis Crescent.
- External materials will comprise render/cladding in Basalt, Timeless Grey, Black, and Natural Timber.
- Maximum of 100 children.
- 19 car parking spaces are provided.
- A reduction of three (3) car parking spaces.
- An external bin storage area is located along the north-west boundary.
- The following trees are proposed to be removed:
    - T1 – Syzygium smithii (no permit required)
    - T2 – Melaleuca armillaris (environmental weed – no permit required)
    - T3 – Syzygium smithii (permit triggered under the SLO2 and VPO4)
    - T4 – Magnolia grandiflora (permit triggered under the SLO2)
    - T5 – Crataegus monogyna (environmental weed – no permit required)
    - T6 – Cotoneaster glaucophylla (environmental weed – no permit required)
    - T7 – Ligustrum lucidum (environmental weed – no permit required)
    - T8 – Callistemon citrinus (permit triggered under the SLO2 and VPO4)
    - T9 – Callistemon salignus (permit triggered under the SLO2)
    - T10 – Citrus limon (permit triggered under the SLO2)
    - T11 – Pittosporum undulatum (environmental weed – no permit required)
    - T12 – Agonis flexuosa (permit triggered under the SLO2)

4. Consultation

4.1 Advertising

The application was advertised by way of two (2) signs on the site and notices were sent to adjoining property owners and occupiers. In total 27 objections were received and are summarised below.

Inadequacy of car parking, on-street car parking and traffic congestion

- The proposed reduction in car parking is not supported, as discussed below at Clause 52.06. A condition of any permit to issue will require the maximum number of children to not exceed 90, to ensure car parking is provided on-site in accordance with the parking requirements at Clause 52.06 of the Knox Planning Scheme.
- Council's Traffic and Transport Team have not raised concerns with reference to the ability of the street network to cater for the proposed development.
- The varying times in which children will be dropped off and picked up is unlikely to result in a dramatic impact on the availability of on-street car parking.

- Any illegal car parking can be managed via parking enforcement.

Vehicle movements and safety

- Vehicles will be able to enter and exit the site in a forward direction.
- Conditions of any permit to issue will require a dividing line along the driveway to improve the safety of the entry/exit point.

Number of child care centres already in the area

- The Knox Planning Scheme does not stipulate the number of child care centres that are permitted within an area.

Noise impacts and accuracy of the acoustic report

- The development includes a 1.8m high acoustic fence along the side boundaries, and a 1.5m high acoustic fence along the outdoor play area on the first floor level.
- A condition of any permit to issue will require the submission of an amended acoustic report to consider mechanical plant (i.e. air conditioning units and external exhaust fans/flues) with any recommendations to be shown on the plans.
- The application has not indicated hours of operation of the centre. Conditions of any permit to issue will limit the hours of operation to 7am-6:30pm Monday to Friday.
- A Noise Management Plan will form part of any permit to issue.

Waste collection

- A Waste Management Plan will be included as part of any permit issued, ensuring that impacts on adjoining properties are minimized.

Construction impact

- Whilst there will be some impact during the construction process, it is unlikely that this would be different to a typical construction process. Appropriate measures through conditions on permit will limit the impact on the surrounding area.
- A Construction Management Plan will form part of any permit to issue.

Child/staff ratio

- This is not a planning consideration.

Health implications of outdoor area above car park

- The outdoor play area that sits above the car park will be well ventilated.

Commercial development in a residential setting

- The location of the proposed child care centre is considered appropriate, as discussed in Section 5.3.3 of this report (Non-Residential Uses in Residential Areas).

Lack of Transparency and Community Engagement

- The application was advertised in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Attachment 1

4.1 Substitution of plans

The Revision F plans were originally advertised as part of the application. These plans have now been substituted with Revision H.

The changes include:

- Crossover widened by 500mm.
- One (1) car parking space deleted (resulting in a total of 19 car spaces proposed).
- Gradient of the car parking area amended from 1:33 to 1:40.

The plans were not re-advertised as the amendments are minor in nature and unlikely to cause any additional impact on adjoining property owners or occupiers. Furthermore, the changes are not expected to alter the recommendations of this report, particularly regarding car parking provision, and do not affect the validity or relevance of the objections previously lodged.

4.2 Referrals

The application was referred to external authorities and internal departments for advice. The following is a summary of relevant advice:

Traffic Engineer: Insufficient information has been provided to support the reduction in car parking.

The following changes are required to the plans:

- The crossover is not at right angles with the roadway and curves around. A dividing line must be included along the driveway inside the property boundary and the parking aisle.
- The Coldstream toppings area must be sealed and suitable for use in all weather conditions.
- Car parking numbers on the plans need to be updated.

Standard conditions to be included on any permit issued.

A Construction Management Plan (CMP) should form part of any permit to issue.

Stormwater: Council records indicate that the development is in an area where Council has flood mapped. The site has not formally been “Designated” as flood prone as defined under Regulation 154 of the Building Regulations. Any information regarding flooding will be included as information on any permit to issue.

Assets: The existing crossover to be fully reconstructed to current Council standard and match internal driveway width.

Landscape: The site can accommodate 19 canopy trees and large feature shrubs**.** Standard conditions to be included on any permit issued.

Arborist: Neighbouring vegetation will not be impacted by the proposed development. No objection to the proposed on-site vegetation removal. Tree protection fencing required.

Building: No objection.

Health: No objection.

Attachment 1

5. Discussion

This section considers the proposed development in light of the provisions of the Knox Planning Scheme including State and Local Planning Policies, any other relevant policies and objectives.

5.1 Zoning and Overlays

5.1.1 Zone

The site is located within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 1. A permit is required to use the land for a child care centre. A permit is also required for buildings and works associated with a Section 2 Use.

Decision Guidelines – Non-residential use and development

In the local neighbourhood context:

- Whether the use or development is compatible with residential use.
- Whether the use generally serves local community needs.
- The scale and intensity of the use and development.
- The design, height, setback and appearance of the proposed buildings and works.
- The proposed landscaping.
- The provision of car and bicycle parking and associated access ways.
- The safety, efficiency and amenity of traffic to be generated by the proposal.

Response: The proposed child care centre adopts a built form that responds to the slope of the land, and its design, height and setbacks provide a development that responds to the local context. The proposed landscaping treatment along the frontage will allow for the planting of additional canopy trees and the rear setback will maintain a rear garden space to Alma Avenue. The development will adopt acoustic fencing along the side boundaries and around the elevated outdoor play area to limit noise. Subject to a condition to reduce the number of children, car parking will be provided in accordance with Clause 52.06 of the Knox Planning Scheme and any traffic generated by the proposal can be accommodated within the existing road network. As such, it is considered that the proposal will result in a use and development that is compatible with surrounding residential use.

5.1.2 Overlays

Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1 (DDO1)

Dandenong Foothills: Foothills Backdrop and Ridgeline Area

The purpose of the Design and Development Overlay is:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To identify areas which are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new development.

A planning permit is not required under the Design and Development Overlay if the following requirements are met:

- The site area covered by buildings must not exceed 40 per cent.
- The site area covered by buildings and impervious surfaces must not exceed 60 per cent.

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A permit cannot be granted to construct a building or construct or carry out works which are not in accordance with these requirements.

Response: Can comply subject to a condition. The site area covered by buildings is less than 40%. It appears that the site area covered by buildings and impervious surfaces (including the shade sails) will exceed 60%. A condition of any permit to issue will require the submission of a detailed plan showing compliance with the building and impervious surfaces requirements of the DDO1, which is likely to result in the removal or alteration of the shade sails. A condition of any permit to issue will also prohibit artificial grass from being used within the outdoor play areas to ensure a natural landscape can be established.

Significant Landscape Overlay – Schedule 2 (SLO2)

Dandenong Foothills: Foothills Backdrop and Ridgeline Area

The purpose of the Significant Landscape Overlay is:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To identify significant landscapes.
- To conserve and enhance the character of significant landscapes.

A permit is required to:

- Construct a building or construct or carry out works;
- A permit is required to remove, destroy or lop a tree if it has a height of 5 metres or more or a trunk girth greater than 0.5 metre when measured at a height of 0.5 metres above adjacent ground level (on sloping ground to be taken on the uphill side of the tree base) or immediately above the ground for multi-stemmed trees.
- A front fence, unless the fence is 1.2 metres in height or less and is more than 50 per cent transparent; or a side fence between a building and the street, unless the fence is 1.2 metres in height or less.

Therefore, a planning permit is triggered under the SLO2 for the proposed buildings and works and removal of vegetation.

In response to the Decision Guidelines in the SLO2:

Landscape Character

- *The proposed development is not expected to impact upon views within the foothills and will not penetrate the tree canopy.*
- *The proposed building is of high architectural standard.*

Finishes

- *The proposed finishes are muted and will blend in with the landscape character of the area.*

Height

- *The proposed development will not exceed 7.5m in height.*

Attachment 1

Landscaping

- *Sufficient provision has been made for the planting of canopy trees and large feature shrubs that will meet the landscape character objectives.*

Vegetation

- *The following trees trigger a permit under the SLO2.*
    - *T3 – Syzygium smithii*
    - *T4 – Magnolia grandiflora*
    - *T8 – Callistemon citrinus*
    - *T9 – Callistemon salignus*
    - *T10 – Citrus limon*
    - *T12 – Agonis flexuosa*
- *The removal of these trees is supported by Council's Arborist. There is adequate space on site for the planting of 19 new canopy trees.*

Building on slopes

- *The slope of the site is approximately 11.8%. The siting of the proposed building follows the topography of the site and avoids the need for significant earthworks.*

Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 4 (VPO4)

The purpose of the Vegetation Protection Overlay is:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To protect areas of significant vegetation.
- To ensure that development minimises loss of vegetation.
- To preserve existing trees and other vegetation.
- To recognise vegetation protection areas as locations of special significance, natural beauty, interest and importance.
- To maintain and enhance habitat and habitat corridors for indigenous fauna.
- To encourage the regeneration of native vegetation.

A permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation and vegetation listed in Table 1 to this clause.

A permit is required to remove the following trees:

- T3 – Syzygium smithii
- T8 – Callistemon citrinus

Response: These trees have a low retention value and their removal is not opposed by Council's Arborist. Subject to conditions, replanting can occur of native vegetation to enhance habitat for indigenous fauna.

Attachment 1

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.

Clause 2.03-4 Built Environment and Heritage

Urban design and building design strategic directions:

- Facilitate a strong City character, identity, sense of place and culture.
- Integrate built form and landscape outcomes along *Bush Boulevards* and *Paths into the Hills*.
- Strengthen the arrival experience at the Basin and Upper Ferntree Gully *Tourist Gateways* to capitalise on their Foothills setting and local character by integrating built form and landscape outcomes.
- Reinforce the design elements within industrial and commercial areas which contribute to the success of these areas.
- Support urban design that activates creek corridors and improves the interface and connectivity between public and private spaces.
- Ensure well designed development to create functional, architecturally attractive, sustainable and accessible places and buildings.
- Facilitate design that responds positively to the public realm and the open space and waterway corridors and improves public amenity.
- Facilitate design that prioritises the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.
- Support building design that addresses the needs of changing commercial and residential markets and household structures.

Response: The proposal is consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy. The site is within a residential area in proximity to the Ferntree Gully Village and the proposed development is generally respectful of the preferred character of the area, through appropriate colours and materials and setbacks to boundaries. Adequate landscaping is to be provided to the front of the property as well as to the rear with minimal impact on adjoining vegetation.

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 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 – Settlement - Planning is to anticipate and respond to the needs of existing and future communities through provision of zoned and serviced land for housing, employment, recreation and open space, commercial and community facilities and infrastructure.

Clause 11.01-L Settlement - This policy applies to all land in the municipality in line with the settlement typologies shown on the Strategic Framework Plan that forms part of Clause 02.04. Direct housing change as follows:

- Limited change in Bush Suburban areas.
- Minimal change in Knox Neighbourhood areas.
- Incremental growth in Local Living areas.
- Substantial growth in Activity Areas.

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Response: Complies. The use and development is considered appropriate for the location. The proposed building is modest in size and scale and appropriate landscaping will be provided.

5.3.2 Significant and Landscape Values

Clause 12.05-2L – Dandenong Foothills – To provide sufficient open space within development to ensure existing canopy vegetation can be retained and new canopy vegetation can establish. Maintain the continuous closed tree canopy of the Foothills and encourage additional canopy tree planting. Maintain uninterrupted view lines of the Dandenong Foothills by encouraging all buildings and works to sit below the dominant tree canopy height.

The site is located in Precinct 3 – Dandenong Foothills: Foothills Backdrop and Ridgeline Area. Strategies include:

- Support development that is sited to protect the visual dominance of vegetation, including canopy trees and native understorey plants.
- Provide a continuous vegetation canopy across residential lots and roads.
- Maintain the appearance of the area as an extension of the Dandenong Ranges National Park by blending development with vegetation on the hillsides.
- Provide effective screening and utilise suitable colours and materials to maintain the appearance of a heavily vegetated natural hillside for distant views.
- Retain existing vegetation and utilise indigenous canopy and understorey planting.
- Locate development on sites at high points and along ridges so it is not highly visible from the valley area below, provided these sites are not within a designated bushfire prone area or subject to a Bushfire Management Overlay.

Response: The proposed development is less than 7.5m in height and follows the topography of the site which will ensure that uninterrupted view lines of the Dandenong Foothills will remain. The proposal also ensures new canopy trees can be established on site to enhance the landscape significance of the Dandenong Foothills and blend the development into the hillside. As such, the proposal is consistent with this Policy.

5.3.3 Environmental Risks and Amenity

Clause 13.05-1S – Noise Management - Ensure that development is not prejudiced and community amenity and human health is not adversely impacted by noise emissions. Minimise the impact on human health from noise exposure to occupants of sensitive land uses (residential use, child care centre, school, education centre, residential aged care centre or hospital) near the transport system and other noise emission sources through suitable building siting and design (including orientation and internal layout), urban design and land use separation techniques as appropriate to the land use functions and character of the area.

Response: The development includes a 1.8m high acoustic fence along the side boundaries, and a 1.5m high acoustic fence along the outdoor play area on the first floor level. A condition of any permit to issue will require the submission of an amended acoustic report to consider mechanical plant (i.e. air conditioning units and external exhaust fans/flues) with any recommendations to be shown on the plans. A Noise Management Plan will form part of any permit to issue. As such, it is considered that the proposal will not adversely affect the amenity of adjoining residential properties through noise emissions.

Clause 13.07-1L – Non residential use and development in residential areas - To support attractive and well-designed non-residential uses in residential areas only where appropriate.

Strategies include:

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Support non-residential use and development that:
- Protects character and residential amenity from impacts of overlooking, overshadowing, excessive noise and light spill.
- Avoids the creation of defacto commercial precincts or activity centres not identified in Clause 02.03-1.
- Fulfils a demonstrated local community need in the immediate area.
- Preserves the primary function of the area for residential purposes.

Encourage non-residential uses to locate:
- On sites with frontages to a Transport Zone (TRZ2 and TRZ3), or to a connector street carrying a minimum of 3,000 vehicles per day.
- In and around activity centres and other commercial precincts.
- Adjacent to other non-residential uses, provided the cumulative impact of the non-residential uses will not create a defacto commercial precinct.

Support non-residential use and development that:
- Respects the role and function of the road network and does not unreasonably impact on traffic flow of adjacent streets.
- Does not unreasonably reduce car parking available for local residents in the area through generating additional on–street parking demand.
- Provides adequate onsite car parking.
- Does not create hazards for local pedestrian traffic.
- Is on or close to public transport routes.

- Design development to be sensitive to and consistent with the surrounding residential environment including character and scale, building bulk, setbacks and heights, façade treatment, building materials, colours and landscaping.

Response: The location is considered to be appropriate and meets the locational criteria of the Clause, being in close proximity to the Ferntree Gully Village and walking distance to Ferntree Gully train station. It is considered that the design, scale and appearance of the child care centre is sensitive to and consistent with the residential character and streetscape of the area, whilst acknowledging the purpose of the building as a child care centre. Subject to conditions to reduce the number of children, car parking can be catered for on-site and will not unreasonably impact on traffic flow to surrounding streets. The landscape setback along the front and rear boundary allows for additional canopy trees to be planted, which will enable a landscaping buffer to Francis Crescent. As such, it is considered the proposal is consistent with this Policy.

5.3.4 Built Environment and Heritage

Clause 15.01-1L – Urban Design - Ensure development maximises visibility and provides for passive surveillance to road frontages, the public realm, the exterior of buildings, creek corridors and public open space by:
- Maximising opportunities for passive surveillance and visual connectivity at ground and podium levels.
- Avoiding the use of solid fences.
- Designing for safe movement good connections, clear sightlines and access.
- Avoid blind corners and entrapment points.
- Design development to clearly define private realm and public realm areas.
- Encourage landscaping as an integral part of the overall design.
- Minimise the visual impact of service areas, access and parking.
- Encourage the use of articulation and materials to present visual interest, appropriate scale and detail to the street frontage.

Response: Complies. The proposed development maximises visibility and passive surveillance to road frontages and the public realm. It is appropriately articulated and an appropriate scale.

5.3.5 Transport

Clause 18.01-1L – Land Use and Transport Planning – Consolidate commercial and retail activities into areas close to railway stations and other reliable public transport nodes.

Response: The site is within walking distance to bus routes 691, 693, 755 with a bus stop on Station Street. The site is also less than 200m walking distance from Ferntree Gully train station. It is considered the site is close to public transport options.

5.3.6 Infrastructure

Clause 19 – Infrastructure – Planning is to recognise social needs by providing land for a range of accessible community resources, such as education, cultural, health and community support (mental health, aged care, disability, youth and family services) facilities.

Clause 19.03-3L – Integrated Water Management – Encourage development to be able to accommodate storm runoff. Encourage development to accommodate overland flow paths. Support innovative design approaches for the provision, use and management of water infrastructure, including water sensitive urban design and integrated water management. Minimise water consumption, including the installation of water saving devices in new development. Encourage development to harnesses and utilise stormwater as a resource, including the installation of water tanks that can be plumbed directly to households. Support development that recycles water, including on-site treatment and fit-for-purpose reuse of grey water or wastewater. Minimise the amount of impervious surfaces on development sites. Support development in high value catchment areas that protect and rehabilitate waterways towards pre-development characteristics of the original ecosystem. Encourage on site detention of stormwater to help accommodate run off where there is a change In flows.

Response: Any permit issued will include conditions requiring a drainage plan to manage the internal run off.

5.4 Particular Provisions

Clause 52.06-1 Provision of Car Spaces - A new use must not commence or the floor area of an existing use must not be increased until the required car spaces have been provided on the land. Where the floor area occupied by an existing use is increased, the parking requirement only applies to the floor area of any extension of the use or site area provided the existing number of car spaces is not reduced.

The table at Clause 52.06-5 sets out the number of car spaces required for uses not covered by a parking precinct plan or another clause.

The car parking rate for a child care centre is 0.22 spaces to each child. Therefore, there is a requirement to provide 22 car parking spaces on site. The proposal has provided 19 car spaces which means there is a shortfall of three (3) spaces.

A permit is required to reduce the number of car parking spaces required under Clause 52.06-5.

Response: The proposed reduction in car parking is not supported. There are limited opportunities for on-street car parking given the sites proximity to the roundabout and restricted parking along Francis Crescent. It is considered appropriate, based on the site constraints, that car parking is provided on-site in accordance with the statutory car parking requirements. A condition of any permit to issue will require the number of children reduced to 90, as this

will reduce the statutory car parking requirement to 19 car spaces, matching the number of car parking spaces proposed.

Design Standards for Car Parking

Design Standard 1: Accessways – *Complies, subject to conditions required by Council's Traffic Engineer.*

Design Standard 2: Car Parking Spaces – *Complies, subject to conditions required by Council's Traffic Engineer.*

Design Standard 3: Gradients – *Complies, subject to conditions required by Council's Traffic Engineer.*

Design Standard 4: Mechanical Parking – *Not applicable*

Design Standard 5: Urban Design – *Complies.*

Design Standard 6: Safety – *Complies.*

Design Standard 7: Landscaping – *Complies.*

5.5 General Decision Guidelines

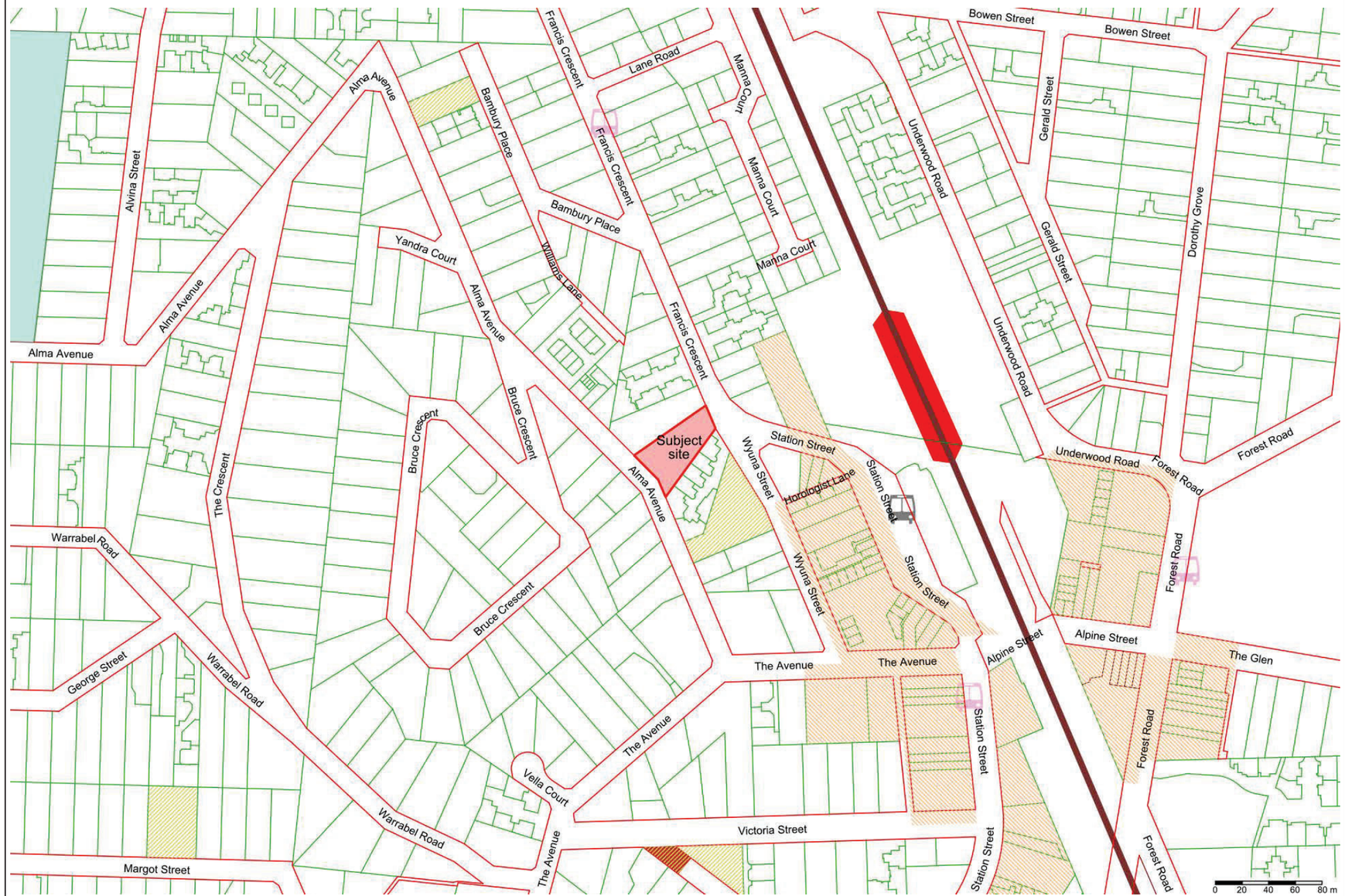
Clause 65 of the Knox Planning Scheme and Section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 set out decision guidelines/matters which the responsible authority must consider when deciding any planning application.

- 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 the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- The proposal complies with the Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 1.
- The proposal complies with the strategies and outcomes sought by the Significant Landscape Overlay – Schedule 2 and the Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 4.
- Subject to a condition, the proposal will comply with the maximum building and impervious surfaces requirements of the Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1.
- The proposal will comply with Clause 52.06, subject to conditions to reduce the number of children.
- The proposal provides for a non-residential use in an appropriate location within an established residential area, while ensuring the amenity of adjoining properties is not unreasonably affected.
- It is considered that the proposal will protect the visual dominance of vegetation through planting of new canopy trees consistent with outcomes for the Dandenong Foothills.



Knox City Council

ATTACHMENT 2

Address	7 Francis Crescent, FERNTREE GULLY
Application Number	P/2024/6269
Description	Use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre, reduce number of car parking spaces required under clause 52.06-5 and removal of vegetation
Ward	Dobson

LEGEND:

- Title Boundary
- Road Boundaries
- City Boundary
- Bus Route
- Reserves
- Commercial Areas
- Tertiary Schools
- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools
- P-12 School
- Bus Stops
- O Objector
- U Unit Development
- S Subject Property
- P Petition

N

Scale: **1:3000**

DISCLAIMER:

Roads, Title Boundaries and Planning Scheme Information - State of Victoria, Knox City Council
Aerial Photography - AAM (Flown January 2023 - unless otherwise stated)
Melbourne Water Drainage Information - Melbourne Water

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2. Planning information should be used only as a means of preliminary investigation. For accurate planning overlay information please obtain a Planning Certificate from the Department of Transport and Planning.
3. Drainage and flood extent information has been provided to Council on a yearly basis by Melbourne Water or by external consultants and is for indicative purposes only. Where the latest Melbourne Water drainage and flood extent mapping is critical, please contact Melbourne Water directly.



Knox City Council

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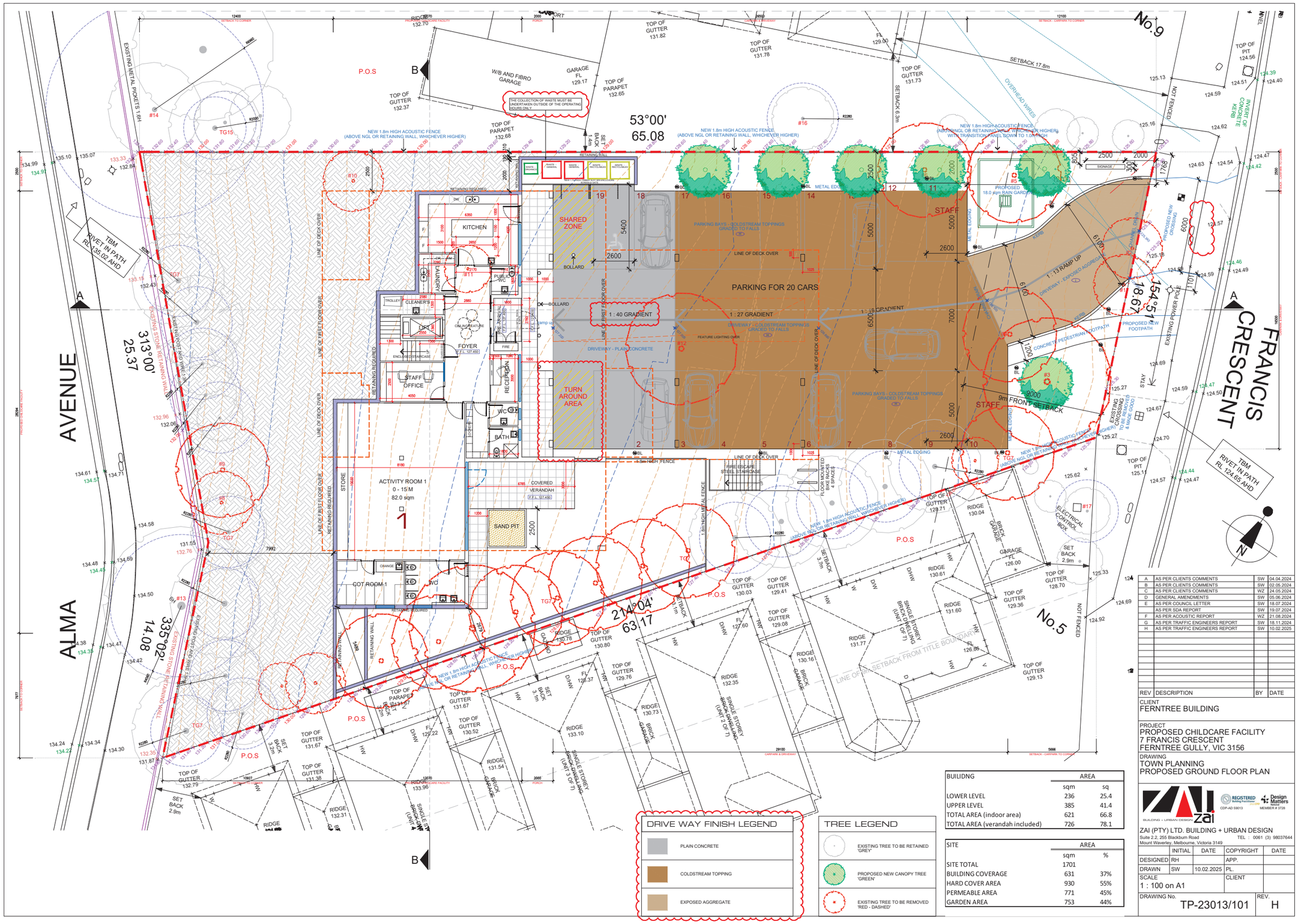
- Title Boundary
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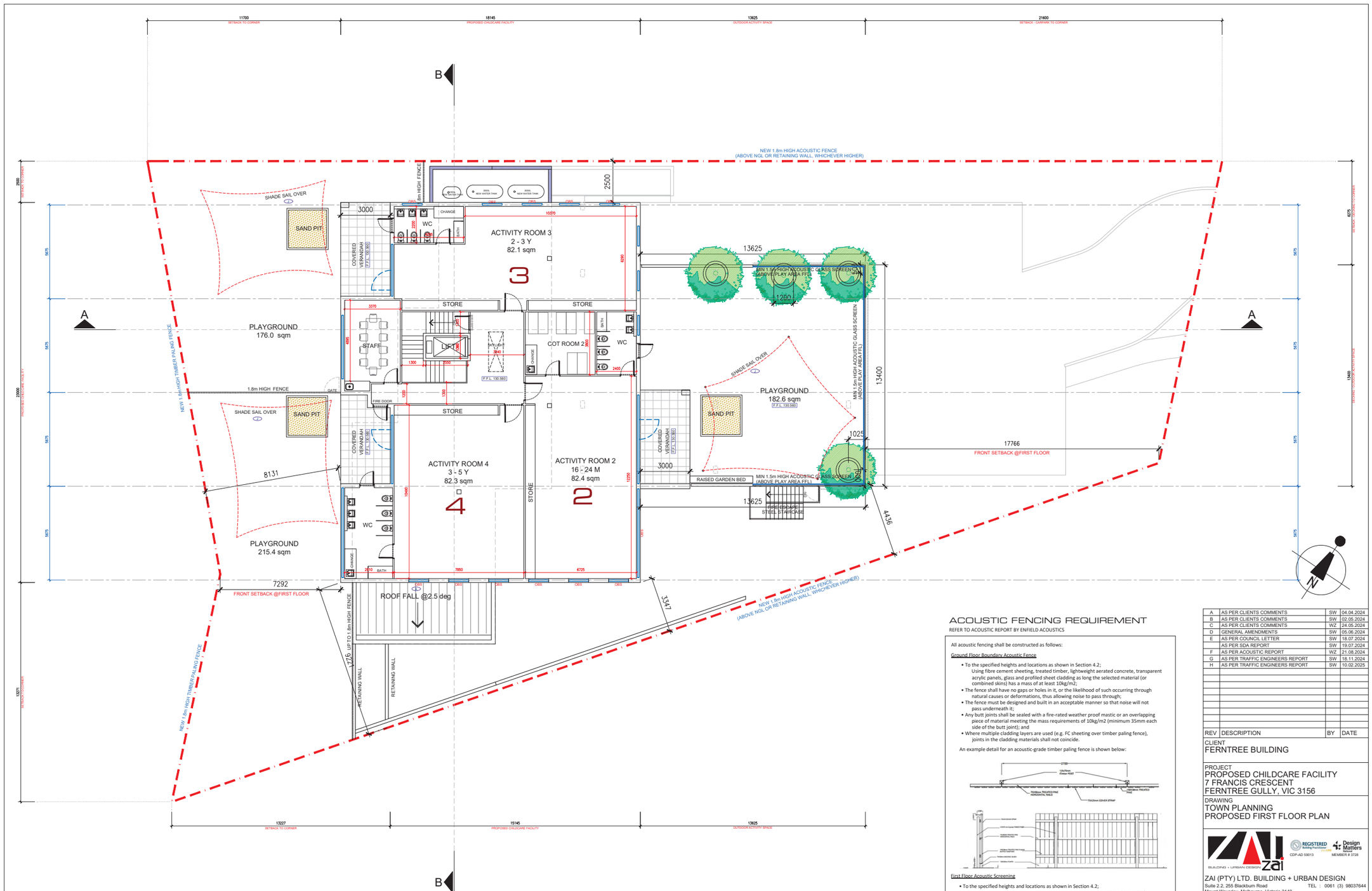
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AVENUE
ALMA
FRANCIS CRESCENT
No.9
No.5
313°00'
25.37
335°02'
14.08
214°04'
63.17
154°57'
18.67
53°00'
65.08
P.O.S
PARKING FOR 20 CARS
SHARED ZONE
TURN AROUND AREA
STAFF
KITCHEN
LAUNDRY
PUBLIC WC
CLEANER'S
LIFT
FOYER
STAFF OFFICE
RECEPTION
WC
BATH
ACTIVITY ROOM 1
0 - 15 M
82.0 sqm
COVERED VERANDAH
SAND PIT
COT ROOM 1
STORE
BOLLARD
1 : 40 GRADIENT
1 : 27 GRADIENT
1 : 13 RAMP UP
DRIVEWAY - PLAIN CONCRETE
DRIVEWAY - COLDSTREAM TOPPINGS GRADED TO FALLS
PARKING BAYS - COLDSTREAM TOPPINGS GRADED TO FALLS
LINE OF DECK OVER
LINE OF FIRST FLOOR OVER
RETAINING REQUIRED
NEW 1.8m HIGH ACOUSTIC FENCE (ABOVE NGL OR RETAINING WALL, WHICHEVER HIGHER)
EXISTING METAL PICKETS 1.8H
EXISTING STONE RETAINING WALL
EXISTING POST AND WIRE 1.8H
1.5m HIGH METAL FENCE
FIRE ESCAPE STEEL STAIRCASE
FLOOR MOUNTED BIKE RACKS
METAL EDGING
CONCRETE PEDESTRIAN FOOTPATH
PROPOSED NEW FOOTPATH
PROPOSED NEW CROSSING
PROPOSED 18.0 sqm RAIN GARDEN
EXISTING POWER POLE
EXISTING CROSSING TO BE REMOVED & MADE GOOD
OVERHEAD WIRES
NOT FENCED
SETBACK 17.8m
SETBACK 6.3m
9m FRONT SETBACK
SETBACK 3.7m
SETBACK 2.9m
SETBACK 3.1m
SETBACK 3.1m
SETBACK 2.9m
SINGLE STOREY BRICK DWELLING (UNIT 1 OF 7)
SINGLE STOREY BRICK DWELLING (UNIT 2 OF 7)
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SINGLE STOREY BRICK DWELLING (UNIT OF 7)
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GARAGE FL 126.00
GARAGE FL 129.17
GARAGE FL 127.60
GARAGE FL 126.86
GARAGE FL 127.78
GARAGE FL 127.22
GARAGE FL 127.37
TBM RIVET IN PATH RL 135.02 AHD
TBM RIVET IN PATH RL 124.65 AHD
ELECTRICAL CONTROL BOX
SIGNAGE
THE COLLECTION OF WASTE MUST BE UNDERTAKEN OUTSIDE OF THE OPERATING HOURS ONLY
RIDGE 132.70
TOP OF GUTTER 131.82
TOP OF GUTTER 131.78
TOP OF GUTTER 131.73
TOP OF GUTTER 132.37
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TOP OF GUTTER 129.41
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TOP OF GUTTER 129.13
TOP OF PIT 124.56
TOP OF PIT 125.17
RIDGE 132.96
RIDGE 133.10
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ACOUSTIC FENCING REQUIREMENT

REFER TO ACOUSTIC REPORT BY ENFIELD ACOUSTICS

All acoustic fencing shall be constructed as follows:

Ground Floor Boundary Acoustic Fence

- To the specified heights and locations as shown in Section 4.2; Using fibre cement sheeting, treated timber, lightweight aerated concrete, transparent acrylic panels, glass and profiled sheet cladding as long the selected material (or combined skins) has a mass of at least 10kg/m2;
- The fence shall have no gaps or holes in it, or the likelihood of such occurring through natural causes or deformations, thus allowing noise to pass through;
- The fence must be designed and built in an acceptable manner so that noise will not pass underneath it;
- Any butt joints shall be sealed with a fire-rated weather proof mastic or an overlapping piece of material meeting the mass requirements of 10kg/m2 (minimum 35mm each side of the butt joint); and
- Where multiple cladding layers are used (e.g. FC sheeting over timber paling fence), joints in the cladding materials shall not coincide.

An example detail for an acoustic-grade timber paling fence is shown below:

First Floor Acoustic Screening

- To the specified heights and locations as shown in Section 4.2;
- Using transparent acrylic panels, glass or concrete as long as the selected material (or combined skins) has a mass of at least 10kg/m2; and
- Balustrades shall be constructed to not form any gaps between glass panes or bead channels. Continuous silicone joints or channel beads covering glass pane joints are acceptable.

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H	AS PER TRAFFIC ENGINEERS REPORT	SW	10.02.2025

CLIENT
FERNTREE BUILDING

PROJECT
PROPOSED CHILDCARE FACILITY
7 FRANCIS CRESCENT
FERNTREE GULLY, VIC 3156

DRAWING
TOWN PLANNING
PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN

ZAI (PTY) LTD. BUILDING + URBAN DESIGN
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Mount Waverley, Melbourne, Victoria 3149
TEL : 0061 (3) 98037644

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FERNTREE BUILDING

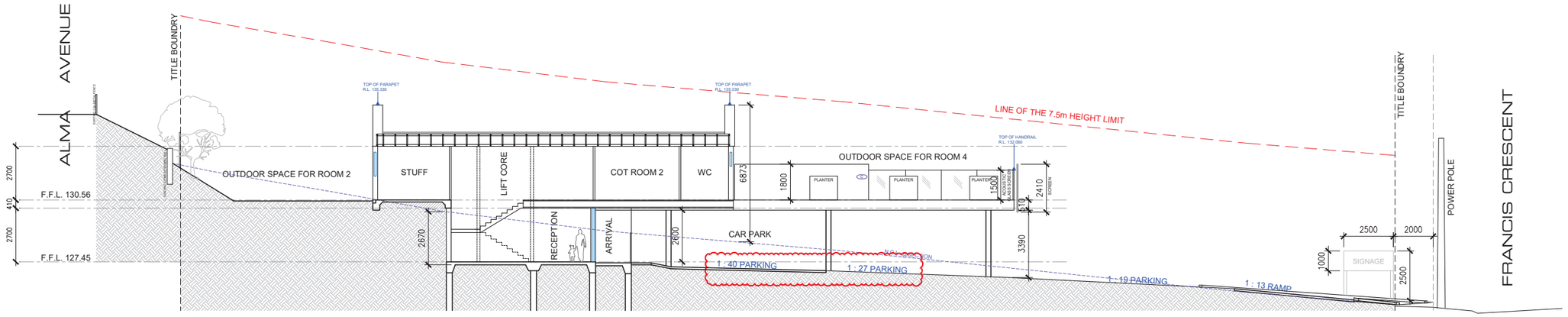
PROJECT
PROPOSED CHILDCARE FACILITY
7 FRANCIS CRESCENT
FERNTREE GULLY, VIC 3156

DRAWING
TOWN PLANNING
PROPOSED SITE & ROOF PLAN

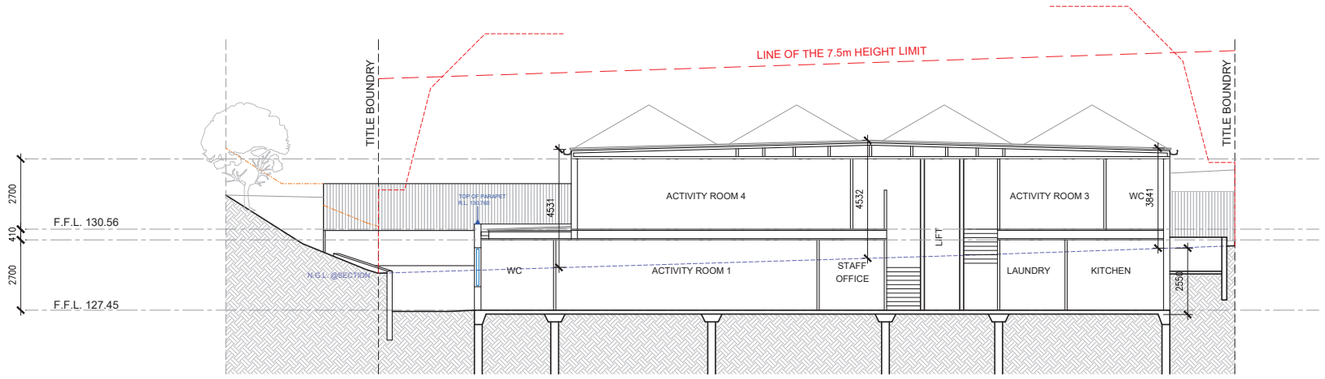
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TEL : 0061 (3) 98037644

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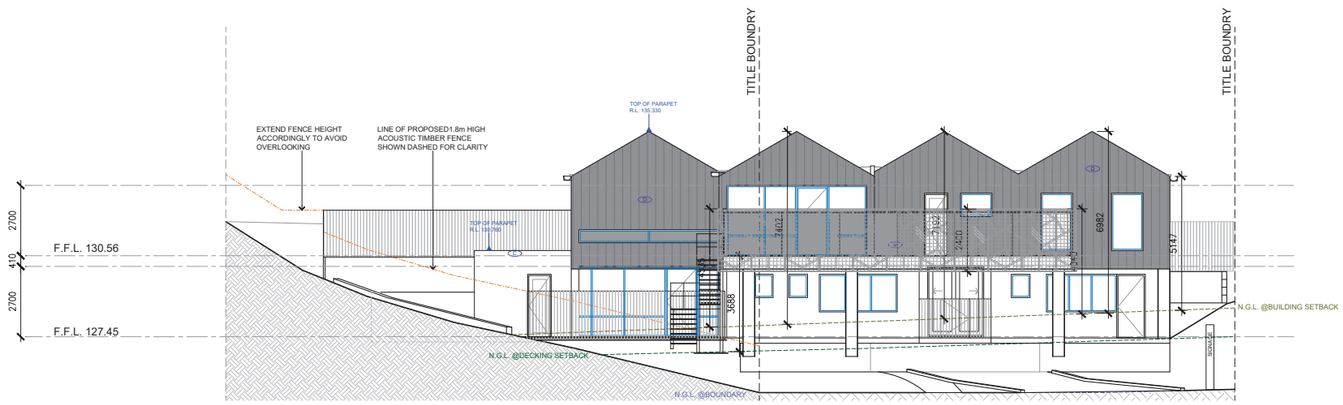
DRAWING No. TP-23013/103 REV. H



SECTION A - A
SCALE 1 : 100



SECTION B - B
SCALE 1 : 100



PROPOSED NORTHEAST ELEVATION
SCALE 1 : 100



MATERIALS + COLOURS SCHEDULE

Sustainable Design Assessment (SDA)

7 Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully VIC 3165
Project Number: 240596

Management
Façade Assessment: Refer to SDA report for the NCC 2109 Façade calculations (applicable to NCC 2022 Section J4D6)

Water
Fixtures and Fittings
Kitchen Taps: 5 Star WELS rating
Bathroom Taps: 5 Star WELS rating
WC: 4 Star WELS rating
Water Tanks: Connected to toilet flushing

Energy
Insulation: Roof – A minimum R2.72 insulation required
Suspended Floor – A minimum R1.58 insulation required
Wall and Glazing: External Wall – A minimum R1.5 insulation required
GF Glazing – U-value: 5.80 SHGC: 0.80
1F Glazing – U-value: 4.28 SHGC: 0.66
Heating and Cooling: Heating and cooling systems will be within one star, or coefficient of performance(COP) & energy efficiency ratios(EER) will be 85% better than most efficient equivalent capacity unit available
Solar Panel: Minimum 2kW system connected to childcare space
Water Heating: Water heating systems will be one star of the best available, or 85% or better than the most efficient equivalent capacity unit
Internal Lighting: The maximum illumination power density will be at least 10% lower than require in accordance with the NCC 2022 Vol:
- Office/Activity room/COT room: 4.05W/m2
- Kitchen space: 3.60W/m2
- Toilet space: 2.70W/m2

Stormwater
STORM Rating: 101%: Refer to STORM rating
Treatment types
Proposed Roof Area: 7,000L RWT connected to 466.5m2 roof space
Driveway: 6m2 raingarden

IEQ
Daylight Access: 48% of the childcare space will have at least 2% daylight factor
Ventilation: minimum 10% increase of outdoor air will be provided to the commercia area compared to the minimum required by AS 1668:2012.
Air Quality: All paints sealants, adhesives, carpet and engineered wood will meet the maximum total indoor pollutants emission limits.

Transport
Bicycle Parking: 4 bicycle spaces provided, please refer to plans for location

Waste
Convenience of Recycling: Recycling facilities will be conveniently located with general waste facilities
Food & Garden Waste: Facilities for on-site management of food and garden waste is provided.

Urban Ecology
Vegetation area: 44%
Innovation
No credits claimed

Report Prepared by PassivEnergy
For any questions/comments, please contact our office on (03) 8769 5619
Or email: info@passivenergy.com.au

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CLIENT
FERNTREE BUILDING

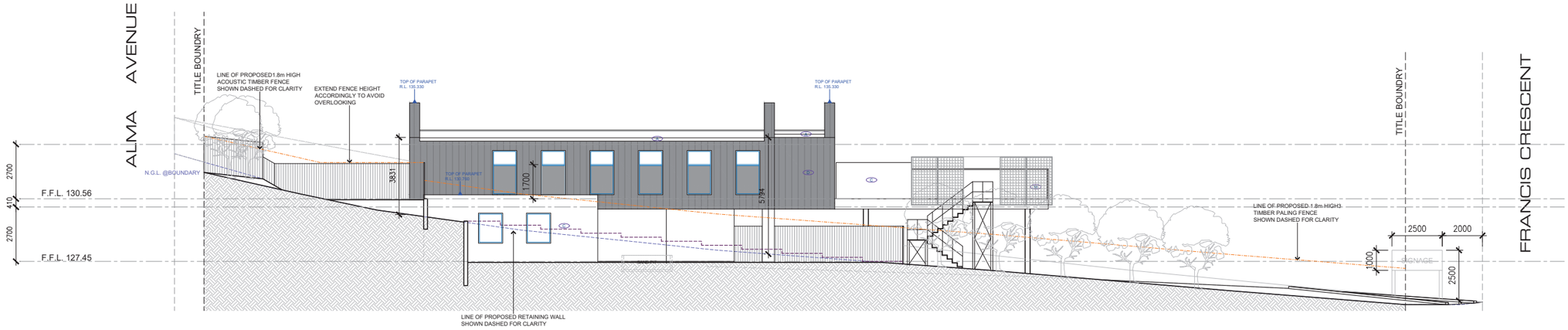
PROJECT
PROPOSED CHILDCARE FACILITY
7 FRANCIS CRESCENT
FERNTREE GULLY, VIC 3156

DRAWING
TOWN PLANNING
PROPOSED SECTIONS
PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

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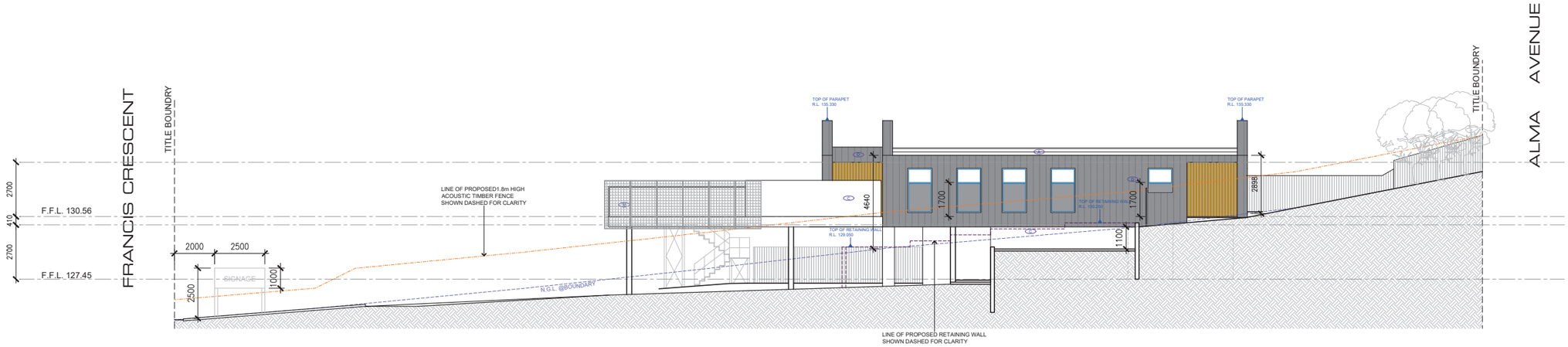
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DRAWING No. TP-23013/104
REV. H



PROPOSED SOUTHEAST ELEVATION

SCALE 1 : 100



PROPOSED NORTHWEST ELEVATION

SCALE 1 : 100



PROPOSED SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

SCALE 1 : 100



MATERIALS + COLOURS SCHEDULE

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CLIENT
FERNTREE BUILDING

PROJECT
PROPOSED CHILDCARE FACILITY
7 FRANCIS CRESCENT
FERNTREE GULLY, VIC 3156

DRAWING
TOWN PLANNING
PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

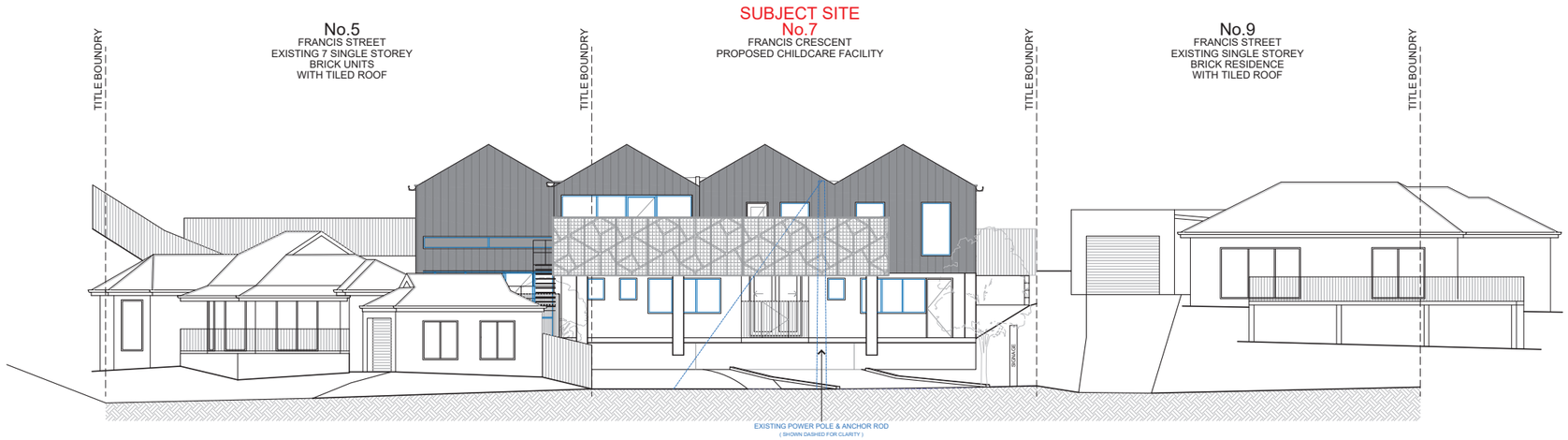
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Mount Waverley, Melbourne, Victoria 3149
TEL : 0061 (3) 98037644

REGISTERED Building Practitioners Act 1993 CDP-AD 59013
Design Matters National MEMBER # 3728

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REV. H



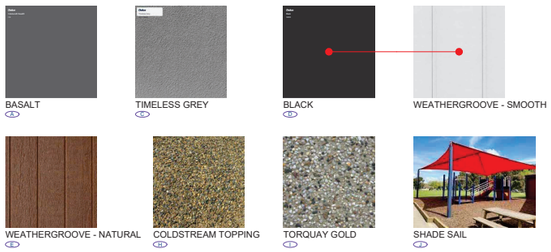
FRANCIS CRESCENT

PROPOSED STREETSCAPE
SCALE 1 : 100

SCHEDULE OF FINISHES & COLOURS.

	EXTERIOR FINISHES	SPECIFICATION	MANUFACTURER	COLOUR
A	ROOF	COLOURBOND STEEL	COLOURBOND	BASALT
B	FLASHING & GUTTERS & RWD's	COLOURBOND STEEL	COLOURBOND	BASALT
C	WALLS - RENDERED	RENDER/PAINTED TEXTURE FINISH	RENDER BY SPECIALIST / DULUX COLOUR	TIMELESS GREY
D	WALLS - CLADDING	WEATHERGROOVE 300mm SMOOTH	WEATHERTEX	BLACK
E	WALLS - CLADDING	WEATHERGROOVE 150mm NATURAL	WEATHERTEX	NATURAL
F	PORCH, EXTERNAL STEPS, & PEDESTRAIN FOOTPATH	NON SLIP FLOOR TILES	EDWARDS PAVERS OR EQUAL APPROVED	NATURAL
G	TERRACE	BLUESTONE TILES	BY SPECIALIST	NATURAL
H	INNER DRIVEWAY / PARKING BAYS	COLDSTREAM TOPPING	BY SPECIALIST	NATURAL
I	DRIVEWAY AT STREET INTERFACE	EXPOSED AGGREGATE	BY SPECIALIST	TORQUAY GOLD OR SIMILAR APPROVED
J	SHADE SAIL	PREFABRICATED SHADECLOTH & STEEL POSTS	BY SPECIALIST	RED
K	WINDOWS	ALUMINIUM / POWDER COATED - REF WINDOW SCHEDULE	A & L WINDOWS / DOORS	MONUMENT
L	FEATURE DECORATIVE SCREEN	ALUMINIUM FRAMED ACRYLIC PANELS - CUSTOMISED	BY SPECIALIST	AS PER ELEVATIONS & PERSPECTIVES
M	ROOFTOP DECKING	SELECTED COMPOSITE DECKING BOARD	MODWOOD	BLACK BEAN - BRUSHED FINISH

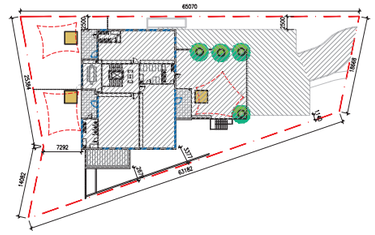
	INTERIOR FINISHES			
1	ACTIVITIES ROOM FLOORS	VINYL FLOOR SHEET	TO CLIENT SELECTION	TO CLIENT SELECTION
2	OFFICE/STAFF ROOM FLOORS	VINYL FLOOR SHEET	TO CLIENT SELECTION	TO CLIENT SELECTION
3	BATHROOM/LAUNDRY FLOORS	NON SKIP CERAMIC TILES	TO CLIENT SELECTION	TO CLIENT SELECTION
4	ALL OTHER FLOORS	VINYL FLOOR SHEET	TO CLIENT SELECTION	TO CLIENT SELECTION
5	STAIRS	TIMBER TO MATCH FLOOR TYPE / COLOUR	BY SPECIALIST	TO CLIENT SELECTION
6	SKIRTINGS	RAW SPLAYED 67 X 18 mm.	CORINTHIAN DOORS	PRIMED MDF [PAINTSA]
7	WALLS TO BATHROOMS	FULL HEIGHT CERAMIC TILES	TO CLIENT SELECTION	TO CLIENT SELECTION
8	WALLS TO ALL OTHER ROOMS	PAINT FINISH / WHISPHER WHITE W 10 B18	DULUX	OFF-WHITE
9	CILLS	PAINT FINISH / CHINA WHITE W B19	DULUX	OFF WHITE BUT DRAKER IN TONE
10	CORNICES	STANDARD COVE CORNICE 75mm SIZE PAINTED FINISH	GYPROCK	WHITE
11	CEILINGS	PAINTED FINISH	DULUX	WHITE
12	DOOR ARCHITRAVES	RAW SPLAYED 67 X 18 mm.	CORINTHIAN DOORS	WHITE / AQUANAMEL
13	DOORS	SOLID CORE DOORS AS PER DOOR SCHEDULE / PAINT FINISH	CORINTHIAN DOORS	CHINA WHITE / AQUANAMEL
14	KITCHEN SPLASHBACK	COLOURED GLASS FULL LENGTH OF COUNTER	BY SPECIALIST	TO CLIENT SELECTION
15	KITCHEN WORKTOPS	ARTIFICIAL STONE BENCHTOP	CORIAN	TO CLIENT SELECTION
16	KITCHEN CUPBOARDS	EMPOWITE FINISH	BY SPECIALIST	WHITE



MATERIALS + COLOURS SCHEDULE



GARDEN AREA PLAN
SCALE 1 : 500



GARDEN AREA PLAN
SCALE 1 : 500

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CLIENT
FERNTREE BUILDING

PROJECT
PROPOSED CHILDCARE FACILITY
7 FRANCIS CRESCENT
FERNTREE GULLY, VIC 3156

DRAWING
TOWN PLANNING
PROPOSED STREETSCAPE
SCHEDULE OF COLOURS & FINISHES

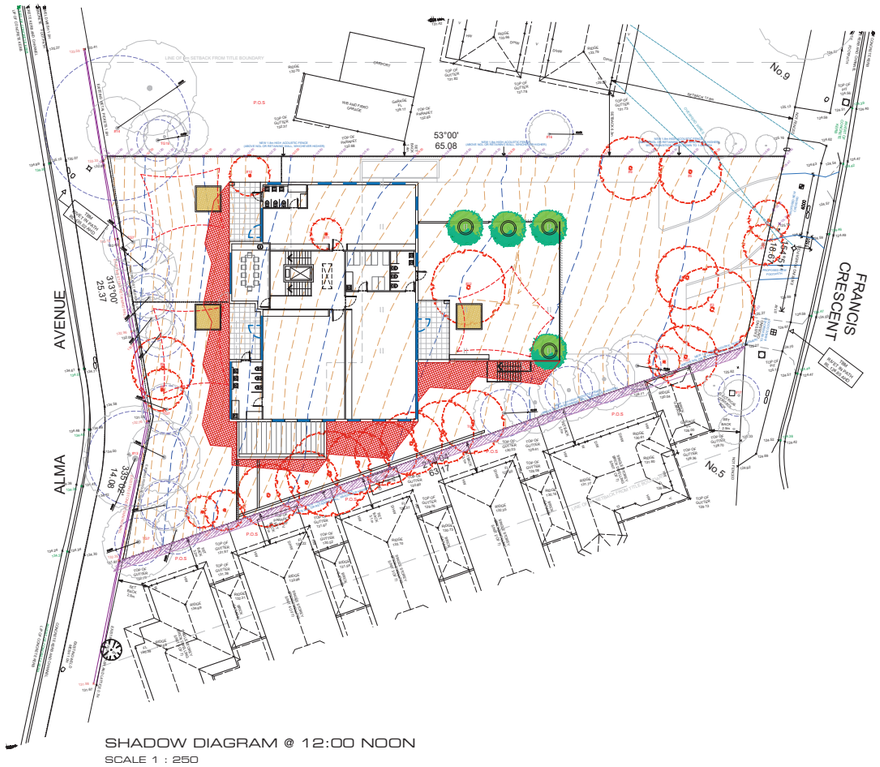
BUILDING + URBAN DESIGN
CDP-AD 59013
MEMBER # 3728
ZAI (PTY) LTD. BUILDING + URBAN DESIGN
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TEL : 0061 (3) 98037644

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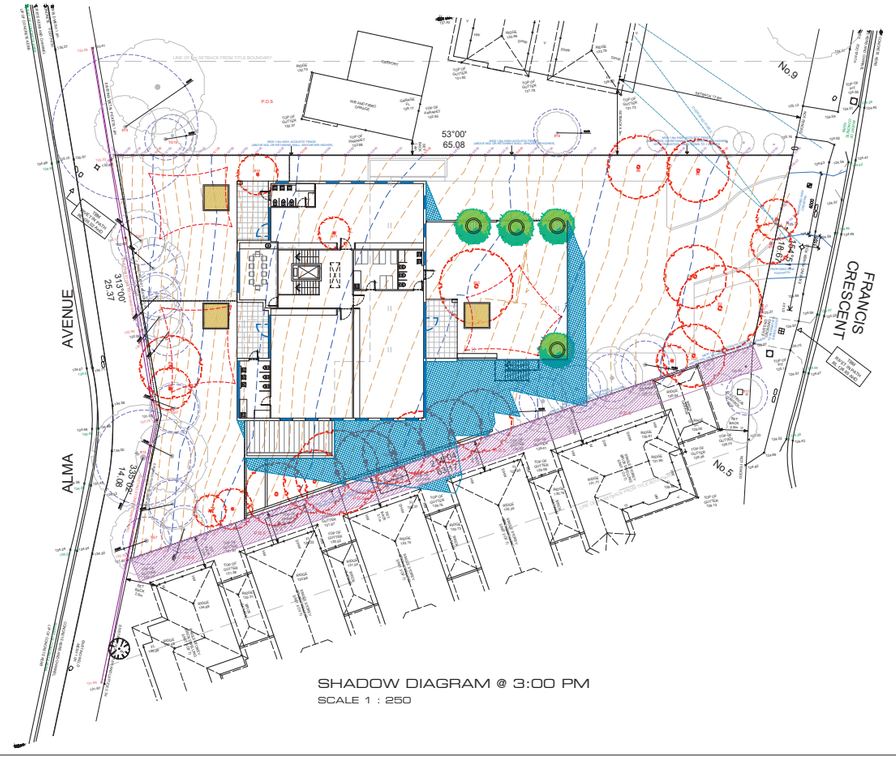
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SHADOW DIAGRAM @ 9:00 AM
SCALE 1 : 250

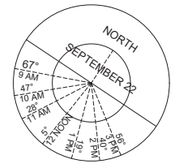


SHADOW DIAGRAM @ 12:00 NOON
SCALE 1 : 250



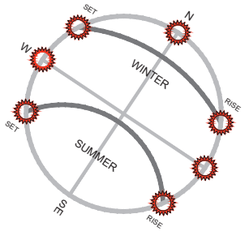
SHADOW DIAGRAM @ 3:00 PM
SCALE 1 : 250

EQUINOX : 22nd SEPTEMBER
MELBOURNE, VICTORIA



- 9:00 A.M. SEPTEMBER 22nd
- 12:00 NOON SEPTEMBER 22nd
- 3:00 P.M. SEPTEMBER 22nd
- FENCE SHADOWS

SUN PATH DIAGRAM



DIRECTION OF SUN MOVEMENT

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CLIENT
FERNTREE BUILDING

PROJECT
PROPOSED CHILDCARE FACILITY
7 FRANCIS CRESCENT
FERNTREE GULLY, VIC 3156

DRAWING
TOWN PLANNING
SHADOW DIAGRAM @ 9:00am,
12:00noon + 3:00pm ON 22nd SEPTEMBER

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7 Public Question Time

8 Officer Reports

8.1 Housing Monitoring Program Annual Report - 2024

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For Decision
Author:	Social Researcher, Seregious Be-ere
Manager:	Manager City Futures, Shiranthi Widan
Executive:	Director City Liveability, Matt Kelleher

SUMMARY
This report summarises the findings of Council's 17th annual Housing Monitoring Program for the 2024 calendar year. The program assesses Knox's alignment with the six objectives of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*.

The following are the highlights of the key findings in this report:

- **Since COVID, the number of new dwellings expected to be constructed in Knox has remained below the 11-year average of 684.** In 2024, 136 planning and subdivision permits were approved. Considering demolitions, if all these permits were fully enacted, Knox could see a net increase of 333 new dwellings. This figure is slightly below the numbers for 2021 (334), 2022 (373), and 2023 (384). In fact, the 2024 housing approvals represent the lowest number of net new dwellings in Knox in over a decade, since 2014.

- **New dwellings approved in 2024 were less aligned with the preferred character outlined in the *Housing Strategy 2015* compared to previous years.** In 2024, 68% of new dwellings approved were consistent with their Housing Strategy Area, a significant 20% decline from 88% in 2023. This marks the second lowest alignment since 2016 and falls below the nine-year average of 74%. The highest alignment was 88% in 2023, and the lowest was 64% in 2016. This decline is concerning, as it was expected that a significant share of approved dwellings would align with the preferred typology within a decade of implementing the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*.

- **Dwelling density significantly increased in the Bush Suburban area in 2024, while it decreased in Neighbourhood and Local Living areas compared to 2023.** Between 2023 and 2024, dwelling units per hectare decreased by 5% in Knox Neighbourhood areas and by 17% in Local Living areas, a departure from the previous year's trend of increases across all Housing Strategy Areas (HSAs). However, dwelling density in Bush Suburban areas increased significantly by 38% during the same period. If this growth continues, the density in Bush Suburban areas could surpass that of Knox Neighbourhood areas within a decade. This would not be the preferred growth pattern, as it could negatively impact Knox's significant biological (flora and fauna) and landscape values.

- **In 2024, approvals for residential aged care facilities rebounded, while apartment approvals declined compared to 2023**. In 2024, a 96-bed residential aged-care facility was approved,

unlike in 2022 and 2023. This aligns with the trend in 2021, when 214 beds were approved. Additionally, planning permits approved in 2024 would result in 39 new apartments if enacted, a decrease from the 59 apartments approved in 2023. Despite this decline, the 2024 figure is an improvement over 2022, where no apartments were approved (only 4 apartments were approved in 2021).

- **In 2024, Knox achieved the minimum target of 78 residential aged care places per 1,000.** In 2024, Knox reached the minimum national benchmark of 78 residential aged care places per 1,000 people aged 70 and above, the lowest ratio since 2015. This decline has been ongoing since 2015, and without a significant increase in RACF[1], Knox will likely fall below this benchmark next year. The population aged 70 and over in Knox is growing by at least 2% every five years, rising from 10.2% in 2016 to 12.4% in 2021 (ABS, 2022). Urgent action is needed to address this decline.

- **Building permits issued in 2024 increased by 35% compared to the previous year.** In 2024, 869 building permits were issued, compared to 643 in 2023 and 588 in 2022. This figure is above the 8-year average of 800 approvals. While 2022 had the lowest number of approvals since 2017, 2017 saw the highest with 1,136 permits. Tracking building permits is crucial as they provide more certainty about future construction in Knox than planning permits, offering a clearer indication of whether the housing challenge can be addressed in the short term.

- **Escalating housing costs and a severe shortage of affordable rental options.** Access to affordable housing remained a critical issue in Knox in 2024. Only 0.1% of rentals and 1% of property sales were affordable to 'very low income' households. Rental affordability has consistently deteriorated since 2020. For instance, 42% of rental properties were affordable to 'very low' and 'low income' households in 2020, but this dropped to 29% in 2024. The rate of this decline is troubling. The *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027* identifies actions that should be progressed to mitigate this trend.

- **A significant shortfall in social and affordable housing supply remains a critical policy concern in Knox in 2024.** In 2024, Knox fell short of the minimum estimated supply of social and affordable housing by 298 dwellings, creating a significant gap between available housing and the estimated need. With 1,505 social and affordable housing dwellings currently available and an estimated need of 2,407, there is a substantial shortfall of 902 dwellings. The decline of 31 social housing dwellings in 2024 further exacerbates the issue. Considering this growing challenge, it may be beneficial for Council to consider complementing existing approaches with alternative advocacy and forward-looking strategies. Exploring new and creative pathways could help support meaningful progress in addressing this important issue.

- **Growth in small dwellings (≤2 bedrooms) fell by 11% in 2024.** In 2024, only 21% of approved dwellings in Knox were small (two bedrooms or less), totalling 69 dwelling units, down from 32% (122 units) in 2023. The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* and *Plan for Victoria* highlight the need for diverse housing, yet large dwellings dominate in Knox. Council could collaborate with landowners/developers in Strategic Investigation Sites to develop apartments, increasing the availability of small dwellings. This would help meet the housing needs of the growing number of lone person and couple-only households, which currently make up 45.7% of households in Knox.

[1] Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF)

- **VCAT decisions on planning permits slightly increased in 2024 after hitting a low in 2023.** VCAT decided 15 residential planning applications for Knox in 2023, up from 12 in 2023 and 14 in 2022 and 2021. The 2023 figure was the lowest since 2012. In 2024, the number of cases remained below the six-year average of 24. Since 2014, 66% of Knox's planning permit refusals were overturned by VCAT. In most cases where Council's refusals were overturned by VCAT, applicants submitted amended applications that Council officers supported. Continuing to encourage amendments to address concerns could reduce appeals, saving time and benefiting both parties. It is noted that planning reform recently implemented by State Government to codify and streamline planning applications for multi-unit developments may impact future VCAT hearing numbers.

- **Knox achieved 100% of its ESD targets for potable water consumption and GHG emissions reduction in 2023-2024.** This implied that all permits for applicable new dwellings in 2022-2023 met both targets. This was equally the case in 2021-2022 financial year. In 2023-24, ESD data showed a 38% average reduction in potable water consumption and a 61% average reduction in GHG emissions for approved planning applications.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the findings in the Knox Housing Monitoring Program Annual Report for 2024 (Attachment 1).
2. Adopt the Knox Housing Monitoring Program Annual Report for 2024.
3. Note that the outcomes of this report will be considered as part of the ongoing review of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* currently underway.

1. DISCUSSION

The **Housing Monitoring Program Report** aims to assess progress towards the six objectives outlined in the **Knox Housing Strategy 2015**. It does so by analysing data on planning approvals, housing construction, and population demographics. This analysis is structured around a set of indicators that measure various aspects of housing in Knox, with a focus on new dwellings approved through the planning system in 2024. The **Knox Housing Monitoring Program - Annual Report for 2024** (covering the period from January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024) presents the findings from this analysis.

Key indicators examined include:

- Types and sizes of dwellings in approved planning permits.
- Alignment with Housing Strategy Areas.
- Dwelling density.
- Housing affordability, social housing, and residential aged care facilities.
- Tree canopy in residential areas.
- Sustainability measures in proposed dwellings.
- Walkability.
- VCAT decisions.
- Integrated Place-Based Plans.

Summary of Key Findings

Objective 1: A diversity of housing is provided in appropriate locations

An analysis of the planning and subdivision permits approved in 2024 revealed that, if fully enacted, there would be a net increase of 333 dwellings in Knox in the medium term. This represents a 13% decline from the 384 approvals in 2023, marking the lowest number of net new dwellings approved in Knox since 2014. For these new dwellings to be built, Knox would see a net loss of 85 detached houses and 14 dual occupancy houses, a slight increase from the net loss of 89 detached and four dual occupancy houses in 2023. As in previous years, no villa units, townhouses, or apartments were demolished for new developments.

In 2024, 68% of the approved new dwellings were the preferred type for their Housing Strategy Area, a significant decline from the 88% recorded in 2023, which was the highest since 2016. This means that 32% of the approved new dwellings in Knox were denser than the preferred type for their respective residential areas. However, the distinctive characteristics of the sites and proposed developments ensured that the required neighbourhood character outcomes could still be met. Additionally, 6% of the proposed developments were in the Strategic Investigation Sites, an 11% decline from 2023. These sites are currently outside the Housing Strategy Areas, and the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* does not explicitly define the preferred dwelling types for these sites.

The planning permits approved in 2024 also indicated varying dwelling densities per hectare in different Housing Strategy Areas: fewer dwellings per hectare in Bush Suburban (18 dwellings) and Knox Neighbourhood (20 dwellings), and higher densities in Local Living (45 dwellings) and Activity Areas (74 dwellings). This aligns with the Knox Housing Strategy 2015, which aims for higher density in Local Living and Activity Areas and lower density in Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas, respecting the neighbourhood character. However, the dwelling density per hectare in Bush Suburban areas increased significantly by 38% between 2023 and 2024. If this growth continues, the density in Bush Suburban areas could surpass that of Knox Neighbourhood areas within a decade.

Objective 2: Residential development responds to community needs, and allows people to age-in-place

The 2021 census figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) revealed that 45.7% of households in Knox are lone person and couple-only households. In 2024, the growth in small dwellings (two bedrooms or less) declined by 11%, with only 21% of approved planning permits for small dwellings. This means the proportion of approved small dwellings in 2024 has significantly fallen behind the rising number of small households in Knox. Although there was a 14% increase in small dwellings in 2023 compared to 2022, further improvements are needed. A lower number of smaller dwellings could limit housing choices for ageing residents looking to downsize, first homebuyers, couple-only households, or anyone keen to reduce their cost of living, as housing is the largest expenditure item for most households.

Access to affordable housing remained a critical issue in Knox in 2024. Only 5 rentals (0.1%) and 6 property sales (1%) were affordable to households within the 'very low income' brackets. Low-income households had slightly more rental options, but there were very few properties available for purchase. For instance, in the 12 months prior to June 2024, low-income households could only purchase approximately 86 (15%) of the 591 properties on the market. Access to affordable rentals has been on a persistent decline since a peak in 2020. Social housing options were also extremely limited, with a substantial gap of 902 dwellings between demand and supply, which

continued to widen. Knox was 298 dwellings short of the estimated minimum supply of social and affordable housing required in 2024. As of June 30, 2024, the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) documented 3,561 Priority Access and Register of Interest applicants waiting for social housing in Knox, a decline of 111 applicants from September 30, 2023. Despite this decline, the number of applicants on the VHR waiting list in Knox remains unacceptably high.

In 2024, approved planning permits yielded 39 apartments, a 34% decline from the 59 apartments approved in 2023, but an improvement over 2022, when no apartments were approved. Notably, a 96-bed residential aged-care facility was approved in 2024, unlike in 2022 and 2023. This aligns with 2021, when 214 beds in residential aged-care facilities were approved. However, residential aged care places in Knox have fallen to the national minimum benchmark of 78 places per 1,000 people aged 70 and above, highlighting the need for urgent action to address the looming crisis in the delivery of residential aged care facilities in Knox.

Objective 3: Energy, water, and waste efficient design are increased in residential dwellings

The Environmental Sustainability Design (ESD) assessments, required for planning permit applications involving two or more new dwellings, indicated that all buildings assessed in 2023-24 met the best practice targets for reducing potable water consumption (25%) and greenhouse gas emissions (50%), consistent with 2022-23. The ESD data for 2023-24 showed an average reduction of 38% in potable water consumption, a slight decline from 39% in 2022-23 and 41.3% in 2021-22. In the same fiscal year, the average reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for approved planning applications was 61%, a significant 10% decline from the 2022-23 reduction of 71%.

Additionally, the 2022-23 ESD data indicated that over 2.1 million litres of rainwater tank capacity and 740 kW of solar panels were approved for installation through the planning scheme in Knox. This compares to over 3 million litres of rainwater tank capacity and 830 kW of solar panels committed in the 2022-23 fiscal year. These declines are likely due to the 13% reduction in net total new dwellings approved in 2024 compared to 2023. Despite these declines, the reduction in GHG emissions from electricity consumption in residential buildings will contribute to Knox's efforts to achieve net zero emissions within the community by 2040.

Objective 4: Housing design in Knox better responds to neighbourhood identity and creates a stronger sense of place

One way to assess the proximity of services to people is by using the Walkscore Index. New residential developments in the high Walkscore areas of Knox are more desirable because residents in these neighbourhoods have access to essential amenities and socio-economic infrastructure and services. In 2024, only 31% of the net total new dwellings approved in planning permits were in "Very walkable" locations in Knox, a significant decline from 47% in previous years. This means that 69% of the dwellings approved in 2024 had Walkscores below 70, indicating they were not in "Very walkable" areas.

It is concerning that the net total new dwellings approved in "Very walkable" areas of Knox in 2024 fell below the nine-year average of 36%. The highest percentages were 48% in both 2016 and 2019, while the lowest was 15% in 2020. Additionally, 51% of the approved net new dwellings in 2024 were in areas considered more walkable than the average score for their suburb. This represents a decline from 56%, 67%, and 59% in the post-COVID years.

Objective 5: Protect and enhance the landscape and environmental values of natural areas of significance

One of the defining features of Knox is its leafy green feel, an aesthetic deeply cherished by residents. As Knox's population continues to grow, it is increasingly important to ensure that residential development does not significantly erode the area's unique and valued environmental and ecological resources. The planning permits approved in 2024 indicated that the number of dwellings per hectare was lower in the Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas. This aligns with the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*, which aims for higher density dwellings in Local Living and Activity Areas, and lower density development in Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas.

No new tree canopy data has been captured beyond what was reported in the previous three years' Housing Monitoring reports. Data from the then Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in 2018 showed Knox's overall tree canopy coverage at 18%, with urban areas at 16.3%. The data also revealed a 6% decline in native vegetation cover in Knox since the late 1980s. Consequently, the Knox *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024 – 2034* recommends that Council explore and implement concrete steps to regularly map and track canopy changes over time. Collaboration with the State Government is necessary to capture new tree canopy data, as the *Plan for Victoria* targets a 30% tree canopy cover in the urban areas of Greater Melbourne.

Objective 6: Development responds to neighbourhoods in an integrated and balanced manner

To achieve integrated and balanced development, Council has outlined explicit policies and strategies in the Knox Planning Scheme. Consistence between Council's planning decisions and those of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) is crucial for gauging alignment with the Knox Planning Scheme.

In 2024, VCAT decided on 15 residential planning application cases for Knox City Council, an increase of three cases from 2023. VCAT upheld two applications refused by Council and overturned seven refusals. Notably, all six applications approved by Council, but challenged at VCAT, were upheld. Since the adoption of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*, the lowest number of residential cases lodged at VCAT from Knox was in 2023, with 2021 and 2022 also recording low numbers.

It is positive that the number of VCAT cases from Knox in 2024 remains below the six-year average of approximately 24 cases. If this trend of fewer appeals continues, it may indicate that planning permit applicants and neighbours are increasingly satisfied with Council's decisions or that community members have limited capacity to engage in the planning appeal process. In most cases where Council's refusals were overturned by VCAT, applicants submitted amended applications that Council officers supported. Continuing to encourage amendments to address concerns could reduce appeals, saving time and benefiting both parties.

Table 1. Summary of Progress Towards Housing Strategy Objectives in 2024

Council Initiative is on Track/Achieved*	Further Improvement Required*	Results do not Indicate a Definite Direction

Objective	Indicative Result of Council's Housing Related Action	Target	Achievement Rating
1	In 2024, 136 approved permits could lead to a net increase of 333 new dwellings in Knox.	N/A	
	68% of dwellings approved are consistent with their Housing Strategy Area.	50%	
	Dwelling density per hectare: Bush Suburban 18, Knox Neighbourhood 20, Local Living 45, and Activity Areas 74 in 2024.	N/A	
2	Dwelling diversity: Small dwellings 21%, 3 bedrooms 17%, 4+ bedrooms 62% in 2024.	46% small dwellings	
	39 apartments approved in 2024; 96-bed residential aged care facility approved in 2024.	N/A	
	Residential aged care places in Knox declined to the national minimum benchmark.	78 RAC[2] places /1000 people 70yrs+	
	In 2024, critical concerns include rising housing costs, a severe shortage of affordable rental options, and a significant shortfall in social and affordable housing.	**298 social and affordable housing units** are needed to meet the minimum supply, while **902 dwellings** are required to meet the demand in 2024	
3	In 2024, all approved developments of two or more dwellings met Environmentally Sustainable Design targets for water reduction and greenhouse gas emissions.	100%	
4	In 2024, 31% of the net new dwellings approved in Knox were located in "very walkable" areas.	50+%	
5	As of 2018, tree canopy cover in Knox stands at 18% overall, with 16.3% in its urbanised areas.	30% by 2050	
6	VCAT decided 15 residential planning applications for Knox in 2024.	N/A	

*Results influenced by property market conditions and other considerations.

It is important to clarify that the Red Achievement Ratings in Table 1 above —particularly in relation to Objectives 2 and 4, which indicate that "Further Improvement is Required"—do not reflect a failure on the part of Council or its processes. For Objective 2, the delivery of small dwellings, social and affordable housing, and residential aged care (RAC) facilities is largely influenced by market dynamics. Council's role is primarily one of advocacy—engaging with Homes Victoria for social housing and encouraging the private and not-for-profit sectors to invest in and deliver these types of housing.

Similarly, for Objective 4, improving walkability in Knox is heavily dependent on investment in public transport and other critical social and economic infrastructure—areas that fall under the

[2] RAC (Residential Aged Care)

responsibility of State and Federal Governments. Council does not have the financial capacity to deliver major infrastructure projects. Instead, its role is to advocate for such investments from higher levels of government.

Summary of Key Future Actions

The findings and outcomes of this report will elicit the following key future actions:

- The key findings and outcomes of this report will provide relevant data and information that will feed into, inform and enrich the ongoing review of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*. This report has discussed, highlighted and rated the performance of each of the six objectives of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*. In fact, the main purpose of the Knox *Housing Monitoring Program* report is to monitor and annually report on the performance of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*. As such, the findings in the 2024 report and previous reports will serve as key foundational documents in the review of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*. For example, in response to the findings of the 2022 Housing Monitoring Program, the City Strategy and Planning team noted that "*As part of the project scope, the findings of the most recent Knox Housing Monitoring Program Report will be considered*." Also, a housing capacity assessment that was conducted by a consultant on behalf of Council effectively used the data and findings in the *Knox Housing Monitoring Program* reports for 2022 and 2023. This means the 2024 report will equally provide updated data on important residential development matters in Knox, now and into the future.
- The 2024 Housing Monitoring Program report may guide Council's response to the new *Plan for Victoria*. It details Knox's status on housing diversity, need, choice, density, capacity, affordability, walkability, tree canopy cover, and environmental sustainability—key themes in the Plan for Victoria. This report details Knox's current residential development status and alignment with the *Plan for Victoria*, highlighting necessary changes.
- The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* mandates annual performance monitoring and reporting through the *Knox Housing Monitoring Program*. To align with this directive, additional data sources and indicators will be developed and refined based on the 2024 findings, ensuring accurate tracking and monitoring of the strategy's performance in future reports.
- Regular tree canopy mapping is essential for monitoring changes. Council officers are seeking reliable data sources and has used some data from DEECA, which has not committed to future releases. The Knox *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024–2034* and the State Government's *Plan Victoria* recommends setting incremental canopy milestones to reach a 30% canopy cover by 2050. Without these targets, progress assessment is challenging.

2. ENGAGEMENT

This report has been prepared by the Research and Geospatial Analytics team. The City Strategy and Planning team, and the City Planning and Building Department were consulted to collate the required data and information. Homes Victoria and other external agencies were also consulted.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct social implications of this report, but it does suggest areas of continued further policy focus in areas related to housing, liveability and sustainability. The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* seeks where possible, to address residents' concerns about social issues such as the availability of affordable housing or aged care accommodation. This report has highlighted an area where Council appears to be delivering good social outcomes for residents (residential aged care)

and an area where supply in Knox appears not to be meeting demand (social and affordable housing).

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS
The subject of this report has been considered in the context of climate change and its relevance to the Knox Climate Response Plan 2021 – 2031.

The Housing Monitoring Program - Annual Report for 2024 presents data on outcomes related to climate change (for example, tree canopy cover, walkability and sustainability adaptations in proposed developments). It is anticipated that this information will inform decisions that impact on Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, and exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation. However, it is important to note that the implementation of the recommendations in this report is considered to have no direct impact upon these things.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS
The Knox Housing Strategy 2015 seeks in part to address residents' concerns about the impact of residential development on neighbourhood amenities and character. The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 also seek to encourage environmentally sustainable design outcomes that deliver more efficient use of resources and reductions in waste. In line with this, the Knox Housing Strategy 2015 aims to strengthen Council's approach to balancing residential development that meets the diverse needs of the community and protects environmental and neighbourhood character values.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
The Housing Monitoring Program - Annual Report for 2024 was completed within the existing City Futures 2024-2025 budget. It is anticipated that the Housing Monitoring Program will continue to be completed within proposed annual budgets.

7. RISKS
Council officers have reviewed the potential risks connected to this report and have identified no known risks associated with this report.

8. KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025
Neighbourhoods, Housing, and Infrastructure
Strategy 2.1 - Plan for and support diverse housing to meet changing community needs.

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 - Housing Monitoring Program Report for 2024 [**8.1.1** - 63 pages]

Knox Housing Monitoring Program

Annual Report for 2024

Knox City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the City of Knox, the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation.

Disclaimer

This report is provided for information, and it does not purport to be complete. While care has been taken to ensure the content in the report is accurate, we cannot guarantee that the report is without flaw of any kind. There may be errors and omissions, or it may not be wholly appropriate for your particular purposes. In addition, the publication is a snapshot in time based on historic information which is liable to change. Knox City Council accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability or any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information contained in this report.

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Executive Summary

This report aims to evaluate the progress made towards the six objectives outlined in the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*. By analysing data on planning approvals, housing construction, and population demographics; the report provides a comprehensive overview of housing growth in Knox. The analysis is structured around a set of indicators designed to measure various aspects of housing, with a particular focus on new dwellings approved through the planning system in 2024.

The following are the key highlights from this report:

- **Since COVID, the number of new dwellings expected to be constructed in Knox has remained below the 11-year average of 684.** In 2024, 136 planning and subdivision permits were approved. Considering demolitions, if all these permits were fully enacted, Knox could see a net increase of 333 new dwellings. This figure is slightly below the numbers for 2021 (334), 2022 (373), and 2023 (384). In fact, the 2024 housing approvals represent the lowest number of net new dwellings in Knox in over a decade, since 2014.
- **New dwellings approved in 2024 were less aligned with the preferred character outlined in the *Housing Strategy 2015* compared to previous years.** In 2024, 68% of new dwellings approved were consistent with their Housing Strategy Area, a significant 20% decline from 88% in 2023. This marks the second lowest alignment since 2016 and falls below the nine-year average of 74%. The highest alignment was 88% in 2023, and the lowest was 64% in 2016. This decline is concerning, as it was expected that a significant share of approved dwellings would align with the preferred typology within a decade of implementing the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*.
- **Dwelling density significantly increased in the Bush Suburban area in 2024, while it decreased in Neighbourhood and Local Living areas compared to 2023.** Between 2023 and 2024, dwelling units per hectare decreased by 5% in Knox Neighbourhood areas and by 17% in Local Living areas, a departure from the previous year's trend of increases across all Housing Strategy Areas (HSAs). However, dwelling density in Bush Suburban areas increased significantly by 38% during the same period. If this growth continues, the density in Bush Suburban areas could surpass that of Knox Neighbourhood areas within a decade. This would not be the preferred growth pattern, as it could negatively impact Knox's significant biological (flora and fauna) and landscape values.
- **In 2024, approvals for residential aged care facilities rebounded, while apartment approvals declined compared to 2023**. In 2024, a 96-bed residential aged-care facility was approved, unlike in 2022 and 2023. This aligns with the trend in 2021, when 214 beds were approved. Additionally, planning permits approved in 2024 would result in 39 new apartments if enacted, a decrease from the 59 apartments approved in 2023. Despite this decline, the 2024 figure is an improvement over 2022, where no apartments were approved (only 4 apartments were approved in 2021).
- **In 2024, Knox achieved the minimum target of 78 residential aged care places per 1,000 people aged 70 and above.** In 2024, Knox reached the minimum national benchmark of 78 residential aged care places per 1,000 people aged 70 and above, the lowest ratio since 2015. This decline has been ongoing since 2015, and without a significant increase in RACF[1], Knox will likely fall below this benchmark next year. The population aged 70 and over in Knox is growing by at least 2% every five years, rising from 10.2% in 2016 to 12.4% in 2021 (ABS, 2022). Urgent action is needed to address this decline.

[1] Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF)

- **Building permits issued in 2024 increased by 35% compared to the previous year.** In 2024, 869 building permits were issued, compared to 643 in 2023 and 588 in 2022. This figure is above the 8-year average of 800 approvals. While 2022 had the lowest number of approvals since 2017, 2017 saw the highest with 1,136 permits. Tracking building permits is crucial as they provide more certainty about future construction in Knox than planning permits, offering a clearer indication of whether the housing challenge can be addressed in the short term.
- **Escalating housing costs and a severe shortage of affordable rental options.** Access to affordable housing remained a critical issue in Knox in 2024. Only 0.1% of rentals and 1% of property sales were affordable to 'very low income' households. Rental affordability has consistently deteriorated since 2020. For instance, 42% of rental properties were affordable to 'very low' and 'low income' households in 2020, but this dropped to 29% in 2024. The rate of this decline is troubling. The *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027* identifies actions that should be progressed to mitigate this issue.
- **A significant shortfall in social and affordable housing supply remains a critical policy concern in Knox in 2024.** In 2024, Knox fell short of the minimum estimated supply of social and affordable housing by 298 dwellings, creating a significant gap between available housing and the estimated need. With 1,505 social and affordable housing dwellings currently available and an estimated need of 2,407, there is a substantial shortfall of 902 dwellings. The decline of 31 social housing dwellings in 2024 further exacerbates the issue. Considering this growing challenge, it may be beneficial for Council to consider complementing existing approaches with alternative advocacy and forward-looking strategies. Exploring new and creative pathways could help support meaningful progress in addressing this important issue.
- **Growth in small dwellings (≤2 bedrooms) fell by 11% in 2024.** In 2024, only 21% of approved dwellings in Knox were small (two bedrooms or less), totalling 69 dwelling units, down from 32% (122 units) in 2023. The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* and *Plan for Victoria* highlight the need for diverse housing, yet large dwellings dominate in Knox. Council could collaborate with landowners/developers in Strategic Investigation Sites to develop apartments, increasing the availability of small dwellings. This would help meet the housing needs of the growing number of lone person and couple-only households, which currently make up 45.7% of households in Knox.
- **VCAT decisions on planning permits slightly increased in 2024 after hitting a low in 2023.** VCAT decided 15 residential planning applications for Knox in 2023, up from 12 in 2023 and 14 in 2022 and 2021. The 2023 figure was the lowest since 2012. In 2024, the number of cases remained below the six-year average of 24. Since 2014, 66% of Knox's planning permit refusals were overturned by VCAT. In most cases where Council's refusals were overturned by VCAT, applicants submitted amended applications that Council officers supported. Continuing to encourage amendments to address concerns could reduce appeals, saving time and benefiting both parties.
- **Knox achieved 100% of its ESD targets for potable water consumption and GHG emissions reduction in 2023-2024.** This implied that all permits for applicable new dwellings in 2022-2023 met both targets. This was equally the case in 2021-2022 financial year. In 2023-24, ESD data showed a 38% average reduction in potable water consumption and a 61% average reduction in GHG emissions for approved planning applications.

Summary of Key Findings

Objective 1: A diversity of housing is provided in appropriate locations

An analysis of the planning and subdivision permits approved in 2024 revealed that, if fully enacted, there would be a net increase of 333 dwellings in Knox in the medium term. This represents a 13% decline from the 384 approvals in 2023, marking the lowest number of net new dwellings approved in Knox since 2014. For these new dwellings to be built, Knox would see a net loss of 85 detached houses and 14 dual occupancy houses, a slight increase from the net loss of 89 detached and four dual occupancy houses in 2023. As in previous years, no villa units, townhouses, or apartments were demolished for new developments.

In 2024, 68% of the approved new dwellings were the preferred type for their Housing Strategy Area, a significant decline from the 88% recorded in 2023, which was the highest since 2016. This means that 32% of the approved new dwellings in Knox were denser than the preferred type for their respective residential areas. However, the distinctive characteristics of the sites and proposed developments ensured that the required neighbourhood character outcomes could still be met. Additionally, 6% of the proposed developments were in the Strategic Investigation Sites, an 11% decline from 2023. These sites are currently outside the Housing Strategy Areas, and the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* does not explicitly define the preferred dwelling types for these sites.

The planning permits approved in 2024 also indicated varying dwelling densities per hectare in different Housing Strategy Areas: fewer dwellings per hectare in Bush Suburban (18 dwellings) and Knox Neighbourhood (20 dwellings), and higher densities in Local Living (45 dwellings) and Activity Areas (74 dwellings). This aligns with the Knox Housing Strategy 2015, which aims for higher density in Local Living and Activity Areas and lower density in Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas, respecting the neighbourhood character. However, the dwelling density per hectare in Bush Suburban areas increased significantly by 38% between 2023 and 2024. If this growth continues, the density in Bush Suburban areas could surpass that of Knox Neighbourhood areas within a decade.

Objective 2: Residential development responds to community needs, and allows people to age-in-place

The 2021 census figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) revealed that 45.7% of households in Knox are lone person and couple-only households. In 2024, the growth in small dwellings (two bedrooms or less) declined by 11%, with only 21% of approved planning permits for small dwellings. This means the proportion of approved small dwellings in 2024 has significantly fallen behind the rising number of small households in Knox. Although there was a 14% increase in small dwellings in 2023 compared to 2022, further improvements are needed. A lower number of smaller dwellings could limit housing choices for ageing residents looking to downsize, first homebuyers, couple-only households, or anyone keen to reduce their cost of living, as housing is the largest expenditure item for most households.

Access to affordable housing remained a critical issue in Knox in 2024. Only 5 rentals (0.1%) and 6 property sales (1%) were affordable to households within the 'very low income' brackets. Low-income households had slightly more rental options, but there were very few properties available for purchase. For instance, in the 12 months prior to June 2024, low-income households could only purchase approximately 86 (15%) of the 591 properties on the market. Access to affordable rentals has been on a persistent decline since a peak in 2020. Social housing options were also extremely limited, with a substantial gap of 902 dwellings between demand and supply, which continued to widen. Knox was 298 dwellings short of the estimated minimum supply of social and affordable housing required in 2024. As of June 30, 2024, the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) documented 3,561 Priority Access and Register of Interest applicants waiting for social housing in Knox, a decline of 111 applicants from September 30, 2023. Despite this decline, the number of applicants on the VHR waiting list in Knox remains unacceptably high.

In 2024, approved planning permits yielded 39 apartments, a 34% decline from the 59 apartments approved in 2023, but an improvement over 2022, when no apartments were approved. Notably, a 96-bed residential aged-care facility was approved in 2024, unlike in 2022 and 2023. This aligns with 2021, when 214 beds in residential aged-care facilities were approved. However, residential aged care places in Knox have fallen to the national minimum benchmark of 78 places per 1,000 people aged 70 and above, highlighting the need for urgent action to address the looming crisis in the delivery of residential aged care facilities in Knox.

Objective 3: Energy, water, and waste efficient design are increased in residential dwellings

The Environmental Sustainability Design (ESD) assessments, required for planning permit applications involving two or more new dwellings, indicated that all buildings assessed in 2023-24 met the best practice targets for reducing potable water consumption (25%) and greenhouse gas emissions (50%), consistent with 2022-23. The ESD data for 2023-24 showed an average reduction of 38% in potable water consumption, a slight decline from 39% in 2022-23 and 41.3% in 2021-22. In the same fiscal year, the average reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for approved planning applications was 61%, a significant 10% decline from the 2022-23 reduction of 71%.

Additionally, the 2022-23 ESD data indicated that over 2.1 million litres of rainwater tank capacity and 740 kW of solar panels were approved for installation through the planning scheme in Knox. This compares to over 3 million litres of rainwater tank capacity and 830 kW of solar panels committed in the 2022-23 fiscal year. These declines are likely due to the 13% reduction in net total new dwellings approved in 2024 compared to 2023. Despite these declines, the reduction in GHG emissions from electricity consumption in residential buildings will contribute to Knox's efforts to achieve net zero emissions within the community by 2040.

Objective 4: Housing design in Knox better responds to neighbourhood identity and creates a stronger sense of place

One way to assess the proximity of services to people is by using the Walkscore Index. New residential developments in the high Walkscore areas of Knox are more desirable because residents in these neighbourhoods have access to essential amenities and socio-economic infrastructure and services. In 2024, only 31% of the net total new dwellings approved in planning permits were in "Very walkable" locations in Knox, a significant decline from 47% in previous years. This means that 69% of the dwellings approved in 2024 had Walkscores below 70, indicating they were not in "Very walkable" areas.

It is concerning that the net total new dwellings approved in "Very walkable" areas of Knox in 2024 fell below the nine-year average of 36%. The highest percentages were 48% in both 2016 and 2019, while the lowest was 15% in 2020. Additionally, 51% of the approved net new dwellings in 2024 were in areas considered more walkable than the average score for their suburb. This represents a decline from 56%, 67%, and 59% in the post-COVID years.

Objective 5: Protect and enhance the landscape and environmental values of natural areas of significance

One of the defining features of Knox is its leafy green feel, an aesthetic deeply cherished by residents. As Knox's population continues to grow, it is increasingly important to ensure that residential development does not significantly erode the area's unique and valued environmental and ecological resources. The planning permits approved in 2024 indicated that the number of dwellings per hectare was lower in the Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas. This aligns with the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*, which aims for higher density dwellings in Local Living and Activity Areas, and lower density development in Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas.

No new tree canopy data has been captured beyond what was reported in the previous three years' Housing Monitoring reports. Data from the then Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in 2018 showed Knox's overall tree canopy coverage at 18%, with urban areas at 16.3%. The data also revealed a 6% decline in native vegetation cover in Knox since the late 1980s. Consequently, the Knox *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024*

– *2034* recommends that Council explore and implement concrete steps to regularly map and track canopy changes over time. Collaboration with the State Government is necessary to capture new tree canopy data, as the *Plan for Victoria* targets a 30% tree canopy cover in the urban areas of Greater Melbourne.

Objective 6: Development responds to neighbourhoods in an integrated and balanced manner

To achieve integrated and balanced development, Council has outlined explicit policies and strategies in the Knox Planning Scheme. Consistence between Council's planning decisions and those of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) is crucial for gauging alignment with the Knox Planning Scheme.

In 2024, VCAT decided on 15 residential planning application cases for Knox City Council, an increase of three cases from 2023. VCAT upheld two applications refused by Council and overturned seven refusals. Notably, all six applications approved by Council, but challenged at VCAT, were upheld. Since the adoption of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*, the lowest number of residential cases lodged at VCAT from Knox was in 2023, with 2021 and 2022 also recording low numbers.

It is positive that the number of VCAT cases from Knox in 2024 remains below the six-year average of approximately 24 cases. If this trend of fewer appeals continues, it may indicate that planning permit applicants and neighbours are increasingly satisfied with Council's decisions or that community members have limited capacity to engage in the planning appeal process. In most cases where Council's refusals were overturned by VCAT, applicants submitted amended applications that Council officers supported. Encouraging amendments to address objections could reduce appeals, saving time and benefiting both parties.

Table 1. Summary of Progress Towards Housing Strategy Objectives in 2024

Council Initiative is on Track/Achieved*	Further Improvement Required*	Results do not Indicate a Definite Direction

Objective	Indicative Result of Council's Housing Related Action	Target	Achievement Rating
1	In 2024, 136 approved permits could lead to a net increase of 333 new dwellings in Knox	N/A	
	68% of dwellings approved are consistent with their Housing Strategy Area	50%	
	Dwelling density per hectare: Bush Suburban 18, Knox Neighbourhood 20, Local Living 45, and Activity Areas 74 in 2024	N/A	
2	Dwelling diversity: Small dwellings 21%, 3 bedrooms 17%, 4+ bedrooms 62% in 2024	46% small dwellings	
	39 apartments approved in 2024; 96-bed residential aged care facility approved in 2024	N/A	
	Residential aged care places in Knox declined to the national minimum benchmark	78 RAC[2] places /1000 people 70yrs+	
	In 2024, critical concerns include rising housing costs, a severe shortage of affordable rental options, and a significant shortfall in social and affordable housing.	**298 social and affordable housing units** are needed to meet the minimum supply, while **902 dwellings** are required to meet the demand in 2024.	
3	In 2024, all approved developments of two or more dwellings met Environmentally Sustainable Design targets for water reduction and greenhouse gas emissions.	100%	
4	In 2024, 31% of the net new dwellings approved in Knox were located in "very walkable" areas.	50+%	
5	As of 2018, tree canopy cover in Knox stands at 18% overall, with 16.3% in its urbanized areas.	30% by 2050	
6	VCAT decided 15 residential planning applications for Knox in 2024	N/A	

*Results influenced by property market conditions and other considerations.

It is important to clarify that the red Achievement Ratings in Table 1 above —particularly in relation to Objectives 2 and 4, which indicate that "Further Improvement is Required"—do not reflect a failure on the part of Council or its processes. For Objective 2, the delivery of small dwellings, social and affordable housing, and residential aged care (RAC) facilities is largely influenced by market dynamics. Council's role is primarily one of advocacy—engaging with Homes Victoria for social housing and encouraging the private and not-for-profit sectors to invest in and deliver these types of housing.

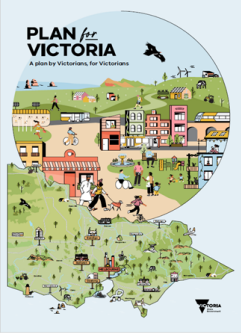
Similarly, for Objective 4, improving walkability in Knox is heavily dependent on investment in public transport and other critical social and economic infrastructure—areas that fall under the responsibility of State and Federal Governments. Council does not have the financial capacity to deliver major infrastructure projects. Instead, its role is to advocate for such investments from higher levels of government.

[2] RAC (Residential Aged Care)

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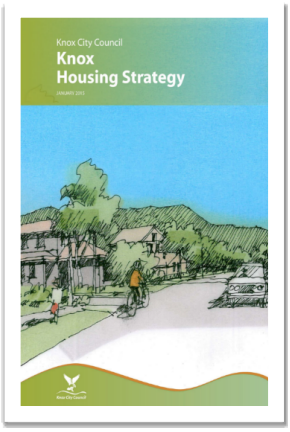
This is the 17th annual *Knox Housing Monitoring Program* report. It assesses and reports on the performance or the progress made against the six objectives of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* for the 2024 calendar year.

Policy Context



Plan for Victoria is the Victorian Government's long-term plan to provide more homes, more jobs and build great communities across Victoria. The plan's five pillars for action will reshape Melbourne and Regional Victoria. It aims to create a socially inclusive, economically prosperous, and environmentally resilient Victoria, connected to global opportunities for all Victorians. Pillar 1 and 3 of the Plan are particularly relevant for housing in Knox – as they are focused on the delivery of more diverse housing choices that are affordable, and located in vibrant, resilient and inclusive suburbs, towns and neighbourhoods. The Plan highlights the need for 2.24 million additional homes in Victoria over the next 30 years and sets out housing targets for each local government area.

The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* is directly consistent with Pillar 1 and 3 of *Plan for Victoria* in terms of the proposal to provide a diversity of housing in the appropriate locations. The overall vision of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* is expected to be achieved through six interrelated objectives: an approach to residential development to accommodate population growth and the community's changing housing needs. The adoption of this balanced approach recognises that some parts of Knox will need to accommodate change, and in other areas change should be gradual and limited in order to protect and enhance Knox's green and leafy character and areas of significance.



Objective 1: A diversity of housing is provided in appropriate locations.

Objective 2: Residential development better responds to the community's current and future needs and allows people to age-in-place.

Objective 3: Energy, water, and waste efficient design is increased in dwellings.

Objective 4: Housing design better responds to neighbourhood identity and creates a stronger sense of place.

Objective 5: Protect and enhance the landscape and environmental values of natural areas of significance.

Objective 6: Development responds to neighbourhoods in an integrated and balanced manner.

The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* splits Knox into four Housing Strategy areas – Bush Suburban, Knox Neighbourhood, Local Living, and Activity Areas (See Map 1) – and provides clear guidance on what types of dwellings are preferred and permissible in each area.

Each area has different levels of anticipated change and different types of preferred dwellings:

- **Bush Suburban** and **Knox Neighbourhood** areas are expected to undergo less change, preserving areas of environmental significance (including native vegetation and wildlife habitat), landscape value and neighbourhood character.
- **Local Living** and **Activity Areas** are expected to see more change, accommodating medium and higher density development to provide additional housing capacity and choice, to serve the municipality's changing housing needs.

Important strategic documents of Knox City Council such as the Community Plan and the Council Plan both underscore the continuing importance of housing as a critical area of focus for Council. A key direction of the *Community Plan 2021-2031* and the *Council Plan 2021-2025* is "*Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure*". This key direction expressly focuses attention on supporting a greater diversity in the housing mix within Knox, and ensuring better access to public transport among others, as important outcomes. The *Council Plan 2021-2025* commits Council to several actions to achieve positive housing outcomes for the community, including commencing a review of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015 (*currently underway*)*, and Council's adoption of the *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023 – 2027* to increase the supply of social and affordable housing, as a key and concrete step towards addressing homelessness in Knox.

A Note on Total versus Net Dwelling Changes

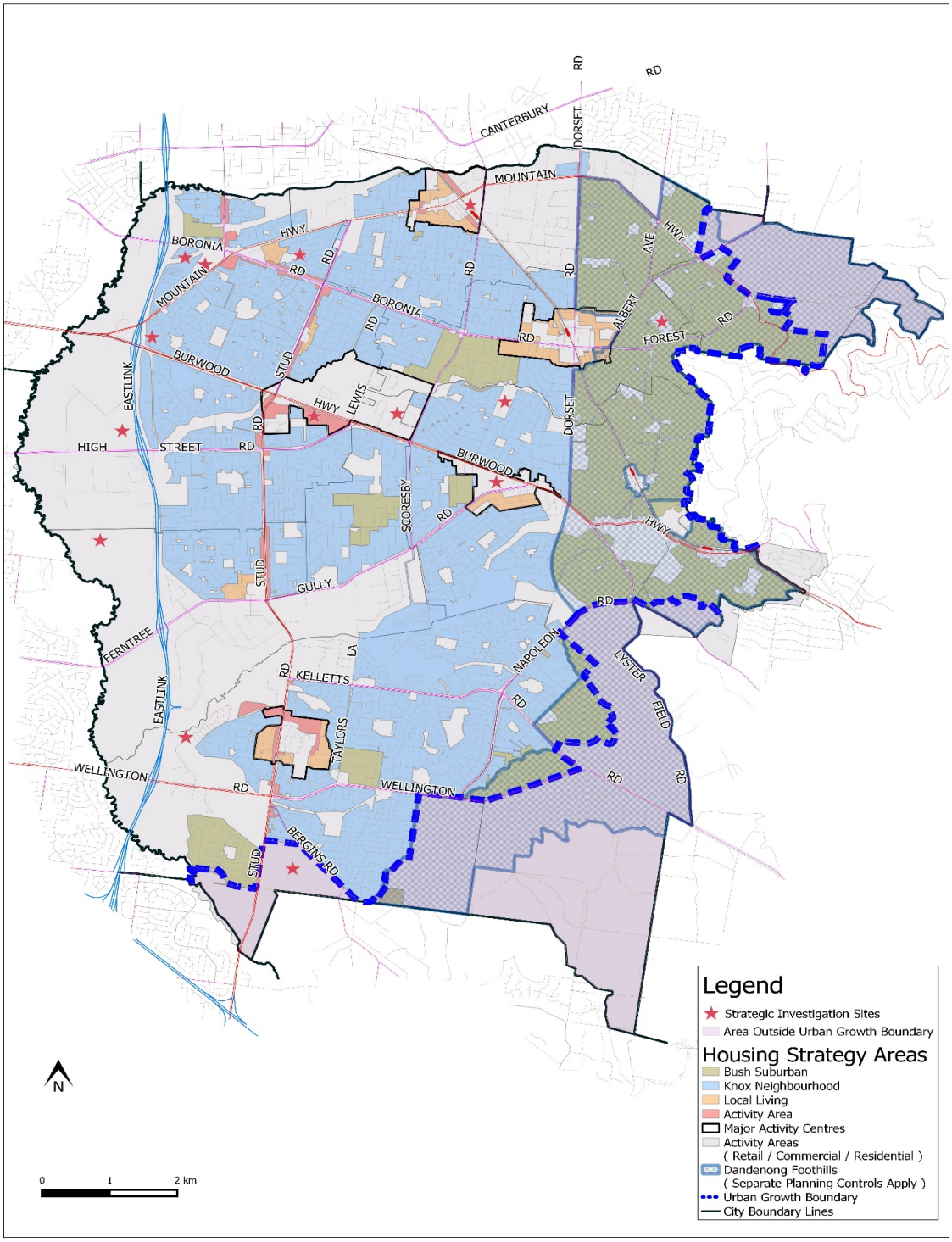
Approved planning permits for subdivisions and additional dwellings (not including planning permits for one new dwelling) are used in this report as an indicator of what dwellings are likely to be built, and where[3]. Two approaches for counting the number of dwellings approved in planning permits are used in this report:

- **Total new dwellings** are all new dwellings possible from approved planning permits. This measure does not account for demolitions and provides the best information about the size and type of dwellings being approved. Total new dwellings are used to demonstrate how permit approvals align with the objectives of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*.
- **Net new dwellings** are the increase in dwellings possible from approved planning permits, beyond what exists in Knox already. It subtracts demolitions from total new dwellings. Net new dwellings is a measure of growth in Knox's housing supply.

For example, an approved planning permit to replace a detached house with five new townhouses would be counted as five total new townhouses and an increase of four net new dwellings.

[3] Approved planning permits are indicative of what may be built, but not all planning permits are enacted. Planning permits usually expire after two years (if not commenced), although extensions can be granted for an additional two years.

Map 1. Residential Areas as defined in the Knox Housing Strategy 2015 and the 14 Strategic Investigation Sites



Overview of Planning Permits Approved in 2024

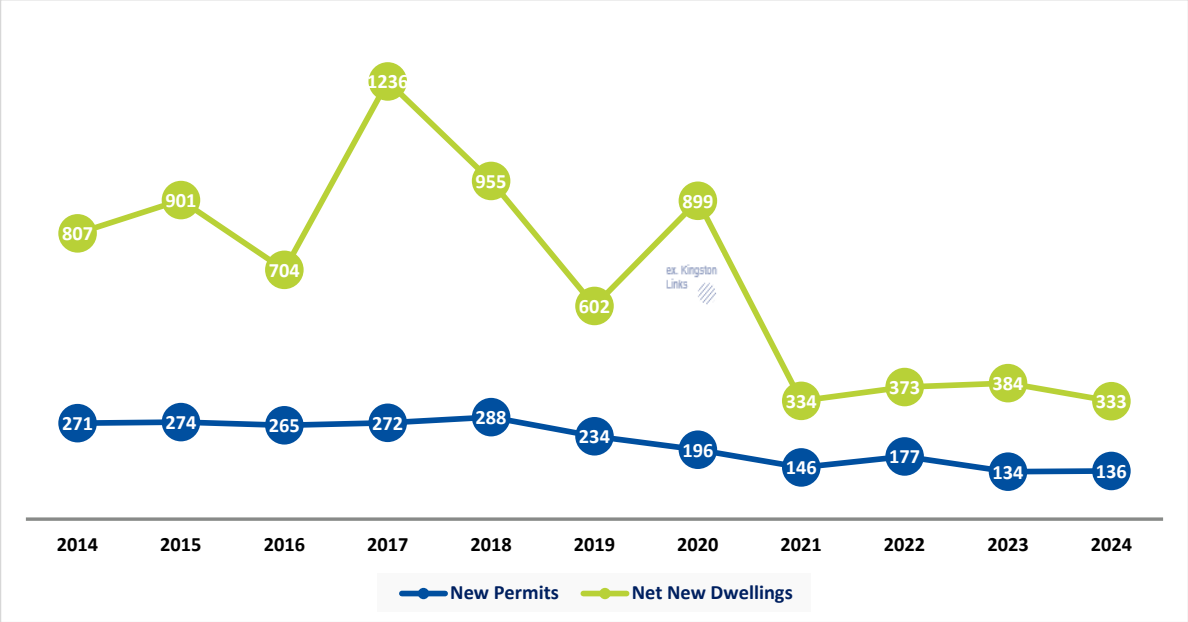
136	**planning permits resulting in at least one additional dwelling were approved in 2024. This continues the trend of low approvals since 2021. It was expected that planning approvals will bounce back post-COVID, but this has not happened yet.**
333	**net new dwellings are possible from the planning permits approved in 2024; this is lower than the 2023 figure by 51 dwellings.**
99	**proposed demolitions possible from approved permits in 2024.**
96	**beds in residential aged care facilities approved in planning permits in 2024. In 2022 and 2023, no residential aged care facility was also approved in planning permits.**
62%	**of net new dwellings possible from approved planning permits were in Boronia, Bayswater and Rowville. No single dwelling approved in Upper Ferntree Gully in 2024.**
39	**apartments were approved in planning permits in 2024. This is lower than the 59 apartments approved in planning permits in 2023. In 2022, no apartments were approved in planning permits. Only four apartments were approved in 2021.**

From Figure 1, the potential net growth in dwellings from planning permits approved[4] in 2024 was the lowest in the past 11 years. Notably, this figure is just one dwelling lower than the net new dwellings in 2021. The number of new dwellings this year, as well as in the past three years, is significantly lower compared to the approvals between 2014 and 2020. After a significant drop in 2021, there was a very gradual recovery in the growth of net new dwellings in Knox, but this trend reversed during 2024.

[4] This includes planning permits approved by Council at the direction of VCAT.

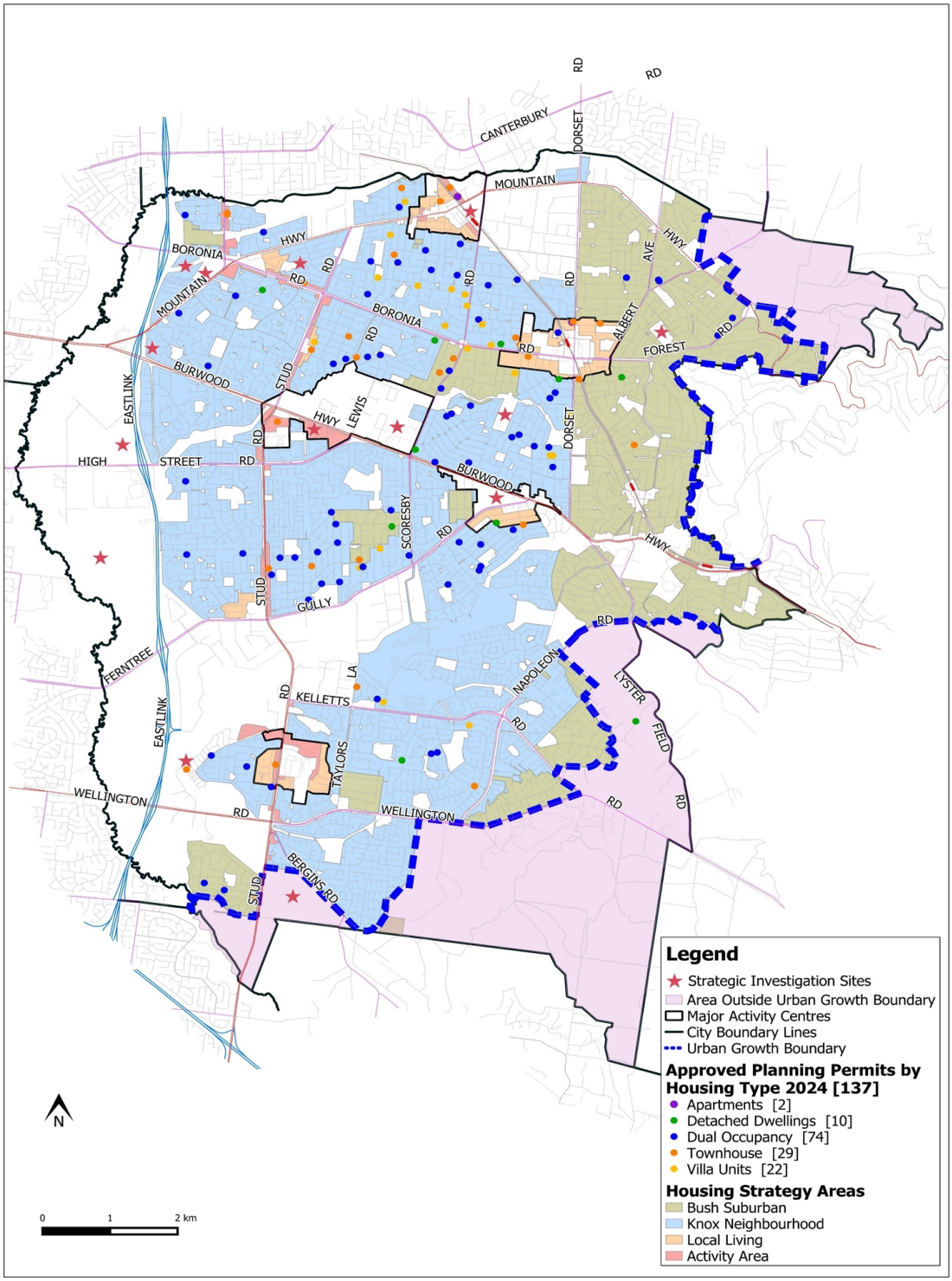
Figure 1. Approved Planning Permits and possible Net Growth in Dwellings

The number of approved planning permits yielding at least one new dwelling, and possible net growth in dwellings from these permits were the lowest in over a decade (since 2014).



Map 2. Planning Permits Approved in 2024

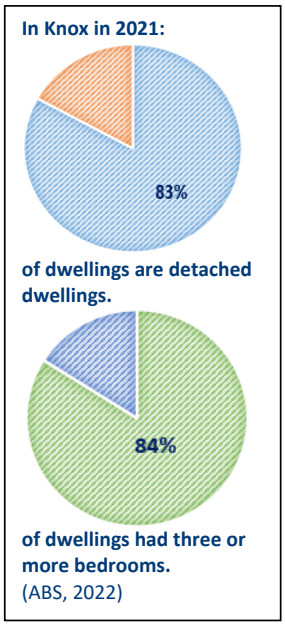
These permits will result in at least one additional dwelling if implemented



Objective 1 - A diversity of housing is provided in appropriate locations

Why is this Objective Important?

A greater diversity of accessible housing is needed to change the current household sizes and structure in Knox. Within Knox, 83% of dwellings are detached dwellings with 84% being houses of three bedrooms or more (ABS, 2022). The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* and the *Council Plan 2021-2025* are addressing this by encouraging the development of diverse types and sizes of dwellings to meet the changing needs of the Knox municipality. Although the demand for larger detached houses in Knox is likely to continue, having a mix of housing options ensures that Council caters to the needs of present and future residents at all stages of life and of diverse socio-economic status. Having diverse housing could also contribute to a multi-faceted and vibrant community. Council also seeks to protect and improve the "green and leafy" character of Knox that the community values. This requires encouraging the development of diverse housing with increased densities in Activity Areas and Local Living areas (close to transport, shops and services) to provide more housing choices, while discouraging intensive development in Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas, to preserve these neighbourhoods' green and leafy character and areas of environmental significance. In other words, the different types of housing development need to align with the character of the different neighbourhoods. Whilst housing diversity is critically important, the provision of diverse dwelling types should not unduly compromise the character of the neighbourhoods and suburbs of Knox.



How are we Tracking this Objective?

Of the planning permits approved in 2024, Townhouses[5] constituted 38% (a decline from 42% in 2023 and 55% in 2022) of the total new dwellings approved (see Figure 2). Apart from 2020, townhouses have always been the predominant housing typology in Knox since 2015. The classification illustrates that, out of the 27 townhouse developments approved in planning permits, 14 permits were approved for four dwellings or less, and 13 were five dwellings or more.

The Housing Strategy identifies preferred housing types for the existing residential areas in Knox. The proposed location of approved dwelling applications gives an indication as to whether the preferred sites for the different housing typology is being followed. This report gives a detailed account of this. Table 2 displays the number of dwellings in approved planning permits and the preferred dwelling typology for each of the four Housing Strategy Areas, as well as areas outside the Urban Growth Boundary and Commercial Areas. Some villa units were approved in the Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas (Lots under 1,000m^2); townhouses were also approved in Knox Neighbourhood areas (Lots under 1,000m^2 and Lots over 1,000m^2). Apartments were also approved in Local Living areas. Although these were not the preferred dwelling types in these areas, the distinctive characteristics of these sites

[5] See Attachment 1 for the definition of dwelling type.

and/or the proposed developments, could still produce the preferred neighbourhood and landscape character outcomes.

The percentage of total new dwellings that were the preferred dwelling type is presented in Figure 3. While Figure 4 displays the total number of new dwellings approved per hectare in each of the four Housing Strategy Areas. See Attachment 2 for the trend analysis of the net growth in dwellings, by type, over the past 10 years.

Figure 2. Total New Dwellings and Demolitions by Approved Planning Permits

In 2024, townhouses were again the most common dwelling type, making up over 35% of total new dwellings in approved planning permits. Additionally, all but 14 demolitions in these permits involved detached dwellings.

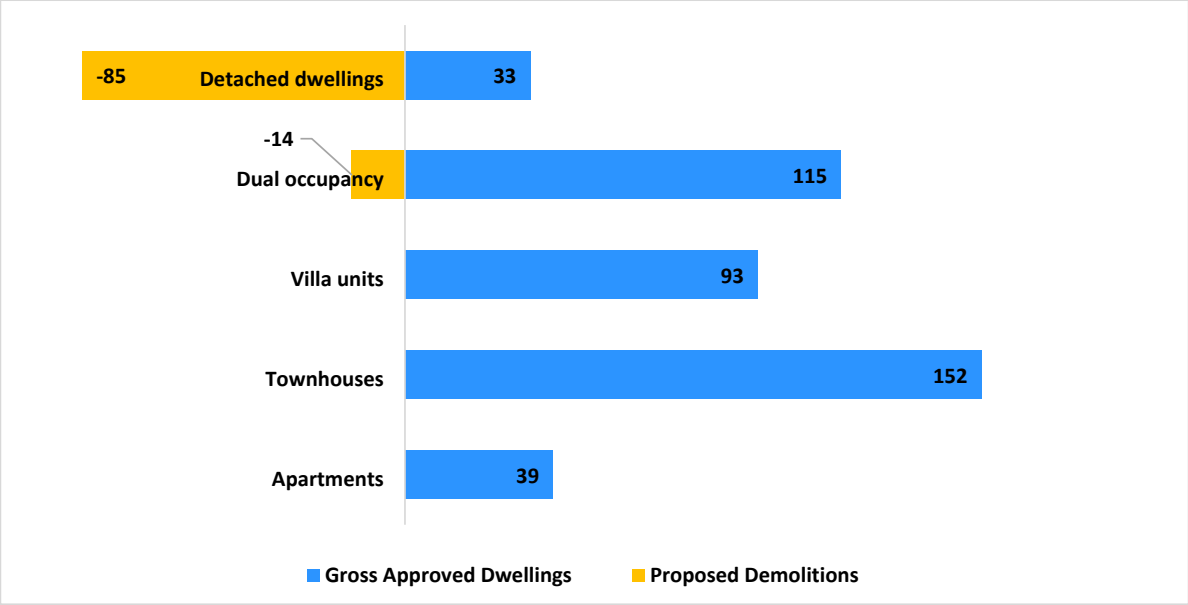


Table 2. Number of new Dwellings by Typology in Knox Housing Strategy Area

Area Type		Net New dwellings	Total new dwellings	Detached dwellings	Dual Occupancy	Villa units	Townhouses	Apartments /Mixed used
Outside Housing Strategy Areas	All lots - includes rural and other zones	25	25	1	0	0	24	0
Bush Suburban	All lots - min. subdivision	33	46	4	15	14	13	0
Knox Neighbourhood	Lots under 1000m²	99	150	7	93	30	20	0
	Lots over 1000m²	57	72	17	5	45	5	0
Local Living	All lots - additional controls	64	74	4	2	4	39	25
Activity Areas	All lots - additional controls from local plans may apply	55	65	0	0	0	51	14
Commercial Areas	All lots - additional controls from local plans may apply	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

PREFERRED HOUSING TYPE PERMISSIBLE BUT NOT PREFERRED NON-PREFERRED HOUSING TYPE

Figure 3. Preferred Dwellings in Housing Strategy Areas

Almost all new dwellings approved in Activity Areas since 2018 have been the preferred type for the Housing Strategy Areas in which they are located.

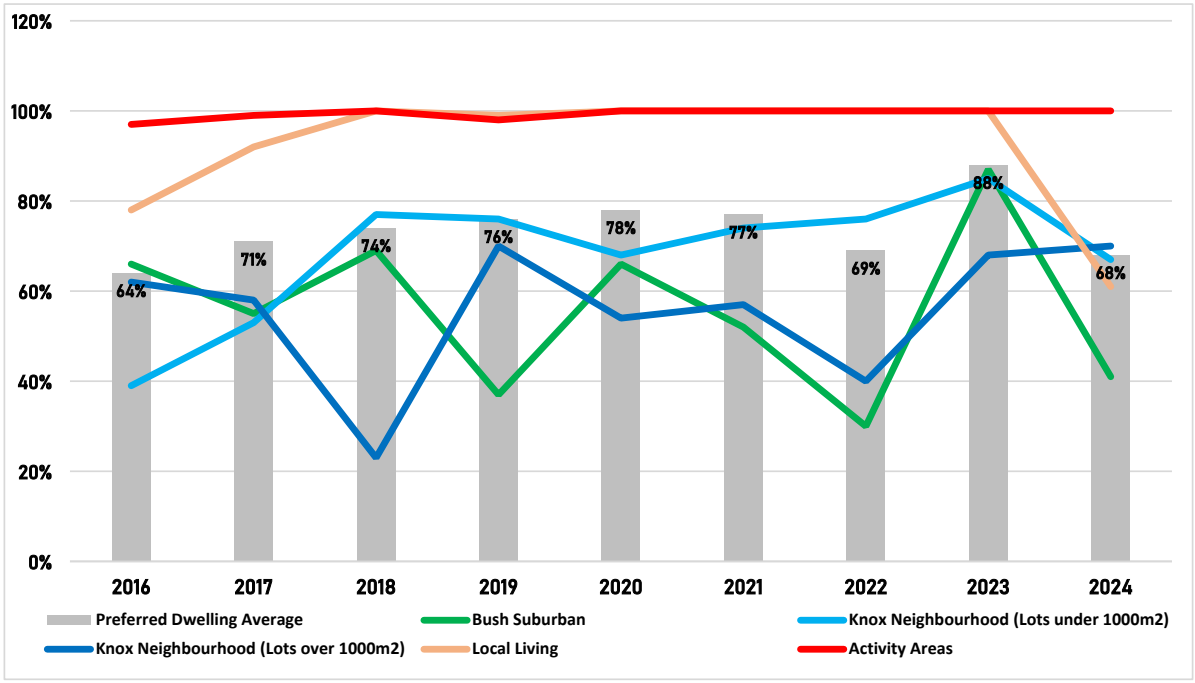
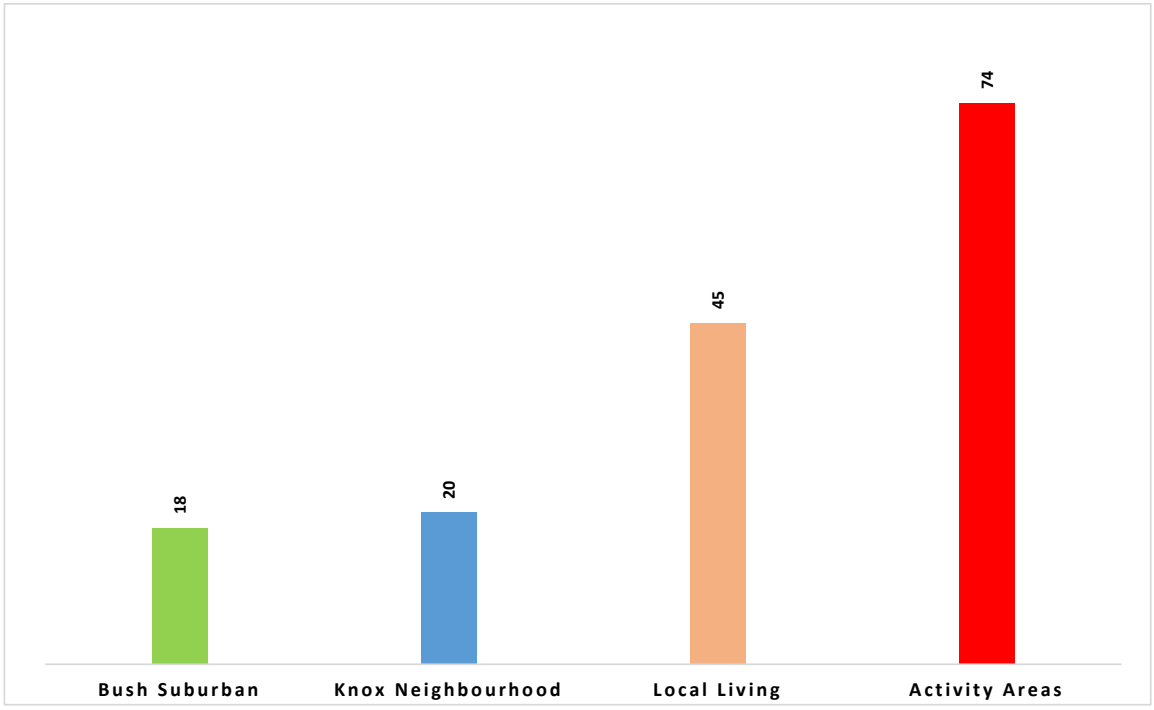


Figure 4. Dwelling Units per Hectare in Housing Strategy Areas

In 2024, the number of new dwelling units per hectare approved was significantly higher in Local Living and Activity Areas compared to the Bush Suburban area



The dwelling unit per hectare chart (Figure 4) above depicts a residential development trend that aligns with the approach to housing development described in the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* – where low scale development is encouraged in Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas, and high scale development is preferred in Local Living and Activity Areas.

Analysis

A net loss of detached dwellings was observed, based on the analysis of the planning permits approved in 2024. However, this trend has continued since 2015[6], apart from 2020 where there was a net increase in detached dwellings (see Attachment 2 for a time series graph). It is pertinent to note that planning permits approved in 2024 recorded the third lowest net loss in detached dwellings since 2015 (Some demolitions of detached dwellings between 2015 and 2018 may also include dual occupancy dwellings due to differences in accounting methods).

Since 2015, Townhouses have been the most prevalent dwelling typology approved in planning permits. The only discontinuation in this trend was in 2020 where the approved subdivision of the former Kingston Links Golf Club site, resulted in approximately 500 new detached dwellings, which essentially put detached dwellings ahead of townhouses for that year[7]. To be precise, 35% of the total new dwellings approved in planning permits in 2024 were townhouses. This is however a decline from the 2022 and 2023 figures, where townhouses constituted 55% and 42% of total dwellings approved in Knox respectively.

Although 39 apartments were approved in planning permits in 2024, this represents a decline of 20 apartments as compared to the approvals in 2023. However, this decline is still better than 2022 where no single apartment was approved. Interestingly, a 96-bed residential aged care facility was approved in planning permits in 2024. This is a significant departure from 2023 and 2022 where no residential aged care facility was approved in planning permits. This approval of residential aged care facilities marks a return to the trends in recent years[8] (2019, 2020 and 2021).

Over the past nine years, the second lowest average score (68%) for the preferred dwelling typology in the four[9] main Knox Housing Strategy areas was recorded in 2024 planning permit approvals. In contrast, the highest average score was achieved in 2023, with 88% of approved dwellings aligning with the preferred typology. The lowest average score of 64% was recorded in 2016. There was an incremental improvement in the alignment of approved dwellings with the preferred housing strategy areas from 2016 to 2020. However, this trend reversed between 2021 and 2024, except for 2023. Further investigation is needed to fully understand the cause of this declining trend.

In 2024, the preferred dwellings approved in Bush Suburban areas, small lot Knox Neighbourhood areas and Local Living areas have witnessed significant decline, compared to 2023. Large lot Knox Neighbourhood areas however recorded a marginal improvement over its 2023 outcome. Unfortunately, preferred dwellings approved in Local Living areas recorded its lowest performance since the implementation of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* in 2016.

In consonance with past trends (except in 2016, 2017 and 2019) all dwellings approved in planning permits in 2024 in Activity Areas were the preferred dwelling typology.

[6] However, it is important to note that between 2015 to 2018 all proposed demolitions in planning permits were assumed to be detached dwellings. This is not entirely the case. For instance, between 2022 and 2024, on average 92% of dwellings proposed to be demolished were detached dwellings. This means, on average 8% of proposed demolitions in planning permits were dual occupancy within the same timeframe.
[7] Development at Kingston Link is shown in Figure 1. These dwellings were not counted among the 899 approved dwellings in 2020.
[8] There were 230 rooms, 226 rooms and 214 rooms in residential aged care approved in Knox in planning permits in 2019, 2020 and 2021 respectively.
[9] Although we have four housing strategy areas, Knox Neighbourhood area is sub-divided into Small (Lots under 1,000m^2 and Large (Lots over 1,000m^2). Different dwellings are therefore preferred in the two.

A positive development was observed with respect to dwellings approved outside the housing strategy area (HSA) in 2014. That is, only 6% of dwellings were approved outside the HSA. This constitutes an 11% reduction from the 2023 figure of 17% of the proposed development approved in planning permits located outside the four main housing strategy areas of Knox, within the Strategic Investigation Sites. As there is no clear guidance as to what dwelling typology is preferred in the Strategic Investigation Sites identified in the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*, a future Council initiative would be to clearly define the preferred dwelling topology in these sites. The ongoing review of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* will address this lacuna.

In conformity to previous developments, the planning permits approved in 2024 will also produce fewer dwellings per hectare in Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood; and more dwellings per hectare in the Local Living and Activity areas (see Figure 4 for more details). This outcome aligns with the direction of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*, resulting in higher density dwellings in the Local Living and Activity Areas, and lower density development in Bush Suburban areas and Knox Neighbourhood areas. This means the neighbourhood and landscape character of these areas will be respected.

To put the paragraph above into practical perspective, the average dwelling in a Bush Suburban area is on a larger parcel of land (~549m^2) compared to a dwelling in Activity Areas (~135m^2)[10]. For the associated graph see Figure 18 (Attachment 2). This provides the required space for canopy trees to be retained or planted in the Bush Suburban areas, compared to Activity Areas or Local Living areas. Also, areas of biological significance will be protected in the Bush Suburban areas as envisaged by the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*. In effect, this is a positive outcome.

Between 2023 and 2024, the number of dwelling units per hectare have decreased by 5% and 17% in Knox Neighbourhood areas and Local Living areas respectively. This is a clear departure from the trend between 2022 and 2023 where increases were noticed in all the four HSAs. However, the dwelling density per hectare in the Bush Suburban areas increased significantly by 38% within the same period[11]. If this margin of growth in dwelling density continues in the Bush Suburban areas, the dwelling density per hectare in the area is more likely to surpass the density in the Knox Neighbourhood areas within a decade. If this happens, it will not be the preferred pattern of growth in Bush Suburban areas, since significant biological (flora and fauna) and landscape values of Knox will be affected by residential development.

Coincidentally, the dwelling units per hectare in the Local Living areas also increased by 38% between 2022 and 2023. This was an unusual and unsustainable spike in dwelling density in the area. It is therefore not surprising that this surge has reversed between 2023 and 2024.

[10] In 2024, the number of square metres per dwelling unit are as follows: Bush Suburban (549m^2); Knox Neighbourhood (499m^2); Local Living (220m^2) and Activity Areas (135m^2).
[11] Activity Areas witnessed a 6% increase in dwelling units per hectare between 2023 and 2024.

Objective 2 - Residential development better responds to the community's needs, and allows people to age-in-place

Why is this Objective Important?

Housing development needs to provide more choices and more opportunities for Knox residents to live in an affordable home that suits them at all stages of life. Knox critically needs more small houses (one to two bedrooms), now and in the future, to accommodate the growing number of smaller households. This is essential because almost 50% of households in Knox are projected to be couple only and lone person households by 2031 (Forecast.id, 2022). This forecast implies that couple only and lone person households will surpass households with children. To tackle this issue, the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* proposes to align the mix of available dwellings with the current and future housing needs of the community – by directly encouraging the development of more small dwellings that can meet the housing needs of small households and improve affordability. Affordability is particularly important as larger detached dwellings are becoming increasingly out of reach for a greater proportion of new homebuyers. Smaller dwellings tend to be relatively less expensive to purchase and maintain, which provides more flexibility and choices for young people looking to get into the housing market, elderly residents planning to downsize, and anyone else looking to reduce their expenditure on housing or their cost of living more broadly.



By 2031 almost 50% of households in Knox will be couple only and lone person households (Knox Forcast.id, 2022)

It is particularly important that Knox residents can remain part of their community as they age (aging-in-place), rather than be pushed to relocate or find suitable and affordable accommodation out of the municipality. If a significant number of smaller houses are provided in Knox, the housing needs of many residents will be met. The provision of smaller dwellings and residential aged care homes, directly contribute to making housing available to homebuyers seeking smaller dwellings and the elderly seeking to downsize.

How are we Tracking this Objective?

Knox Housing Capacity

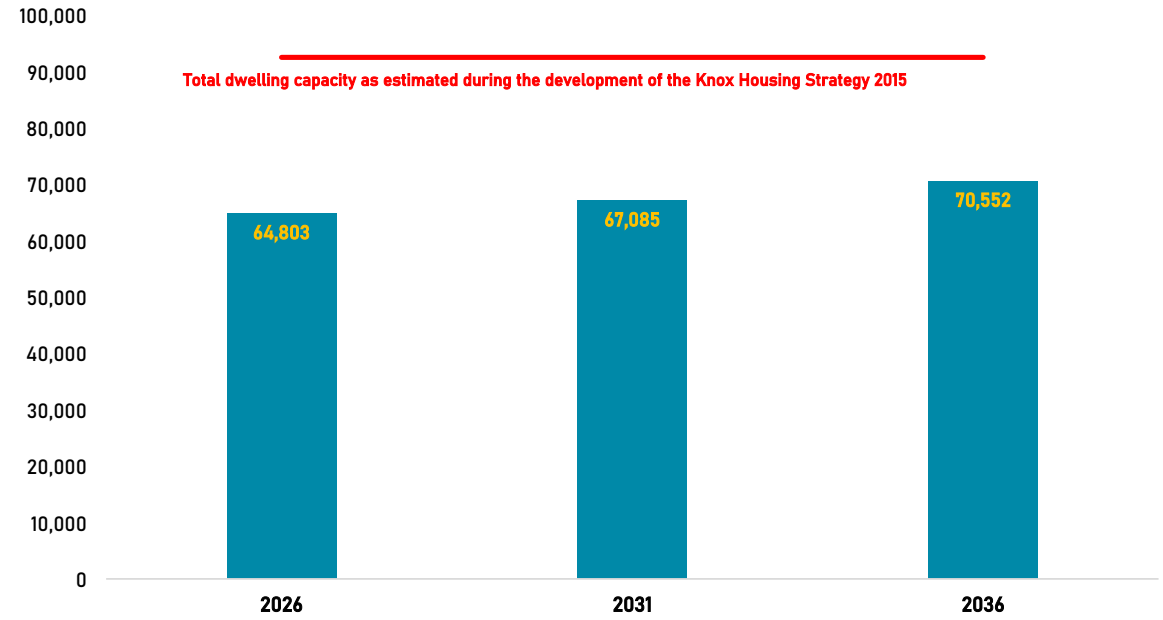
The understanding of Knox's capacity to accommodate more dwellings in the future is of great importance in the residential development in the municipality. In furtherance of this, the Knox *Housing Strategy 2015* estimated that theoretically, Knox had the capacity to accommodate 36,362 additional dwellings (in addition to the existing dwellings in Knox as of 2015), giving a total of 92,500 dwellings (see Figure 5) if each lot was developed to its full capacity within the constraints and parameters of the Knox Planning Scheme as of 2015. Based on the Victorian Government's *Victoria in Future* (VIF) projections[12] (DTP, 2023), future housing growth can be accommodated within the estimated capacity in the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* until 2036, and probably beyond (see Figure 5). These capacity estimates are based

[12] VIF dwelling projections are applied here as they are calculated using a top-down approach. In contrast to the forecasting method employed by id Consulting Pty Ltd (abbreviated as .id in some sections of this report) on behalf of Council, in which only local factors are considered, the VIF projections include assumptions about state level growth and allocate this to local government areas.

on broad assumptions made within the policy context of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015,* the *Knox Residential Design Guidelines 2015, the Knox Planning Scheme* and other relevant Council plans or documents. Therefore, these estimates could change if any of the documents that underpinned or informed the projections were to be significantly revised. As the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* is currently being reviewed, some future changes may occur. In fact, a new housing capacity assessment[13] conducted on behalf of Council demonstrates that Knox has a net capacity of 34,238 additional dwellings as of 2036 and 28,277 additional dwellings as of 2051. More importantly, the Victorian Government through the *Plan for Victoria* has set a target of 43,000 additional dwellings to be built in Knox by 2051 (Department of Transport and Planning, 2025, p. 31).

Figure 5. Forecast Dwelling Capacity in Knox

The current VIF forecast for dwelling capacity in Knox aligns with the estimated capacity outlined in the Knox Housing Strategy 2015 and can be accommodated within applicable planning provisions



Since the above projections are based on '*theoretical*' assumptions, it is important to test these projections against reality. In this regard, projected dwelling growth needs to be analysed against actual housing development data in recent years. To actualise this, one effective method of assessing the actual number of new dwellings built in Knox against the forecast housing figures, is to analyse the data on building permits in Knox. It is worth clarifying that building permits affirm that housing development plans and specifications fully comply with building regulations and pave the way for building work to commence on site. In this purview, building permits are therefore a more suitable and reliable indicator of actual dwelling growth than planning permits. This is because planning permits basically show what could potentially be built, in the next two to 4-year window, if approved plans are enacted fully.

An analysis of building approvals data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) demonstrates that building permits were granted for the construction of a total of 6,339 dwellings in Knox between 2017 and 2024 – 8 years (ABS, 2025). A breakdown of the total figure annually, is equivalent to an annual average of 800 dwellings approved per year. However, this average annual building approval figure is misleading as it overestimates the real or net increase in

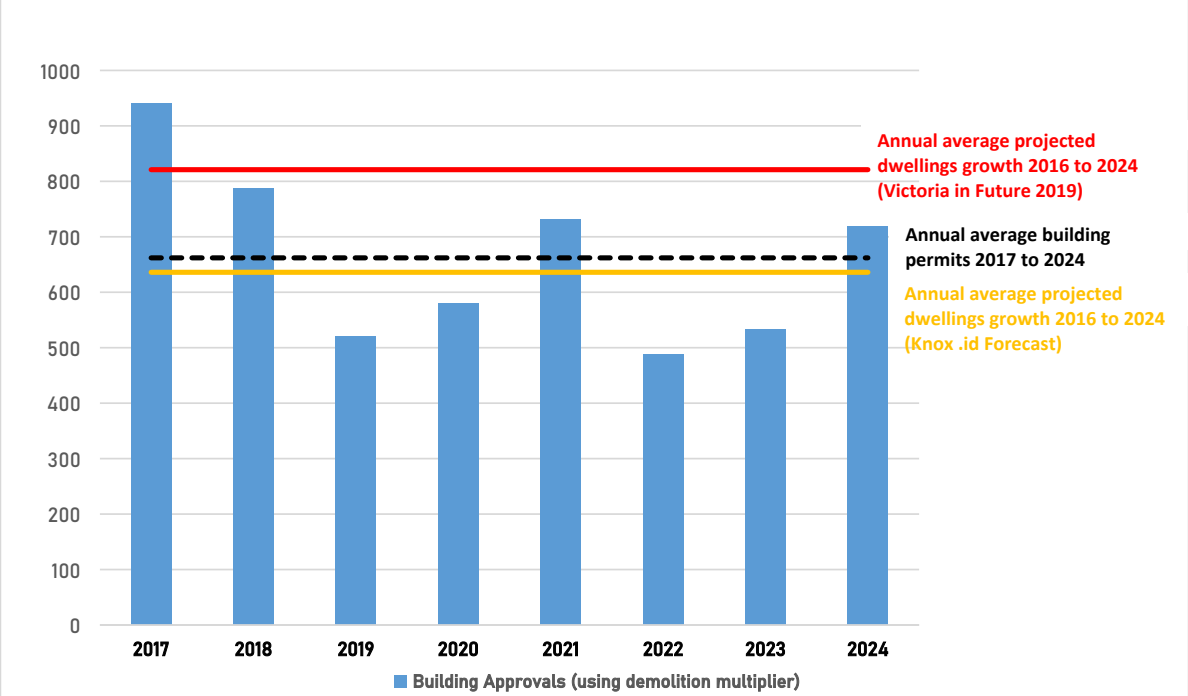
[13] The Housing Capacity Assessment was done to inform the ongoing Review of the Knox Housing Strategy 2015. This means the new housing capacity assessed will be officially featured in the Revised Strategy.

dwellings because the ABS building permit data does not usually take into consideration demolitions[14]. Therefore, to correctly determine the actual number of dwellings to be built, it is important to estimate the number of dwellings that were demolished within the same time frame. So, to estimate the number of dwellings that were demolished to make space for the new dwellings in building permits, the correlation between new dwellings and demolitions in approved planning permits has been used as a proxy in this report.

Based on the analysis, there was one dwelling demolished for every 5.8 dwellings (approximately 6 dwellings) approved in planning permits over the last eight years, that is 2017 to 2024. Applying this rate to building permits yields an annual average of 662 new dwellings per year, constructed within Knox between 2017 and 2024. It is worth noting that this figure falls between the forecast of 821 new dwellings annually by the Victorian Government in the *Victoria in Future* projections and the forecast of 636 new dwellings per year calculated by id Consulting Pty Ltd[15] on the Council's behalf (For details, see Figure 6 below)[16]. This implies that the estimate applied in this report is reliable[17] in relative terms.

Figure 6. Annual Average Building Permits Growth versus Projected Dwellings Growth in Knox

The number of new dwellings in Knox, based on building permits (adjusted for demolitions), aligns broadly with the growth projections from the Victorian Government and an independent forecast commissioned by Council.



Housing typology is the next issue of focus. The ABS 2021 Census data (published in 2022) revealed that lone person and couple only households are almost half (45.7%) of all households in Knox. Despite this, over the past seven years

[14] But from the planning permit we know that some existing dwellings are demolished for the construction of new ones.
[15] id Consulting Pty Ltd is abbreviated as .id in some sections of this report.
[16] The significant alignment between building permit data and the dwelling forecasts prepared by the Victorian Government on behalf of Council is anticipated because building approvals are taken into consideration in computing these forecasts.
[17] At least using the planning permits to demolition ratio and transferring that to building permits.

2018-2024), large dwellings of three or more bedrooms were more prevalent in approved planning permits than other dwelling sizes. For instance, in 2024, nearly 80% (79%) of approved net new dwellings were large dwellings – three or more bedrooms (See Figure 7). This constitutes an 11% decline from 2023, where 68% were large dwellings. But in 2022, over 80% of net new dwellings were large dwellings. Showing that the drop in large dwellings in 2023 was not the usual trend in recent years.

An insignificant proportion (21%) of approved dwellings were small dwellings (two bedrooms or less) in 2024. In terms of the actual numbers, a net total of 69 new small dwellings were approved in planning permits in Knox in 2024. Compared to 2023, small dwellings were 32% (122 dwellings). The 2024 proportion of small dwelling is the third lowest figure since 2016 (See Figure 8). The lowest share (13%) of small dwellings in approved planning permits was recorded in 2020. Remarkably, the highest proportion of small dwellings was noted in 2017 with 50% of approved dwellings in planning permits being small houses.

Figure 7. Net Growth in Dwellings by Bedrooms

The planning permits approved in 2024 would result in 21% of net growth being small dwellings (two bedrooms or less).

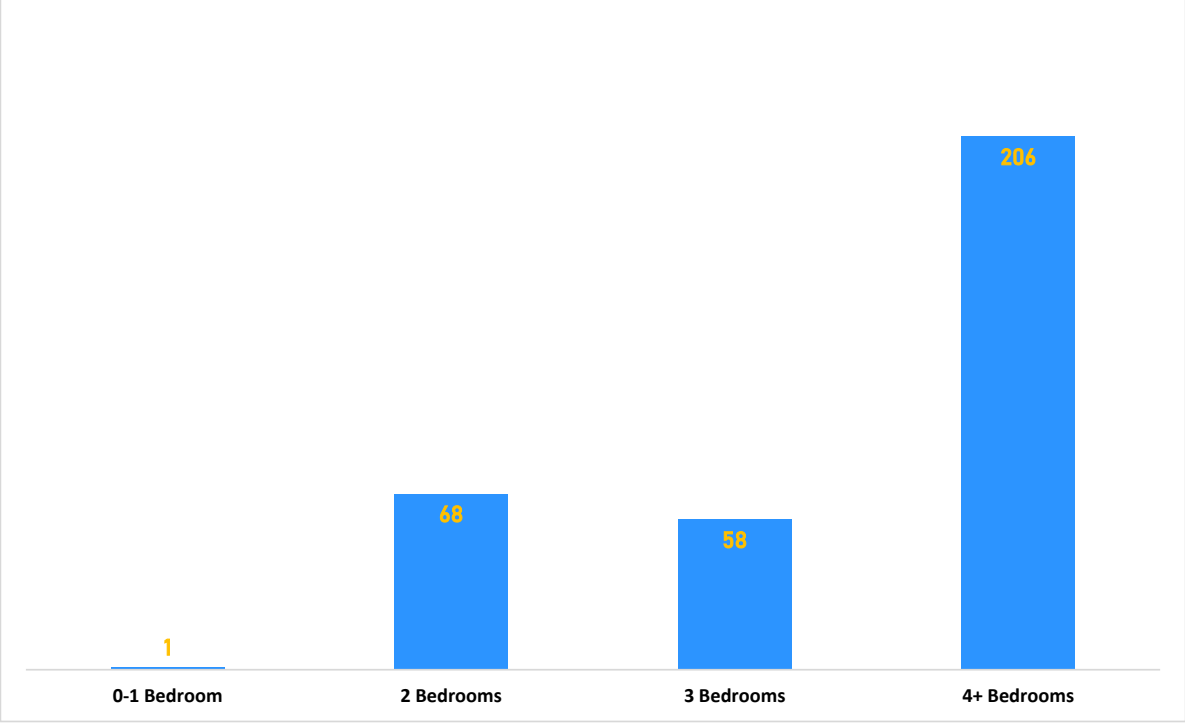
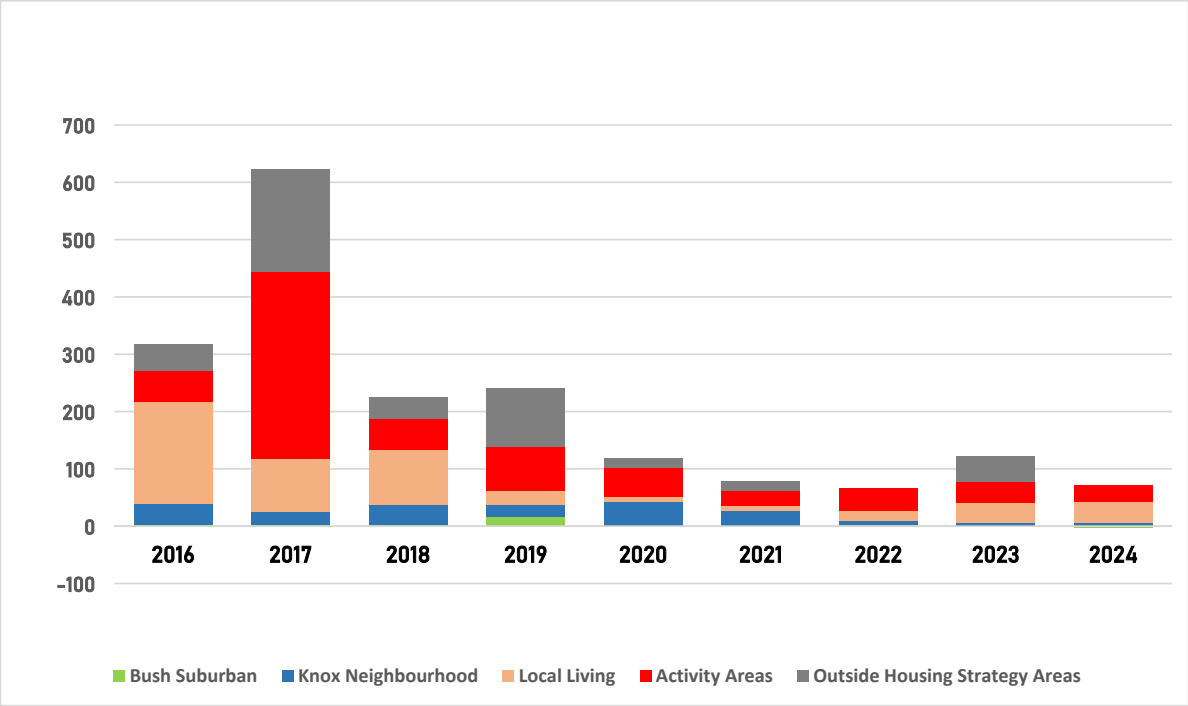


Figure 8. Net Growth in Small Dwellings

Over the past nine years, the approved planning permits in 2024 resulted in the second lowest number of net new small dwellings (two bedrooms or fewer).

– Except for 2017, the net growth in small dwellings has consistently fallen below the forecasted growth for small households.



Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF)

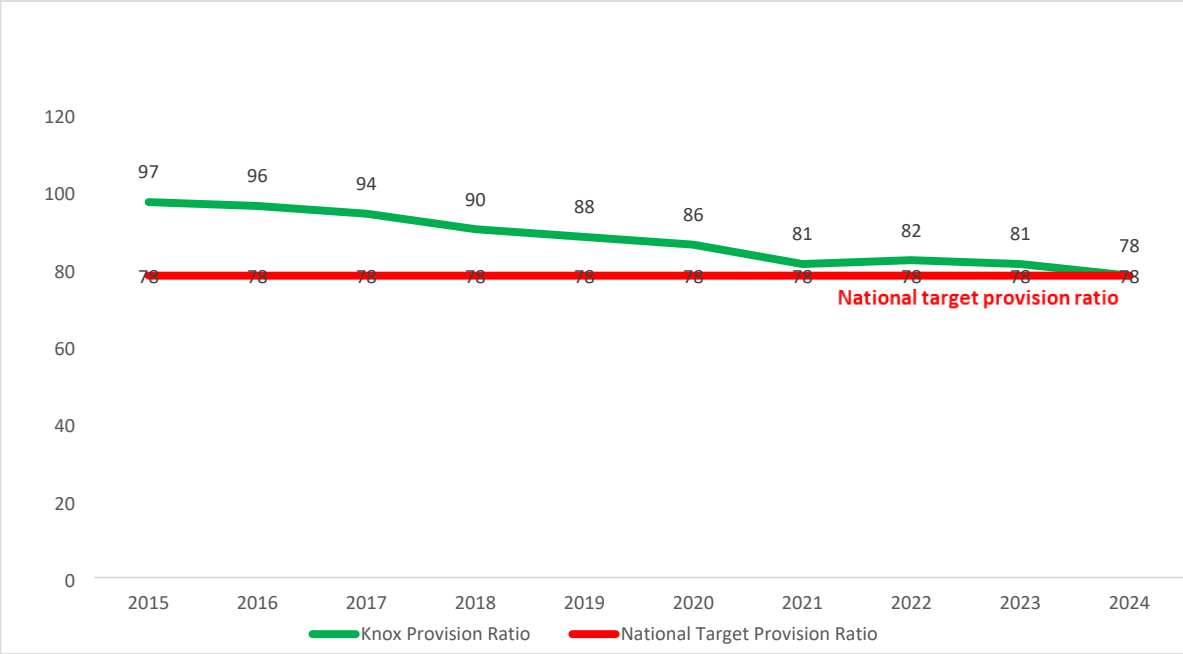
The provision of dignified accommodation for the elderly is of critical importance in modern society (Home Care Assistance, 2023). Residential aged care facilities play a crucial role in this regard. As Knox's population continues to age, the provision of residential aged care facilities to accommodate the increasing population of senior citizens will be significantly important. The updated data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) confirmed that as of June 2024, Knox had 1,621 places, usually a single room with an ensuite (AIHW, 2024). Also, updated population estimates,[18] by the ABS established that as of 30 June 2023, the number of people aged 70 years and over in Knox was 20,760 (ABS, 2023). This gives a ratio of 78 places in residential aged care facilities per 1,000 residents aged 70 and above in Knox (See Figure 9). The 2024 ratio was the lowest compared to previous years, since 2015. Meanwhile, the Australian Government's target provision ratio for operational residential aged care places is 78 for every 1,000 people aged 70 years and over (ACFA, 2021)[19]. Therefore, Knox is now sitting exactly on the minimum target provision ratio in 2024 (See Figure 9). This is the lowest residential aged care provision ratio recorded in Knox over the last 10 years. This is a departure from previous trends as Knox has always exceeded the target since 2015. If no significant effort is made within the next couple of years. Knox will certainly fall below the minimum target. This is because except for 2022, Knox has consistently been trending downwards towards the minimum provision since 2015.

[18] 2023 population estimate used as 2024 ABS update is pending.

[19] The national target for home care is 45 per 1,000 residents 70 years and over. However, the home care target ratio has already been exceeded, reaching 53.6 mainstream home care packages available for every 1,000 people aged 70 and over as of 30 June 2020 (ACFA, 2021). The residential aged care places per 1,000 people aged 70 years and over was reduced from 86 places per 1,000 residents aged 70 and over to the current 78 places per 1,000 people 70 years and over. This report has cited the most current ACFA report.

Figure 9. Residential Aged Care Places in Knox in 2024

In 2024, Knox just met the minimum target of 78 residential aged care places per 1,000 residents aged 70 and over.



Social and Affordable Housing

The new *Plan for Victoria* seeks to provide affordable homes for all people – without social housing very low-income households in Knox cannot afford a home. Social housing provides affordable housing for low-income households. Knox has 1,491 social housing dwellings as of 30 June 2024[20](Homes Victoria, 2024). This constitutes a decline of 31 dwellings between 1st July 2023 and 30th June 2024. In fact, this is the first decline in the stock of social housing in Knox since 2019. Between June 2020 to June 2023, the total stock of social housing has on average increased by 13 dwellings per financial year. For instance, Knox rose by 19 social housing dwellings between July 2022 and 30th June 2023; and by four dwellings between July 2021 and 30th June 2022. It is troubling that the current total stock of social housing is below Knox's total stock of 1,493 as of June 2020. Homes Victoria explains that the cause of the decline is due to BAU maintenance and upgrades of existing social dwellings. This takes them out of the market until they are in a condition to be added back on to the market.

Drawing on the Victorian Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing's (DFFH) accessible data on social housing and affordable housing lettings (Homes Victoria), and comparing it with the minimum supply calculated in the Knox Minimum Supply of Social Housing Analysis (2022) and the Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027**,** the gap between the actual availability of social and affordable dwellings in Knox in 2024 and the estimated need for social and affordable housing in Knox within the same period, is a significant 902 dwellings[21]. In fact, it was projected that Knox should have a minimum supply of 1,803 social and affordable dwellings by 2024.

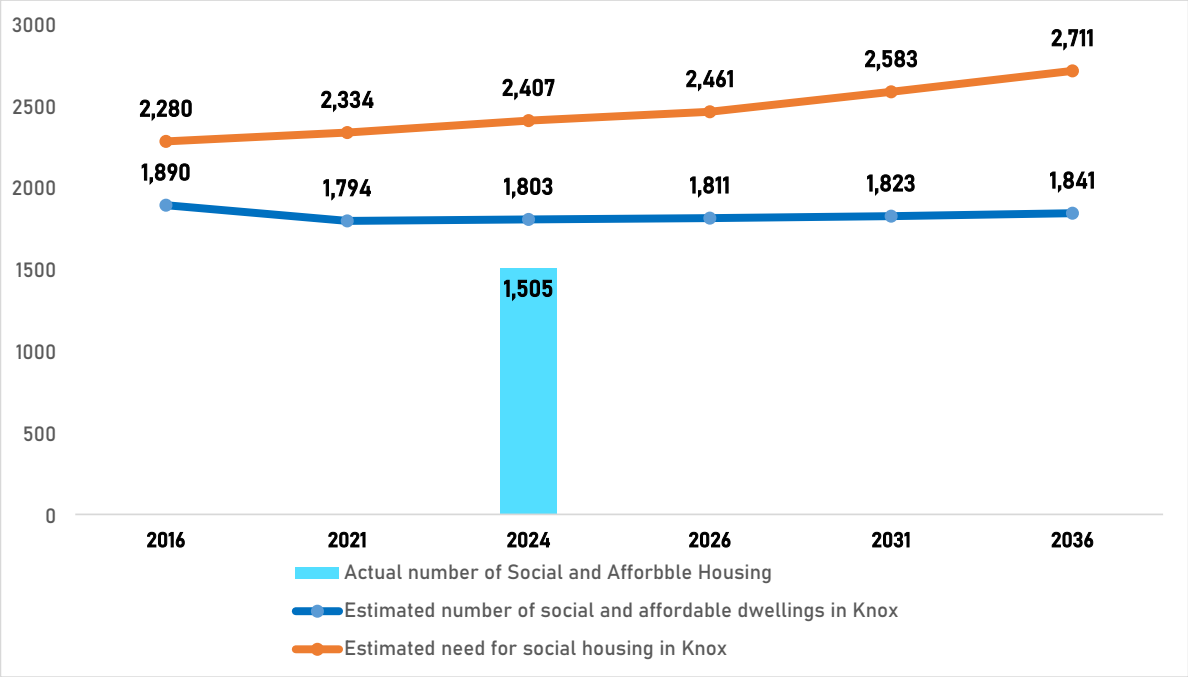
[20] The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) notes that more than 6,300 social housing dwellings are being completed or are under way across Victoria. If these homes are completed the social housing stock in Knox will increase. This is because 159 dwellings funded by Homes Victoria is being built in Knox (KCC, 2023). But the updated data at the end of February 2024 on Homes Victoria website shows that 149 houses were funded in Knox; 29 have been completed and 120 are underway.

[21] This estimate is calculated based on the social and affordable housing supply/available in Knox as of 2024, and the estimated social and affordable housing need projected in the two Council documents cited in this report.

However, the current availability of social housing and affordable private housing lettings in Knox is 1,505 – that is a shortfall of 298 dwellings from the projected minimum supply. In comparison to 2023, the gap was narrower, at 845 between estimated need and estimated supply of social and affordable housing. The shortfall from the estimated minimum supply and availability of social and affordable dwellings stood at 261[22].

From Homes Victoria data, the widening gap in 2024 is attributable to the decline of the total stock of social housing dwellings in Knox by 31 dwellings, and the low availability of private rental lettings in Knox, 12 months to June 2024[23]. This growing trend is projected to continue without significant interventions in the provision of social and affordable housing in Knox (See Figure 10). Figure 10 shows that the Knox's projected minimum supply of social and affordable housing in 2024 should have been 1,803. Hence, Knox has fallen short of the minimum supply by 298 dwellings in 2024 since we currently have 1505 dwellings.

Figure 10. Gap between Supply and estimated Need for Social and Affordable Housing in Knox
As in previous years, Knox has not met the estimated minimum supply of social and affordable housing in 2024



[22] It is important to caution that these data points (845 dwellings and 261 dwelling) noted in this report (2024) as the gaps in 2023 are not comparable (to the figures in the 2023 Housing monitoring report) because, the 584-gap observed in the 2023 report only reported the gap between the estimated need for social and affordable housing and the estimated minimum supply. That is, if Knox had met the projected minimum supply of 1,800 by 2023 dwellings, that figure would have been reliable. But we now have reliable data from Homes Victoria on the private rental lettings in Knox as well as the percentage (2.7%) that was affordable to low-income households in 2023. Hence, the right figures for 2023 have been calculated retrospectively.
[23] Homes Victoria data shows that 618 private rental lettings were available in Knox 12 months to June 2023 (with 2.7% of these being affordable to low-income households). And 535 private rental lettings were available in Knox 12 months to June 2024 (also with 2.7% of these being affordable to low-income households)

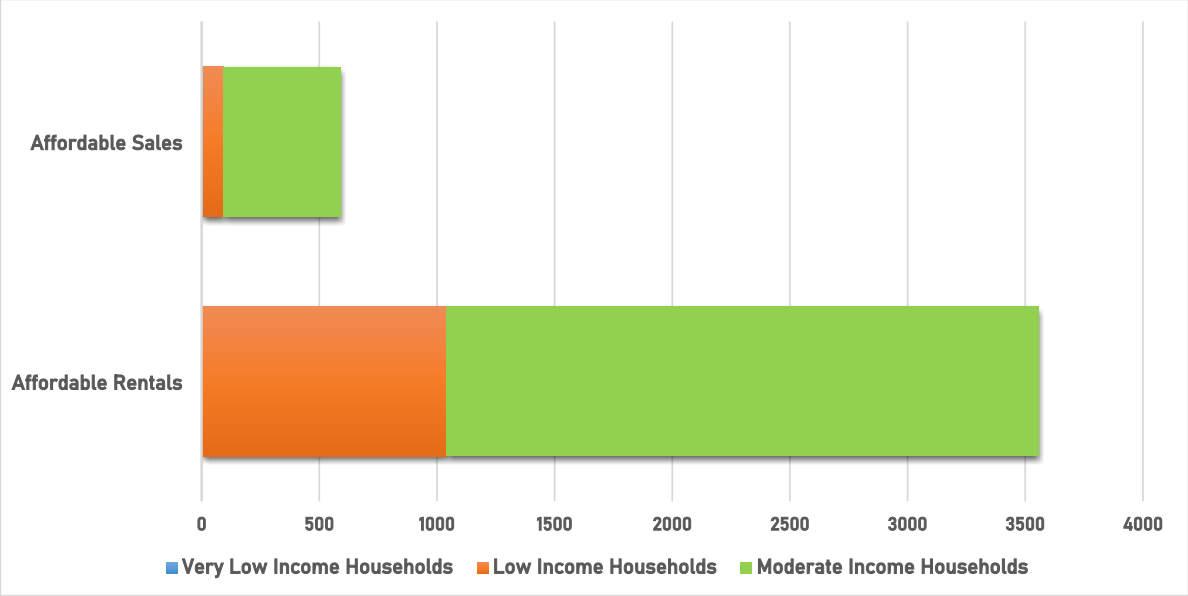
Affordable Housing Sales and Rentals

The affordability of housing is fundamentally determined by rental and house prices. Within the twelve months prior to June 2024, the median house price was $985,000 and the median unit price was $687,500 in Knox (Knox Housing Monitor). This means that only 92 (16%) of the 591 dwellings[24] sold in Knox were considered affordable to households within the very low and low-income brackets[25]. In parallel, only 1,040 (29%) of the 3,558 rental properties in Knox were affordable to households in the very low and low-income groups (See Figure 11). As compared to 2023 the affordability of properties being sold in Knox has slightly (3%) improved in 2024 while the affordability of rental properties has worsened by 7% between 2023 and 2024. It is critical to highlight that the affordability of rental properties in Knox has been deteriorating fast. For instance, within two years (2022 to now), the affordability of rental properties has deteriorated by nearly 10% (9%)[26]. See Figure 12 for a trend analysis of this since 2019.

Figure 11. Affordable Sales and Rentals in Knox in 2024

In the year leading up to June 2024, only 5 sales and 6 rentals were affordable for very low-income households.

Low-income households had more rental options, but very few affordable dwellings to purchase.



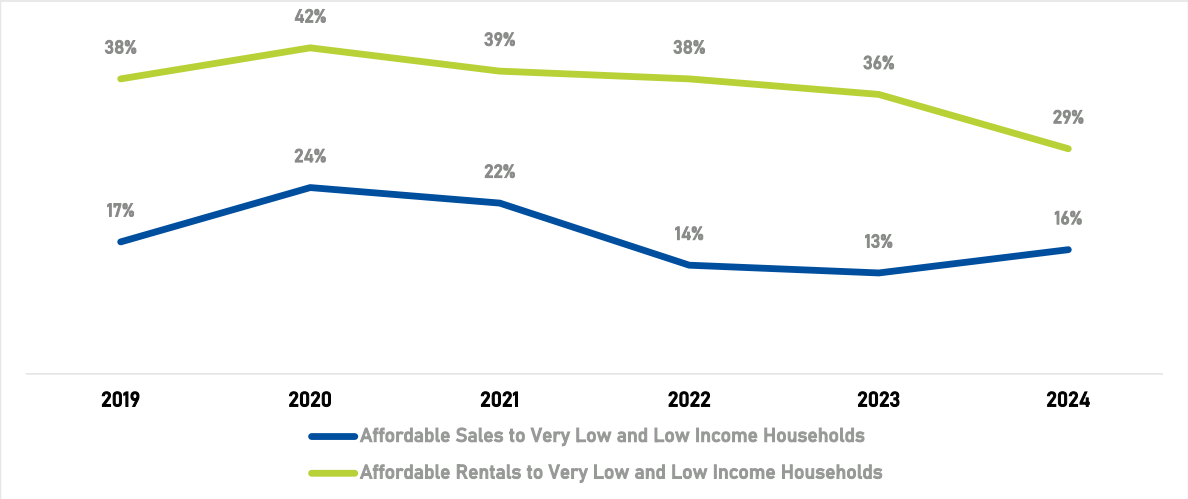
[24] The 488 dwellings were considered affordable to the very low, low and moderate-income brackets. Thus, the moderate-income group could afford 87% of the houses or units sold within Knox within the period under consideration.

[25] This Report follows the Department of Infrastructure and Knox City Council in defining Affordable Housing as a "Well-located housing, appropriate to the needs of a given household, where the cost (whether mortgage repayment or rent) is no more than 30% of that household's income. Exceeding the mark places one under 'housing stress,' particularly in the lower 40% of the income distribution scale" (Department of Infrastructure, 2002, p.182; Knox City Council, 2015, p.6). In the 2024 Housing Monitoring Program Report, very low income is household income of less than $54,024 per annum. Low income is a household income of between $54,025 to $86,439 per annum. Moderate income households range from $$86,440 to $129,659. These income bands are adapted from .id calculations in the Housing Monitor to suite our purpose. For more details, see Table 4 under Attachment 2.

[26] In 2022, a reasonable 38% of rental properties were affordable and 14% of properties being sold affordable in Knox. This means affordable rentals has worsened by 9% and affordably purchases improved by 2% over the 2-year period.

Figure 12. Affordable Sales and Rentals Trend in Knox Since 2019

Since peaking in 2020 (during COVID), access to affordable rentals for very low- and low-income households has continuously declined in Knox.



Analysis

The Victorian Government's population and dwelling projections (*Victoria in Future - VIF, 2023*) revealed that it is possible for Knox to accommodate more population and dwellings. For instance, the Victorian Government's dwelling growth for Knox from 2026 to 2036, as captured in the VIF, can be fully accommodated within the estimated dwelling capacity in Knox as outlined in the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015.* Based on the projected population, by 2036 there will be a difference of 2,131 people[27] in Knox between the population forecast by the Victorian Government and the updated forecast of id Consulting Pty Ltd (in September, 2024). This disparity might be due to difference in the methodology. Excitingly, the higher estimate of 177,300 people documented in the Victorian Government VIF, can be accommodated entirely in Knox by 2036, if Knox is developed to its full capacity (92,500 dwellings) by 2036, and if each dwelling accommodates at least two residents on average. The Victorian Government and id Consulting have projected a total of 69,237 and 70,552 dwellings in Knox by 2036, respectively. This means by 2036, Knox will still have over 22,000 dwellings capacity, using the higher forecast in VIF and the capacity assessment in the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*.

Residential building approvals in Knox has bounced back, following the lowest building permit approvals in 2022, compared to the previous five years. This is a positive development for Knox as the media (that used ABS data) reported that Victoria had the lowest building approvals compared to the previous 10 years. In 2024 while other state recorded higher building approvals, Victoria's figure declined by 0.5% compared to 2023. This was foreshadowed by the Victorian Building Authority – VBA (2022) as it noted that building approvals increased during the 2021-2022 financial year for other building activity, but residential building approvals reduced as compared to the 2020-2021 financial year across Victoria. However, in Knox, building approvals appear to have rebounded strongly, as there was a 35% rise in dwellings approved in Knox in 2024 as compared to 2023. Despite this it may still take a few years for approved building permits to be translated into dwellings on the ground, to ease the current housing crisis.

[27] It is heartwarming that both the Victorian Government and id Consulting have revised their population forecast figures downwards (VIF) and upwards (id). This has narrowed the gap between the two. This gap between the forecasts was nearly 14,000 in 2023.

Growth in small dwellings have declined by 11% in 2024. Small dwellings (two bedrooms or less) were at 21% for approved planning permits in 2024, which is significantly behind the rising numbers of small households in Knox. The ABS has predicted that lone person and couple only households will constitute almost 50% of the Knox population by 2031 (ABS, 2022). A trend analysis shows that in years where larger subdivisions were approved in planning permits, a larger number of smaller dwellings were approved. When apartments were approved in significant numbers in planning permits in a particular year (i.e. 2019, 2020 and 2023), this increased the number of smaller dwellings. While 39 apartments (and 59 in 2023) were approved in 2024, no apartments were approved in the planning permits in 2022. If the approvals of apartments could be greatly increased and sustained, the rising gap between supply and demand for small dwellings in Knox, will be gradually reduced in the medium to long term. Unfortunately, there have been a reduction in the numbers approved in 2024.

The Bush Suburban area has experienced a net loss in small dwellings in 2024. Small dwellings have consistently been approved in low numbers in the Bush Suburban areas. In fact, no small dwelling was approved in the Bush Suburban area in 2023 and 2021. In contrast, about 85% of small dwellings are in the Activity Areas and Local Living areas on average, in most years[28]. These areas have nearly an equal number of small dwellings and usually have greater proximity to shops and public transport. This makes these locations ideal for the elderly and lone person households. The provision of high-density dwellings (in the form of apartments/small dwellings) in the Activity Areas and Local Living areas is in line with the objective of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*.

Knox has reached the minimum national provision benchmark of 78 residential aged care facilities (RACF) per 1,000 people 70 years and above in 2024. This is the lowest RACF provision ratio Knox has recorded since 2015. However, this is unsurprising as Knox has been declining progressively towards the minimum since 2015. Without a massive increase in RACF within the next year, Knox will undoubtedly fall below the minimum target provision ratio of 78 residential aged care places per 1,000 people aged 70 and over. This is because people aged 70 and over in Knox are increasing by a minimum of 2% every five years. For example, people aged 70 and over increased from 10.2% in 2016 to 12.4% in 2021 (ABS, 2022). Urgent actions are therefore needed to respond to the declining spate of RACF in Knox.

It is gratifying to report that a 96-bed RACF has been approved in planning permits (by VCAT) in 2024. In contrast, the past two years (2022 and 2023) has witnessed no approval of a single residential aged care facility in a planning permit. However, a few residential aged care facilities were approved in planning permits within the last five years. These include a 214-bed residential aged care facility approved in 2021, and three other residential aged care facilities approved in 2019 and 2020. If these facilities are developed quickly, Knox could rise again above its current provision (minimum) ratio of residential aged care places. To ensure that Knox does not fall deeply below the Australian Government minimum provision threshold for residential aged care places within the next few years, Council may need to work with private developers of aged care facilities, to address the landscape and environmental concerns that previous proposed residential aged care facilities posed (especially in 2022 planning permits applications). The *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027* has observed that Council will partner with the private sector to deliver affordable housing. This approach is equally potent in the provision of RACF in Knox.

Housing affordability is a major determinant of both the cost of living and the standard of living. This is because a significant share of a household's budget goes toward housing costs. In Knox, very few dwellings and units were affordable to households in the very low-income brackets (below $54,024 per annum) to rent or purchase. This was the case, because an insignificant 5 rentals (0.1%) and 6 property sale (1%) were affordable to households within the 'very low income' brackets in 2024 (Knox Housing Monitor. ; also see Table 4 of Attachment 2 for details). Low-income households ($54,025 to $86,439 per annum) have slightly more rental options, but only a limited number of property

[28] In 2023, small dwellings were only 57% in Local Living and Activity Areas. This could be because almost 37% of the small dwellings were approved outside the Housing Strategy Areas (Strategic Investigation Sites).

options to purchase. For instance, in the 12 months prior to June 2024, low-income households could only purchase approximately 86 of the 591 (15%) properties on the market (Knox Housing Monitor.). As of 30th June 2024, the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) documented 3,561 Priority Access and Register of Interest applicants who were on the waiting list for social housing within Knox[29] (Homes Victoria, 2024). This number had declined by 111 applicants, from 3,450 as at 30th September 2023. This is the second decline in a row with respect to the number of applicants in the VHR. Despite this, the numbers of the applicants on the VHR waiting list in Knox alone is still unacceptably high. The high number of applicants for social housing epitomises the housing affordability crisis (Pawson, 2022). The current housing affordability predicament has essentially pushed many potential renters out of the rental market in Knox.

Rental affordability in particularly has been consistently deteriorating in Knox since 2020. For example, 42% of rental properties were affordable to households in the 'very low' and 'low income' ranges in 2020, but in 2024, only 29% of rental properties are affordable to people within the same income brackets (See Figure 11). Not only this, but the rate of the decline is troubling. Council earnestly needs to expedite action on its commitment to implementing the actions and proposals documented in the *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027* to ameliorate this looming crisis.

The central focus of the *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027* is to expand the supply of social housing[30]. The provision of more social housing could partly address the housing affordability quandary. However, the gap between social housing demand and supply is continuing to widen in Knox (see Figure 10). The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* has highlighted that Council could influence the social housing market through a partnership with social housing providers. It also signals that although it is difficult to influence the private housing market, opportunities could be explored by Council to define a minimum supply of social or affordable housing, to be constructed by private developers. In addition, further negotiating with permit applicants whose applications would produce many dwellings, could increase a developer's contribution to the social and/or affordable housing supply. In fact, a 5% voluntary contribution to social housing by private developers has been proposed in the *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027*. If these proposals are fully explored and implemented, the provision of social and affordable housing could improve within Knox.

In 2024, Knox fell short of the minimum estimated supply of social and affordable housing by nearly 300 dwellings (298 to be exact). This shortfall has created a significant gap between the available housing and the estimated need. Currently, Knox has 1,505 social and affordable housing dwellings, but the estimated need is 2,407 dwellings in 2024, leaving a substantial gap of 902 dwellings. This situation is critical. If Council is already 298 dwellings short of the projected minimum supply for 2024, meeting the estimated need of over 900 additional dwellings seems unattainable, especially since the growth of social housing is not keeping pace. The decline of 31 social housing dwellings in 2024 further exacerbates the issue. Considering this growing challenge, it may be beneficial for Council to consider complementing existing approaches with alternative advocacy and forward-looking strategies. Exploring new and creative pathways could help support meaningful progress in addressing this important issue.

The rate at which new social housing dwellings are added in Knox could indicate how quickly the deficit might be reduced. From June 2020 to June 2023, social housing grew by an average of 13 dwellings per year, which is very low given the large deficit in 2024. However, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing reports over 6,000 social housing projects completed or underway in Victoria. The *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027* identifies 159 homes under development in Knox, funded by Homes Victoria[31]. Completion of these homes

[29] It is important to note that *as applicants can select up to five location preferences; a single applicant can therefore be counted anywhere from one to five times in the data set.* On average, an applicant selects 2 to 3 location preferences.
[30] The Knox Affordable Housing Action Plan 2015-2020 equally highlighted the need to increase social and affordable housing in Knox: https://tinyurl.com/mr3haub5
[31] The 159 (slightly revised down to 149) homes are likely to be Knox's share of the 6,300 social housing projects under development across Victoria.

would significantly improve Knox's social housing stock. Additional opportunities for new social housing in Knox include negotiating voluntary contributions from developers and working with permit applicants to contribute to social and affordable housing. Despite these efforts, Knox still faces significant challenges in meeting its social housing needs.

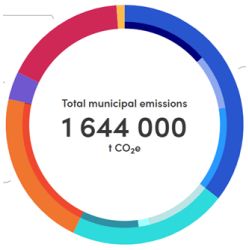
Objective 3 - Energy, water, and waste efficient design are increased in dwellings

Why is this Objective Important?

The *Knox Climate Response Plan 2021–2031* highlights that **37% of emissions** originate from residential and commercial stationary energy, primarily due to electricity consumption. To address this, Knox needs more sustainable and efficient housing to enhance residents' comfort, reduce emissions and their environmental impact, and lower living costs.

Adopting *Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD)* standards in new residential buildings can significantly improve energy and water efficiency, as well as ensure waste-efficient designs. This approach will result in higher quality, more accessible, and sustainable housing in Knox. These measures will directly reduce the adverse environmental and ecological impacts and substantially mitigate the effects of residential development on climate change.

The *Knox Climate Response Plan 2021–2031* outlines strategies to make dwellings in Knox more environmentally friendly, climate-responsive, and sustainable.



An estimated 1.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2) equivalent emissions in Knox in 2022 (Residential emissions, 24%)
Source: Snapshot Climate Report, 2022/2023

How are we Tracking this Objective?

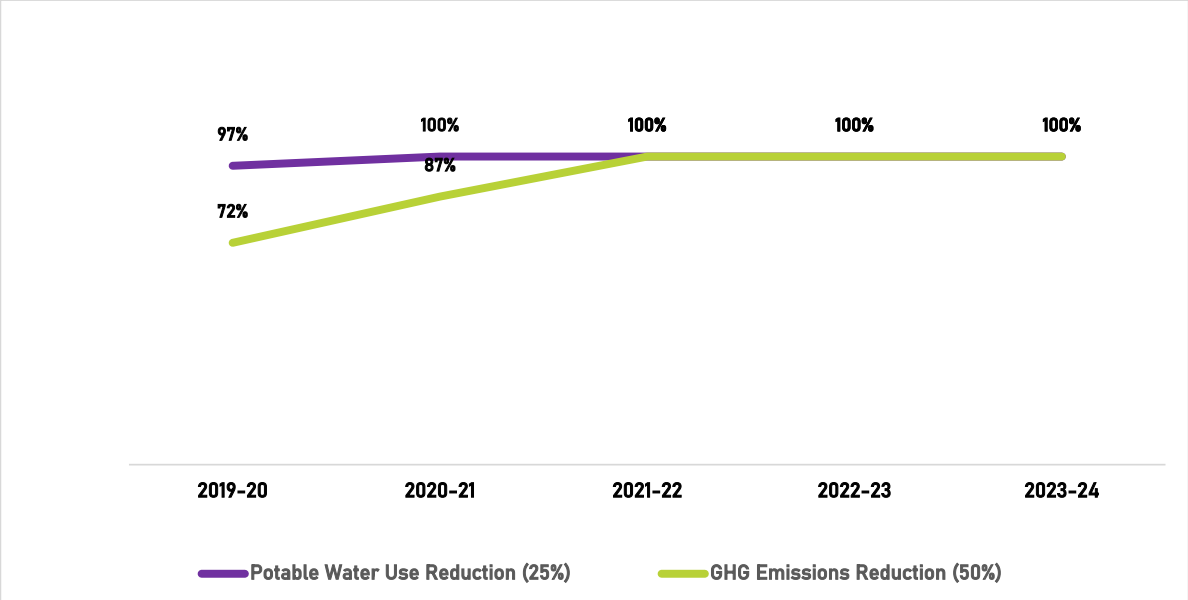
Suitably designed and resource-efficient buildings are essential for creating more sustainable and liveable cities. In the planning and construction of homes, energy efficiency, resource conservation, and community well-being should be prioritised. Council aims to make Knox a sustainable and climate-responsive municipality. Through the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015,* Council encourages all residential developments to incorporate sustainable design features, including water-sensitive urban design.

In fact, Council mandates that all developments of two or more dwellings undergo a *Sustainable Design Assessment (SDA)* before a planning permit is issued. This ensures that new residential buildings meet satisfactory environmental performance and efficiency standards, particularly regarding water usage and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Specifically, the SDA report must address two key sustainability indicators: reducing potable water consumption and GHG emissions. According to the *Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS)* data for the 2023-2024 financial year, the best practice targets of a 25% reduction in potable water consumption was achieved (100%) in all assessed developments. On the other hand, the best practice target of 50% reduction in GHG emissions was also fully achieved in the applicable proposed development assessed[32](See Figure 13).

[32] It is worthy to note that application for elevated ESD requirements has been submitted to the Minister for Planning. When the new ESD requirements are approved they will be tracked and reported in future Housing Monitoring Program Annual reports.

Figure 13. *Applicable new* Buildings Assessed as meeting Sustainability Targets
The proportion of new buildings proposed in planning permits that meet sustainability targets.



Analysis

It is important to note that Council revised its approach to ESD permit conditions and endorsed sustainability measures on developments in 2019-2020. This revision was to ensure that ESD commitments on approved development plans were delivered upon construction. This means that the ESD data on potable water reduction and GHG emissions reduction for the 2019-2020 (reported in Figure 13 above) are not comparable with the ESD data of the subsequent years (2020-2021 to 2023-2024) presented in Figure 13. Therefore, the ESD data from the 2020-21 to 2023-24 financial years are consistent and comparable. The ESD outcomes for 2023-2024 shows that approved permits of two or more dwellings in Knox had met (100%) or exceeded the best practice target of 25% reduction in potable water consumption. Additionally, in the same financial year, approved development of two of more dwellings in Knox had met 84% or surpassed the best practice target of 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions reduction. This implied that all permits for applicable new dwellings[33] from 2020-2021 to 2023-2024 met the best practice targets on the 25% reduction in potable water consumption. For GHG emissions, the target of 50% in greenhouse gas has been met in the past three financial years – 2021-2022 to 2023-2024. A 100% was not achieved on the ESD targets on GHG in the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 financial years (See Figure 13).

Moreover, the ESD data for 2023-2024 revealed that in practice an average of 38% of potable water consumption was reduced. This is a marginal decline of 1% from the 2022-2023 figure of 39% (the 2021-2022 figure was 41.3%). Correspondingly, in the same 2023-2024 financial year, the average GHG reduction was 51%. This constitute a significant decline of 10% over the 2022-2023 emission reduction of 61% (the 2021-2022 GHG emissions reduction was 60.4%).

[33] Applicable new dwellings mean additional new dwellings of two or more.

Also, the *Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS)* data observed that 2.1 million litres of rainwater tank capacity was committed to in the Knox municipality in 2023-2024 fiscal year. This was a decline because in 2022-2023 fiscal year, it was over 3 million litres of rainwater tank capacity. This is probably due to the reduction of the net new dwellings approved in 2024 by 51 (13% reduction) as compared to 2023. It also pertinent to note that 740kW (0.74 MW) of Solar PV was installed in the Knox municipality in 2023-2024. This is again a reduction from the 2023 figure, since 830kW of solar panels were committed to for installation. This is again probably due to the low scale of net new dwellings approved in 2024 (13% reduction from 2023). The installation of solar panels would contribute to a reduction of GHG emissions, emanating from electricity consumption in residential buildings.

Analysis over time would show more explicitly how Knox is progressing on these two ESD benchmarks. The time series analysis will likely show that the “best practice” definition is not fixed, rather it varies as standards shift. For example, on 21st July 2022, Knox was part of 24 Councils in Victoria that lodged an application for a planning scheme amendment with the State Government, requesting to introduce planning policy that elevates sustainability requirements for new buildings and encourages a transition towards net zero carbon development. The application for the elevated ESD requirements is still pending a decision by the Minister for Planning. If this application is approved, altering the “best practice” benchmark, the consistently of tracking the ESD benchmarks and tracking progress over time will be less coherent because of the variations of the standards.

Objective 4 - Housing design is improved to better respond to neighbourhood identity and create a stronger sense of place

Why is this Objective Important?

Greener suburbs with more tree canopy, open space, plus walking and bike paths, contribute to healthier, more sustainable communities. Over the decades, Knox has been known for its green and leafy neighbourhoods, quiet streets, and a blend of city and country feel. The low-scale and low-density residential development patterns in Knox have created the quiet streets, green character, and natural ambiance that attract many people to the area. However, this form of residential development has made Knox a car-dependent city, leading to increased air pollution and reduced access to amenities, services, and socio-economic infrastructure for residents. As land values have risen significantly over the years, redevelopment has introduced new housing types into Knox's neighbourhoods, altering the municipality's look and feel.



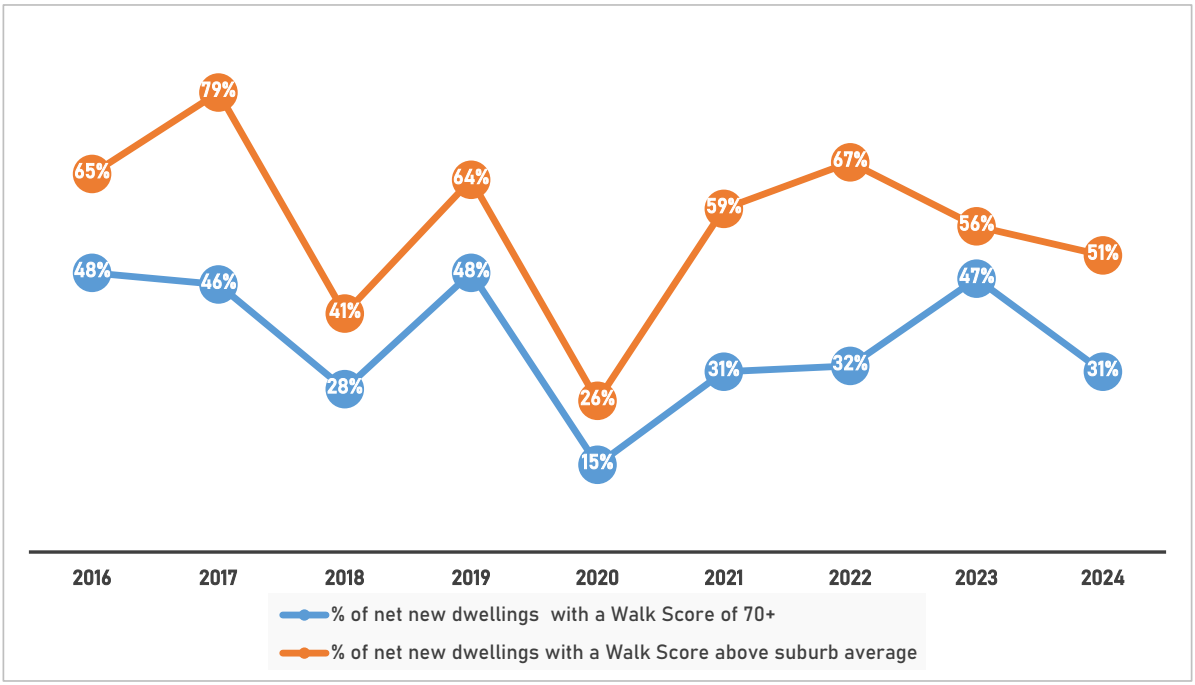
Knox scored 4.9 out of 16 on the social infrastructure index; 41st percentile in Melbourne (AUO, 2025).

How are we Tracking this Objective?

Building more houses within the walkable catchments of activity centres, train stations, and priority precincts will increase opportunities for walking, cycling, and scooting. One way of measuring the proximity of services to people is to use the Walkscore Index. Walkscore is an index developed to estimate the 'walkability' of a place. It assesses the proximity of local shops, services, schools, entertainment and jobs, to develop a walkability score on a scale of 1 to 100 (Steiniger et al. 2019). Areas that score below 50 are categorized as "Car Dependent", those with scores of 51-70 are classified as "Somewhat Walkable", scores of 71-90 are considered as "Very Walkable", and places that score over 90 are regarded as a "Walker's Paradise" according to Walkscore.

Interestingly, the walkscore website can be used to determine scores from individual addresses and by suburbs or neighbourhoods (Steiniger et al. 2019). Hence, the Housing Monitoring Program report examines the individual Walkscores for each of the planning permits approved, as well as how they compare against their suburb's average score. New residential developments in high Walkscore areas of Knox are more desirable as residents in those neighbourhoods would have ease of access to essential amenities and socio-economic services and infrastructure.

Figure 14. Proportion of Dwellings Approved in Walkable Areas of Knox
The proportion of net new dwellings approved in "Very walkable" areas of Knox declined compared to the 2023 score.



Furthermore, the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* have another important measure outlined under the neighbourhood identity objective – loss of trees and backyard space in Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas. Tree canopy data published by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning in 2022 (DELWP now known as DEECA – Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action) specified that there were about 250,000 trees on residential zoned land in Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas (DELWP 2022). Future releases (if any) of this data may offer an indicative measure of change over the years.

As part of the assessment of the neighbourhood identity objective, it is worth reiterating that the results presented in Figure 4 of this report, which confirmed that low numbers of new dwellings per hectare were approved in Bush Suburban and Knox Neighbourhood areas, supported Council's decision-making process to minimising tree loss, thus maintaining a green leafy natural environment within the municipality.

Analysis

Net new dwellings approved in "Very Walkable" areas of Knox has declined. Figure 14 above shows that almost a third (31%) of the net new dwellings approved in 2024 in Knox had Walkscores of above 70, that is, in "Very Walkable" locations. This was a marked decline (of 16%) from the 2023 performance of 47%. In fact, this is also marginally below the 2022 figure of 32%. It is worrying to report that the net new dwellings approved in "Very Walkable" areas of Knox in 2024 fell below the average of 36% over the last nine years. The highest was 48% in 2016 and 2019. Unsurprisingly, the net new dwellings that were approved in areas that were considered more walkable than the average score for their suburb also declined by 5% (a score of 51% in 2024) as compared to the 2023 figure of 56%. This is also a steep decrease over the 2022 figure of 67%. This strongly suggests that there was relatively fewer planning permits permitted in areas closer to activity centres in 2024.

It has been hypothesized that the approvals of apartments tend to increase the proportion of net new dwellings with a walk score above their suburb average. Despite this proposition, the percentages of net new dwellings with a walkability score above their suburb average in 2024 and 2023 (39 apartments approved in 2024, 59 apartments approved in 2023) were lower than in 2022, where no single apartment was approved in a planning permit. Apartment buildings normally accommodate many dwellings, compared to other dwelling typologies, and are usually located in or near activity centres where walkability tends to be high. Therefore, each approved apartment development often contributes significantly to increasing the number of very walkable dwellings approved. It was somewhat surprising to observe that approved dwellings in 2022 where no apartments were approved scored the second highest on walkability compared to their suburbs and outperformed 2024 and 2023 where 39 apartments and 59 apartments were approved respectively. This essentially suggested that while apartments usually elevate Walkscores, other dwelling typologies can equally improve walkability if they are located closer to services, such as shops, schools, health facilities, sports, recreational facilities, etc.

An encouraging 41% of the net new dwellings approved in 2024 will be located in “Somewhat Walkable” areas. This was in contrast with 2023 where only a quarter (25%) of the dwellings were in “Somewhat Walkable” areas. It must be pointed out that more than half were in “Somewhat Walkable” areas in 2022. Coincidentally, 28% of the approved net new dwellings were sited in “Car Dependent” areas in both 2024 and 2023. In comparison to 2022, a lower share (24%) of approved net new dwellings were in “Car Dependent” areas. It is relevant to report that no single dwelling was approved in “Walkers’ Paradise” in 2024.

The Basin, Lysterfield, Rowville, and Upper Ferntree Gully[34] have been generally categorised as “Car Dependent” suburbs by Walkscore. However, some approved net new dwellings were still identified in “Somewhat Walkable” and “Very Walkable” areas in these suburbs. For example, 10% (25% in 2023) of the approved net new dwellings in Rowville in 2024 were in “Very Walkable” areas and 22% were in “Somewhat Walkable” locations, although Rowville is generally categorised as a “Car Dependent” suburb. Therefore, the specific location of a dwelling is more important than the suburb in which it is located.

The fact that a little less than one-third of all approved net new dwellings in 2024 were located in “Very Walkable” locations is an unimpressive development. These approvals fail to align with the directives of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* and the *Plan for Victoria*, both of which emphasised the importance of accessibility and the need for more dwellings to be located near services, shops, and schools. The reason for the below average responsiveness of approved net new dwellings to locations with close proximity to shops and other services over five years, out of the nine since this trend analysis has done, deserves further investigation and analysis.

[34] No dwelling was approved in Upper Ferntree Gully in 2024

Objective 5 - Protect and enhance the landscape and environmental value of natural areas of significance

Why is this Objective Important?

Protecting environmental values in residential development is crucial because it preserves biodiversity, enhances human health and well-being, promotes sustainable practices, mitigates climate change, and maintains community value. A key defining feature of Knox is its cherished leafy green aesthetic. Nestled at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges, the municipality boasts a unique natural setting, with creeks and wetlands providing tranquil habitats for native wildlife and a serene ambiance for residents. These elements bring the feel of bushland and natural spaces into Knox's neighbourhoods, a quality highly valued by its residents. However, this green and leafy character is under threat from increasing development. As Knox's population grows, so will residential development. It is therefore crucial to ensure that new developments do not deplete Knox's unique and treasured environmental and ecological assets over time.



18 dwellings were approved per hectare in Bush Suburban Areas in 2023.



Knox has 118 Sites of Biological Significance; native vegetation covers less than 5% of Knox (Lorimer, 2010)**.**

How are we Tracking this Objective?

The Knox *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024 – 2034* aims to foster a nature-positive future where the community coexists with nature, protecting sites of biological significance and enhancing habitat corridors across the municipality to ensure local wildlife can survive and thrive. The strategy observes that there are 118 sites of biological significance identified across the municipality that serve to protect areas of remnant and indigenous vegetation. While Knox enjoys a spectacular natural setting, native vegetation covers just under 5% of Knox's municipality (Lorimer, 2010). Disturbingly, over a quarter of the native plant species found in Knox are at serious risk of extinction within one to two decades, if effective preventative measures are not taken. To protect the green and leafy character of Knox and respond to endangered species, Council has a well-established policy[35], in addition to planning controls on vegetation and residential design, to safeguard and preserve the significant landscape and environmental values of the area. More significantly, in January 2024 Council adopted the *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024 – 2034*, which explicitly outlines constructive goals and actions for sustaining biodiversity resilience in Knox over the next decade. The strategy seeks to sustain biodiversity resilience through the three-pronged core focus areas: tree canopy and vegetation cover, habitat connectivity, and climate change resilience (BRS[36], 2024). The strategy outlined six key recommendations to strengthen and preserve biodiversity in Knox.

The Bush Suburban areas boast unique and significant biological and landscape values, featuring flora and fauna that are critically important to both Knox and Greater Melbourne. The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* prioritises the protection of the natural environment over residential development in the Bush Suburban areas, which resulted in

[35] The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* notes that the *Knox Residential Design Guidelines 2015 (updated 2019)* aim to enhance the 'green and leafy' image of Knox.
[36] Biodiversity Resilience Strategy (BRS)

only 18 dwellings per hectare in the Bush Suburban areas in 2024 (See Figure 4). This represents the lowest number of dwellings per hectare, compared to the other housing strategy areas in 2024. By comparison, the Activity Areas had 74 dwellings per hectare in 2024.

It is worth stating that the Dandenong Foothills area is part of the Bush Suburban areas, which has long held a valuable place in Knox. The Foothills area has had its own special set of planning controls since 2006. This has successfully preserved the unique nature of the area. The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* stresses the need to maintain a very low scale of change in the Dandenong Foothills (see Map 1). The dwellings per hectare in the Bush Suburban areas equally applies to the Dandenong Foothills, so it undergoes a lower scale of change compared to all the other housing strategy areas.

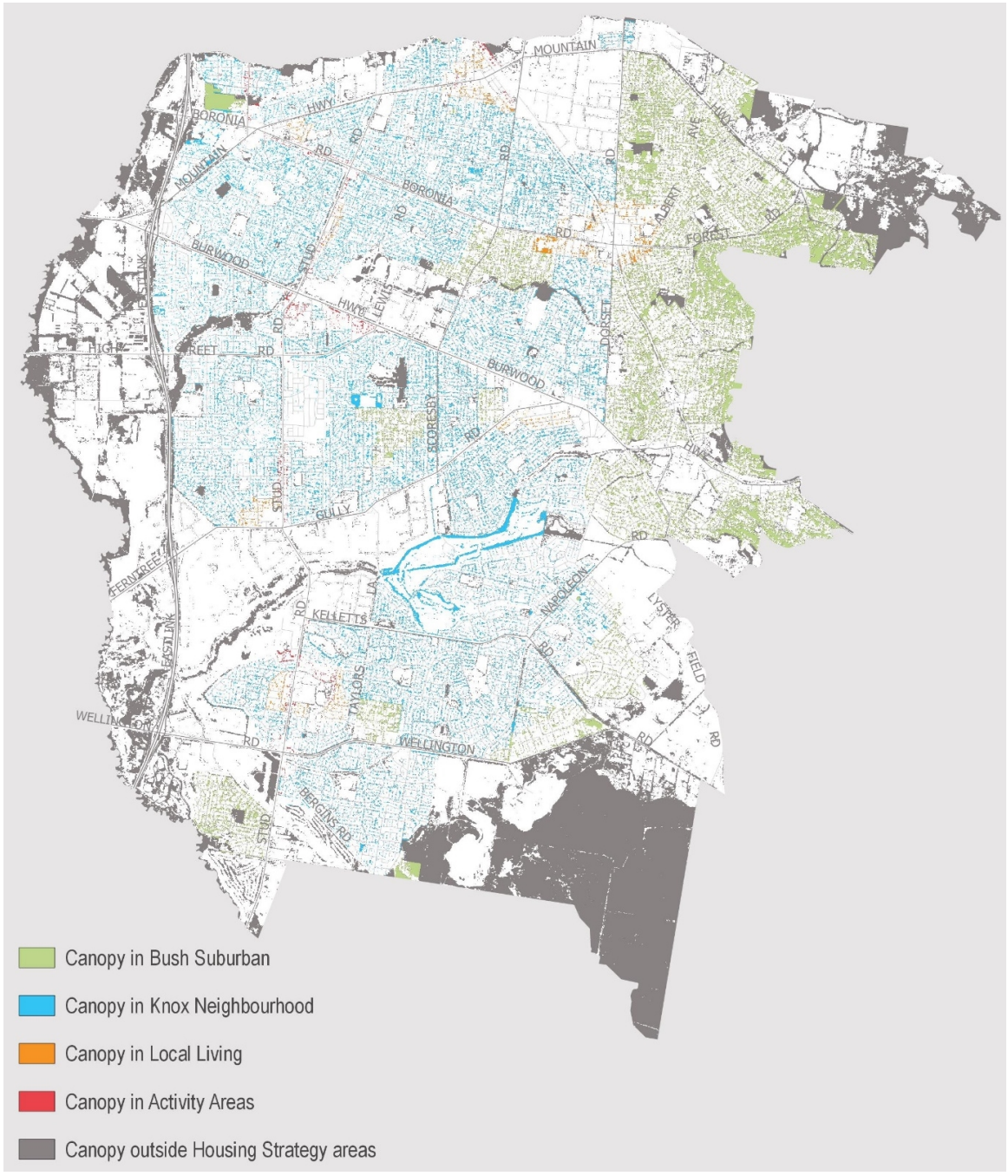
In fact, native vegetation provides a habitat for plants and animals and makes land more productive and contributes to human wellbeing. The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* encourages the planting of native and indigenous vegetation to support biodiversity and habitat protection and enhance liveability. This is important as it is hard to maintain native and indigenous vegetation and tree canopy, during multi dwelling development, which usually leads to the removal of large canopy trees to make space for multi-dwelling developments. The associated reduction in private open space tends to limit tree planting prospects and suppresses good tree health. It is worrying to note that outside of the urban and built-up areas, Knox's native tree cover has declined by an estimated 6% (about 112 hectares) since the late 1980s (DELWP, 2019a). Council recognises the challenges of protecting and enhancing biodiversity and habitat in the urban environment. The *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024-2034* addresses these issues and identifies key themes to tackle them. In the 2023-24 financial year, the Council's Biodiversity Team planted 24,864 indigenous plants, including 1,104 trees.

Tree canopy coverage has generally been declining in Knox. The decline in total tree canopy coverage has been concentrated in the northern suburbs of the municipality, which aligns with long-term land conversion from native trees to urban and built-up areas since the late 1980s (BRS, 2024). Regarding tree canopy in Knox's urban areas, there was an overall loss of 115 hectares between 2014 and 2018, equivalent to a reduction of 6.5%. Within the same period the urban areas of the Eastern Region[37] witnessed a loss of 9.2% of its canopy trees (DELWP, 2020). These figures are likely to change as new data becomes available.

The latest tree canopy data was published in 2021[38] by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP, now the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, DEECA). Tree canopy is defined in that dataset as "*woody vegetation over approximately two metres in height*"[39]. This dataset revealed that about 16% of the Knox housing strategy areas were covered by tree canopy. Map 3 below gives a graphical depiction of the distribution of the tree canopy. It is worth noting that, a trend analysis is not possible, as it was the first publication of the data. Future releases of this data will be monitored, nevertheless we are unaware of any firm commitment to publish a subsequent version at this time.[40] Discussions have also been ongoing within Council to explore alternative tree canopy data sources, but concrete actions and results remain elusive.

[37] The Eastern Region includes the municipalities of Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.
[38] This data was captured mainly in early 2020.
[39] It is important to note that this data is not comparable to the tree canopy data that DELWP published in 2019 (DELWP 2019b), which was reported on in previous Housing Monitoring Reports.
This data (2021) was also reported on in a previous Housing Monitoring report.
[40] DEECA suggests that a regular update of the data is unlikely as the data published in 2021 was ad hoc.

Map 3. Tree Canopy Cover in Knox



Source: This tree canopy data is part of the Vicmap Vegetation – Tree Extent dataset produced by the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning in 2021 (https://www.land.vic.gov.au/maps-and-spatial/spatial-data/vicmap-catalogue/vicmap-vegetation).

Analysis

Native tree cover in Knox has declined by about 6%. The evidence of this decline is based on the tree canopy data[41] published by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in 2019. The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* endorses the planting of native and indigenous vegetation, but this has not reversed the loss of native vegetation. To reverse the declining trend, more effective strategies and guidelines would be needed to ensure that more native and indigenous vegetation was planted. Interestingly, the Knox *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024 – 2034* has made practical recommendations aimed at reversing the continuous loss of native and indigenous plants. Additionally, Council may require robust regulations in the planning permit approval regime to achieve a better outcome in this domain.

As previously underscored, the Bush Suburban areas which encompasses the Dandenong Foothills, has the least number of dwellings per hectare in 2024, and in the previous years (documented in the Housing Monitoring Program Reports). The attainment of this low scale of change emanated from the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* which is focused on directing development away from Bush Suburban areas, particularly the Dandenong Foothills, with the view to sustaining a leafy green environment – which has been a well-recognised character of this housing strategy area. If this is sustained, the Dandenong Foothills will continue to undergo a low scale of change. Therefore, the distinctive bushland character and aesthetic charm of Knox will be preserved.

Knox's overall tree canopy coverage stands at 18%, and the urban areas at 16.3% (DELWP 2019b). As noted, this tree canopy data was published by DELWP. It is important to note that the data published in 2021 also cited (above) in this report was not directly comparable with the data published in 2019, due to the differences in the height of the canopy trees used, and a range of other factors including different data creation methods and geographical aggregations[42]. Hence, there is a need to explore and establish a means of mapping canopy regularly with a consistent data capture methodology to accurately chronicle canopy changes over time. In fact, the Knox *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024 – 2024* has equally elucidated this critical point.

The protection of the leafy character of Knox is an important goal of Council. In fact, Council has over the years implemented policies and plans to protect the green and leafy character of Knox's neighbourhoods, using various policy tools including the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015,* the Knox Planning Scheme (Residential Zone Schedules – Tree Canopy Controls, Vegetation Protection Overlays, the Dandenong Foothills Policy, and others), and the *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024 – 2034.* It is pertinent to note that Council has merely had an indirect power to control canopy loss on private property. Despite this, Council is still focused on exploring strategies to increase tree canopy cover. The Knox *Community Plan 2021 – 2031* considers an increase of tree canopy cover as one of the indicators of success, on the natural environment and sustainability key direction. This means the Knox community is strongly supportive of Council's measures on tree canopy protection.

The protection of canopy trees on private land is critical to increasing canopy coverage in Knox. However, the Knox *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024 – 2034* maintains that the loss of canopy trees on private land remains a fundamental barrier to increasing tree canopy coverage in Knox. For this reason, it is recommended in the *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024 – 2034* that there should be a review of how vegetation is protected on private land and/or property to reduce the possibility of canopy cover loss. The *Strategy* also calls for the exploration of community

[41] This data was captured in 2018.
[42] In the data published in 2019, a tree of 3+ metres was captured as a canopy tree by DELWP, but in 2020 data, a tree of 2 metres was categorized/used as a canopy tree. The heights used by DELWP fell short of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* definition of a Canopy Tree as "a perennial woody plant that reaches more than five (5) metres in height." (KCC, 2015, p.4).

campaigns to support vegetation management within the Knox municipality. This is a worthy proposal as this has the potential of carrying the community along in the canopy protection measures.

Objective 6 - Development responds to neighbourhoods in an integrated and balanced manner

Why is this Objective Important?

Integrated planning is required to develop liveable, inclusive, and safe cities, that consider the complex urban environment. An integrated approach to planning and delivery of development, infrastructure, services and activities for local areas and neighbourhoods promotes better outcomes. This approach considers not only the physical and economic determinants of neighbourhoods, but also the social, cultural, community, and health and wellbeing attributes that help define a place and contribute to its liveability. To achieve an integrated and balanced development, Council, through the Knox Planning Scheme has outlined explicit policies, goals and strategies for the development of the municipality. The Knox Planning Scheme is the official instrument for all decisions regarding planning made by Council, planning officers, and the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). To guarantee that planning decisions are effective and deliver quality outcomes to the residents of Knox, it is crucial to have consistency between Council policy, the Knox Planning Scheme, and Council's decision-making processes. More importantly, consistency between Council's planning decision-making and VCAT ruling ensures fairness, predictability, and public confidence in planning decisions or approval processes.



VCAT decided 15 residential planning applications for Knox in 2024 – an increase from 12 in 2023, 14 in 2021 & 2022; but a decline from 26 in 2020; 32 in 2019; and 43 in 2018.

How are we Tracking this Objective?

As referenced earlier in this section, coherence between Council's planning application decisions and VCAT decisions is crucial for assessing consistency with the Knox Planning Scheme. Planning applications decided by Council can be appealed at VCAT, which makes a final ruling on permit issuance based on the Knox Planning Scheme. Appellants may include landowners appealing a permit refusal, neighbours objecting to a permit approval, or either party seeking variations to permit conditions. VCAT primarily considers the Knox Planning Scheme provisions as the key reference, along with supporting documents and other relevant matters (VCAT Website, 2024). The number of cases appealed to VCAT and the percentage of overturned decisions indicate the consistency between Council policy, the Knox Planning Scheme, and Council's decision-making process. This report highlights trends in the consistency between VCAT and Council decisions on planning matters.

The remainder of this section reviews and analyses the VCAT decisions in Knox in 2024. To provide context, Figures 15 and 16 present VCAT's decisions on residential planning permits that would result in at least one net new dwelling in Knox if approved and implemented by the applicant[43]. Figure 15 shows that VCAT upheld two applications refused by Council and overturned seven applications that were refused by Council. This aligns with the typical trend since 2018 (excluding 2021 and 2023), where VCAT has generally overturned most of the Council's refusals. Interestingly, all six applications approved by Council but challenged at the Tribunal were upheld by VCAT. This is illustrated in Figure 16,

[43]Residential planning permits here include those for residential aged care facilities, which may not produce conventional dwelling types but will still provide much-needed accommodation for the elderly in Knox.

highlighting that VCAT upheld 100% of Council's approvals in 2024 – also, a consistent outcome since 2014, except for 2014, 2018, and 2023. It is noteworthy that in 2023, VCAT overturned one of Council's approvals, as depicted in Figure 16. However, only 22% of Council's refusals were upheld by VCAT in 2024, as shown in Figure 16.

Figure 15. VCAT Decisions on Residential Planning Applications
In 2024, VCAT overturned more Council refusals than it upheld

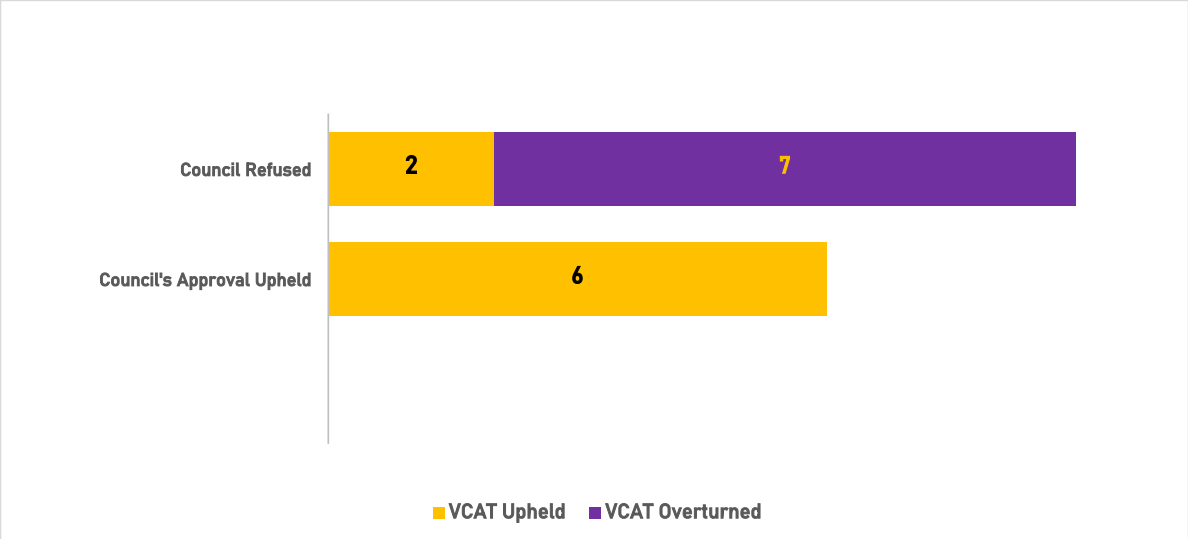
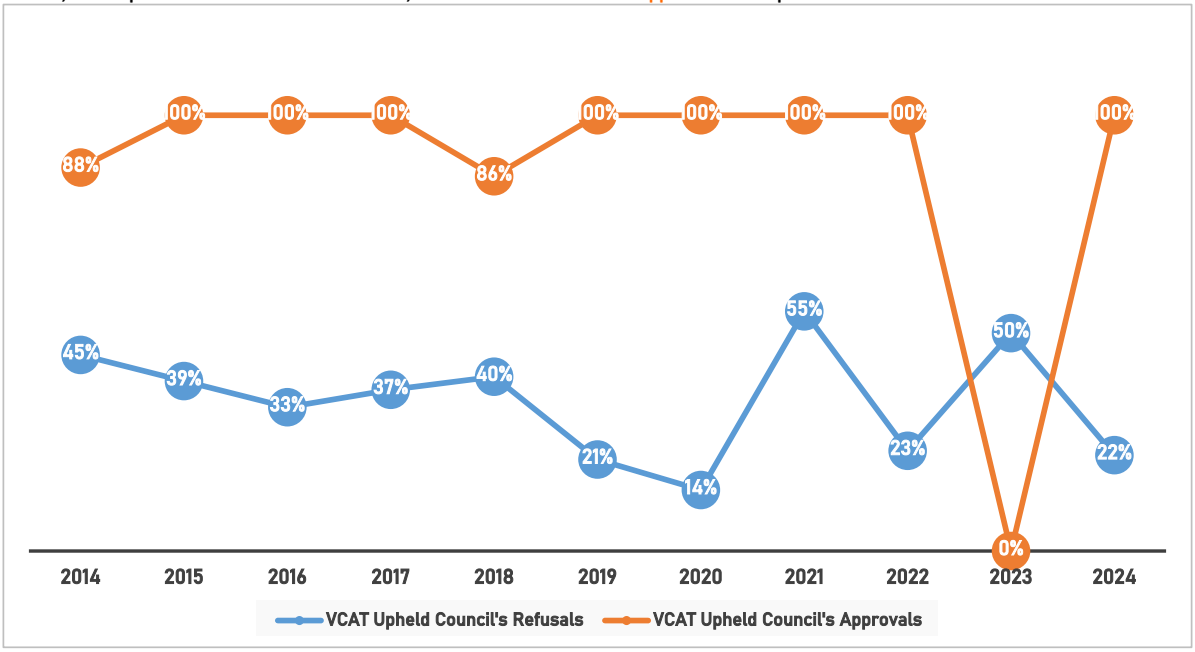


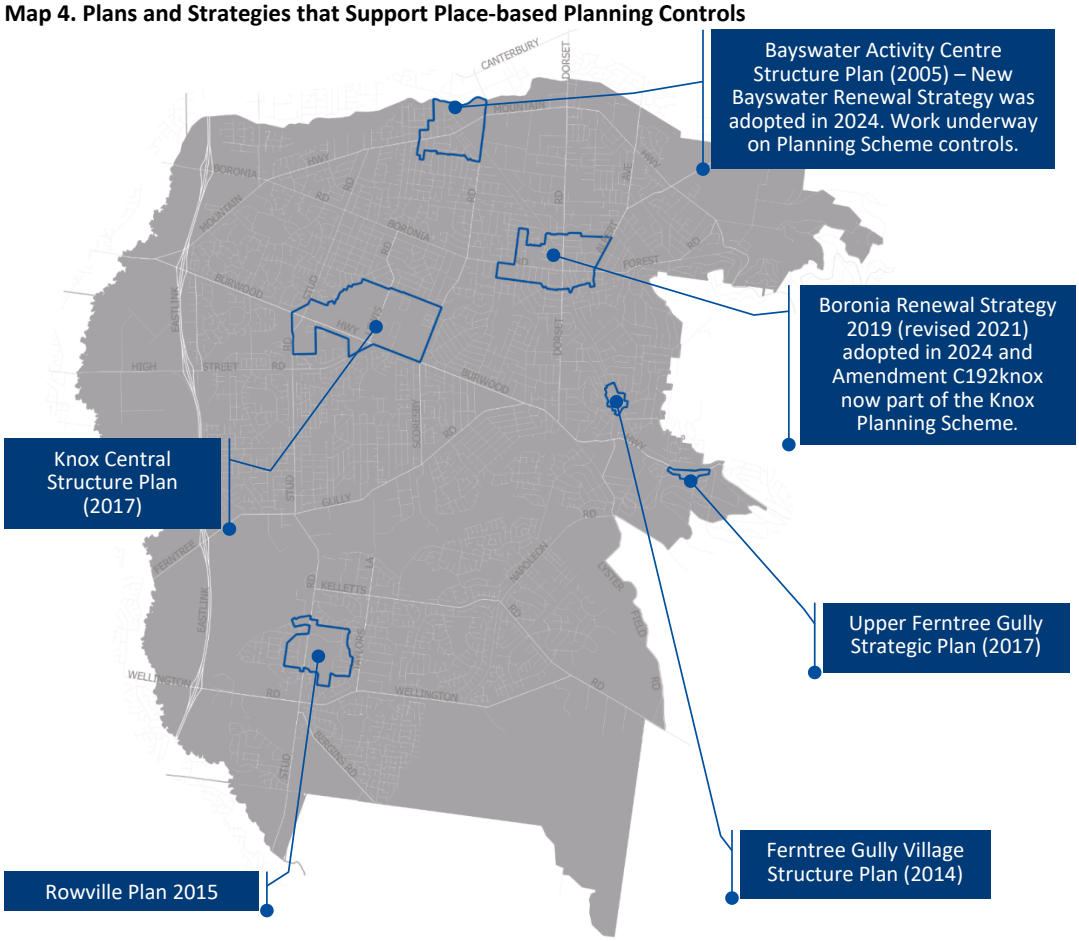
Figure 16. Trend Analysis of VCAT Decisions on Residential Planning Applications from 2014-2024
In 2024, VCAT upheld 22% of the Council's refusals, while 100% of the Council's approvals were upheld.



Place-based Planning

Place-based planning is crucial because it tailors development strategies to the unique needs and strengths of specific communities, fostering more effective and sustainable outcomes (Lata & Reddel, 2022). In the context of municipalities, place-based planning promotes the development of infrastructure and services to specific communities, rather than using a generic or 'one-size-fits-all' approach. This approach is applied to respond to complex, interrelated or challenging issues. Knox City Council undertakes integrated place-based planning initiatives in activity centres and other key places across the municipality. Structure plans and other local strategic plans developed through extensive consultation with the local communities, provide specific directions and guidance for future decisions on planning controls, infrastructure provision and the delivery of community services (See Map 4). The place-based planning approach empowers stakeholders by fostering partnerships between Council and the community, local businesses, and other key stakeholders. This improves the understanding and ownership of place-specific plans within the community, thereby facilitating outcomes that meet community aspirations. Place-based planning delivers infrastructure and has multiple and cascading benefits to the Knox community beyond the primary purpose for which they were provided. As shown in Map 4, Knox currently has six plans and strategies that support place-based planning.

Map 4. Plans and Strategies that Support Place-based Planning Controls



Knox City Council's place-based planning initiatives has led to the creation of six activity centres, giving residents of the municipality easy access to a wide range of major retail, community, government, entertainment, cultural and transport services. The activity centres also offer local employment opportunities and support local economic development. These activity centres support the growth of high-density housing and align with the *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* goal of developing 20-minute neighbourhoods (DELWP, 2017) as well as the new *Plan for Victoria* (2025). In fact, the *Plan for Victoria* (2025, p.74) envisions the development of 800,000 new homes across 60 Activity Centres in Greater Melbourne over the next decade.

Analysis

VCAT cases lodged from Knox in 2024 have slightly increased compared to the previous two years but remain below the six-year average of approximately 24 cases. A sum of 15 residential cases were decided by VCAT in 2024. This constitutes an increase from 12 cases in 2023 and 14 in 2022. To further break this down, 9 of these VCAT cases were initially refused by Council. The remaining six VCAT cases were initially approved by Council. Some of these cases were approved with conditions. So, applicants disagreed with the conditions and appealed to VCAT. In a few cases, neighbours were unhappy with Council's approvals and therefore lodged cases with VCAT to set aside Council's approval. But in all the six appeals against Council's approvals, VCAT upheld Council decision. In the nine cases that were initially refused by Council, VCAT set aside seven of Council's refusals and ordered that planning permits should be granted. However, in two of the remaining nine Council refusals, VCAT affirmed Council decision – ruling that no permits should be granted in those cases (See Figure 15).

VCAT's overruling of most of Council's refusals (78% in 2024) was consistent with VCAT's past rulings, but VCAT usually affirmed all Council's approvals. As outlined in Figure 16, since 2015 VCAT has always overruled most Council's refusals. The only exception to this trend was in 2021 and 2023 where VCAT upheld 55% and 50% of Council's refusal to approve a planning permit respectively. On the other hand, VCAT consistently upholds all of Council's planning permit approvals. As shown in Figure 16, the only major departure from this trend was in 2023 where VCAT overturned a Council approval. The other years of minor departure from the usual trend were in 2014 and 2018 where VCAT failed to uphold 12% and 14% of Council's approvals respectively. In effect, while VCAT is most certainly likely to agree with Council regarding its approvals of planning permits, the Tribunal is always more likely to overrule Council's disapprovals of residential applications. From this, Council may need to relook at its reasons for refusing residential applications. This is because the high rate at which VCAT overrules Council's refusals of planning applications may signal to applicants that Council is too firm or rigid in enforcing the controls in its planning scheme without carefully considering the unique circumstances of each application.

In more than half of the seven planning applications that were refused by the Council but overturned by VCAT, the applicants submitted amended applications that Council officers under delegation largely supported. This suggests that if Council officers encouraged applicants to amend their proposals to address concerns, the number of appeals against Council refusals at VCAT could significantly decrease. This would save Council and its officers valuable time in litigating these matters at the Tribunal, resulting in a win-win outcome for both parties.

The seven overturned permits produced a total of 40 net new dwellings[44]. If these approved permits are fully enacted, it will contribute to new housing for the residents of Knox. More importantly, Council refused a 108-bed residential aged care facility. The application was refused by Council on the basis that the proposed design did not provide for sufficient separation and landscaping between the proposed building and the waterway, to manage a fire risk and a

[44] Five proposed developments refused by Council but approved at VCAT in 2023 yielded 9 net new dwellings. Also, the 10 developments that were initially refused by Council but overturned by VCAT in 2022 produced 37 net new dwellings.

site of biological significance. The applicant lodged an appeal at VCAT against the decision to refuse the application. The Tribunal found that the site was suitable for a residential aged care facility, and that the built form was generally satisfactory. Importantly, the Tribunal found that the proposed setback of the building from the watercourse was an acceptable outcome; by providing a buffer to the waterway and retaining a treed environment, with bushfire protection. In the end, the residential aged care facility was reduced to a 96-bed facility and approved by VCAT. At a time when Knox is just sitting on the minimum national target provision ratio of 78 places per people 70 years and above, Council needs to balance the requirements as part of planning applications, to respect the landscape while addressing the shortage of residential aged care facilities.

It is a positive development that VCAT cases lodged from Knox in 2024 is still below the average cases lodged at the tribunal over the last six years. For instance, 2021, 2022 and 2023 equally recorded some of the lowest VCAT cases lodged from Knox. If this trend of fewer appeals submitted to VCAT continues, it could be presumed that either planning permit applicants and neighbours are increasingly becoming satisfied with Council's decisions on planning permits or community members have limited capacity to actively engage in the planning appeal processes. The time and effectiveness of this third-party appeals process could also be one of the reasons for the low VCAT cases in the post-COVID period.

Action Areas and Advocacy Opportunities for Council

Council can take practical actions and advocate for changes in the housing sector in response to the key findings of the 2024 annual report of the *Knox Housing Monitoring Program*. With its four interconnected roles as planner, provider, partner, and advocate, Council has the leverage to initiate effective actions and seize opportunities to drive transformative positive changes in Knox's housing sector. This section highlights critical areas for Council action and outlines advocacy opportunities.

Action Areas

Action areas that the findings in this report might trigger are as follows:

- With the ongoing review of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*, the findings and data within this report could provide relevant data and perspectives, which could inform and enrich the review. In fact, one of the actions that emanated from the *Knox Housing Monitoring Program Report* 2022 is that the City Strategy and Planning team, who are currently managing and leading the review of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015,* have confirmed that "*As part of the project scope, the findings of the most recent Knox Housing Monitoring Program Report will be considered*." Indeed, SGS Economics and Planning that has assessed the current housing capacity of Knox has drawn on the data in the *Knox Housing Monitoring Program* reports for 2022 and 2023. This means the 2024 report will equally provide updated data on important residential development matters in Knox, now and into the future.
- Small dwellings are only 21% of approved net new dwellings in Knox in 2024. However, the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* and *Plan for Victoria* have both explicitly elucidated the critical need for diverse housing. Currently, there is extremely limited diversity of dwellings in Knox. Large dwellings are the overwhelming majority. Council could work with landowners/developers within Strategic Investigation Sites, toward the residential development of apartments that usually produce many small dwellings. The 2024 annual report, like previous Housing Monitoring Program reports, has flagged the limited availability of small dwellings in Knox. By working with landowners/developers, the diversification of the housing stock in the municipality may be able to be increased, particularly the availability of one and two-bedroom dwellings. This will also partly address the housing needs of the 45.7% (which is forecast to increase) of lone person or couple only households in Knox.
- A notable finding in the 2024 Housing Monitoring report is the persistent problem of housing unaffordability, particularly the emerging trend of the worsening affordability of rental properties. This report will therefore buttress some of the proposals in the *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023–2027*. This report and previous reports have highlighted that a critically significant policy concern in Knox, are the rising housing costs, coupled with very low availability of affordable rental options, plus a shortfall of social housing. A potential action in response to this, is for Council to re-look at its policies and their effectiveness in the social and affordable housing domain. This is because the *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023–2027* has now been implemented for two years, yet rental affordability is worsening and regrettably, Knox has lost 31 social housing dwellings from the existing 1,522 properties as of June 2023. There is therefore the need for a mid-term evaluation of Council's key strategy for attacking the housing affordability crisis.
- The data and conclusions in this report may inform the final strategies, goals, and actions on housing in the draft Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029. Additionally, the findings could lead to revisions of some actions in the Knox *Community Plan 2021–2031*. Although the community plan spans a 10-year period, it is

monitored to track progress against key targets and benchmarks. The data and findings from the 2024 Housing Monitoring Program report can be used to assess the progress of objectives under the 'Neighbourhoods, Housing, and Infrastructure' Key Direction of the Knox *Community Plan 2021–2031*. Furthermore, these findings will help Council and its staff to respond to questions during housing-related community engagements and assist in designing survey instruments to evaluate how well the community's needs are being met.

- The 2024 Housing Monitoring Program report may guide Council's response to the new *Plan for Victoria*. It details Knox's status on housing diversity, need, choice, density, capacity, affordability, walkability, tree canopy cover, and environmental sustainability—key themes in the *Plan for Victoria*. This report details Knox's current residential development status and alignment with the *Plan for Victoria*, highlighting necessary changes.

Advocacy Opportunities

Council's advocacy in the housing sector could lead to practical actions that could ameliorate identified challenges and shortfalls in the housing domain in Knox. In this respect, based on the findings in the 2024 *Knox Housing Monitoring Program* Report, some advocacy opportunities have been highlighted for Council to consider. These include:

- The 2024 Housing Monitoring Program report highlights that Knox has now declined to the minimum Australian national benchmark for the provision of aged care places. The previous two reports predicted this outcome if no substantial action was taken to increase residential aged care places in Knox. Knox is projected to fall below the national benchmark in the next Housing Monitoring report unless the provision of residential aged care places is significantly increased in 2025. This is likely due to the intercensal growth rate of Knox residents aged 70 and above, which is growing at 2.2%, outpacing the growth in residential aged care places. Consequently, Council could use these findings to effectively advocate for and attract residential aged care facility providers from all sectors (public, not-for-profit, private) to the Knox municipality. Successful advocacy could increase residential aged care places and address the emerging housing needs of this vulnerable cohort.

- This year's Housing Monitoring Program report revealed that 31 social housing dwellings were removed from Knox's stock in 2024. Homes Victoria attributes this decline to routine maintenance and upgrades. Given the significant shortfall in social housing, it is crucial for Council to collaborate with Homes Victoria and other providers to find better ways to conduct maintenance and upgrades progressively. This approach would prevent existing dwellings from deteriorating to the point of disrepair. By performing minor routine maintenance and upgrades, occupants could remain in their homes. Alternatively, upgrading and maintaining a few dwellings at a time would eliminate the need to remove 31 dwellings simultaneously for maintenance purposes.

- This report established that couple-only and lone-person households accounted for 45.7% in 2021, with projections indicating this figure will reach nearly 50% by 2031. However, the net growth of small dwellings (two bedrooms or less) in planning permits in 2024 was only 21%, and the average yield of small dwellings in planning permits over the last five years (2020-2024) has been an insignificant 21%. Given this looming crisis of small dwellings, Council could undertake advocacy campaigns to make private developers aware of the high and growing demand for small dwellings in Knox. An effective and sustainable campaign could encourage private housing developers to invest in constructing small dwellings, particularly apartments. This proposed advocacy acknowledges the complexities involved in providing small dwellings in a profit-driven property market.

- This report has recognised the importance of dwelling locations being in close proximity to community facilities and services, as less than a third (31%) of the dwellings approved in planning permits in 2024 in Knox were in "Very Walkable" areas. Since 2016, an average of 36% of approved dwellings in planning permits were in "Very Walkable" areas of Knox. Thus, on average, almost 65% of the net new dwellings approved in Knox over the past nine years were not in "Very Walkable" areas. This indicates that critical socio-economic infrastructure and services are not

in close proximity to many Knox residents. Therefore, Council could use this finding to advocate for State Government support in providing essential social and economic infrastructure and services, such as public transport, local shopping centres, health facilities, and local schools. If successful, Knox could achieve the *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* goal of creating 20-minute neighbourhoods, where most essential daily needs and services could be accessed within a 20-minute walk, cycle, or local public transport trip. Proximity of dwellings to services is also a central pillar of the *Plan for Victoria*, which aims to build more homes in established areas close to jobs, public transport, facilities, and services. These locations are already well-serviced by existing infrastructure, reducing the need to build new infrastructure.

- Council has set a tree canopy target of 30% by 2050, but current data to assess progress is unavailable, relying instead on outdated 2018 data showing 18% coverage. Additionally, Council has also been exploring alternative tree canopy data sources, but concrete results have remained elusive. Improving tree canopy coverage is a key direction of *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* and *Plan for Victoria*, which also targets 30% in urban areas. Achieving this requires regular measurement and monitoring. The Knox *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024-2034* recommends establishing a system for regular canopy mapping. The 2024 *Knox Housing Monitoring Program* report highlights the need for current data, suggesting Council collaborate with the Municipal Association of Victoria and other stakeholders to advocate for State Government support and funding to capture tree canopy data regularly. This is an opportune time, as the State Government has explicitly stated in *Plan for Victoria* that a tree canopy cover of 30% will be set for urbanised areas.

Summary of Key Findings

This report aims to evaluate the progress made towards the six objectives outlined in the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*. By analysing data on planning approvals, housing construction, and population demographics, the report provides a comprehensive overview of housing developments in Knox. The analysis is structured around a set of indicators designed to measure various aspects of housing, with a particular focus on new dwellings approved through the planning system in 2024.

The following are the key highlights from this report:

- **Since COVID, the number of new dwellings expected to be constructed in Knox has remained below the 11-year average of 684.** In 2024, 136 planning and subdivision permits were approved. Considering demolitions, if all these permits were fully enacted, Knox could see a net increase of 333 new dwellings. This figure is slightly below the numbers for 2021 (334), 2022 (373), and 2023 (384). In fact, the 2024 housing approvals represent the lowest number of net new dwellings in Knox in over a decade, since 2014.
- **New dwellings approved in 2024 were less aligned with the preferred character outlined in the *Housing Strategy 2015* compared to previous years.** In 2024, 68% of new dwellings approved were consistent with their Housing Strategy Area, a significant 20% decline from 88% in 2023. This marks the second lowest alignment since 2016 and falls below the nine-year average of 74%. The highest alignment was 88% in 2023, and the lowest was 64% in 2016. This decline is concerning, as it was expected that a significant share of approved dwellings would align with the preferred typology within a decade of implementing the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*.
- **Dwelling density significantly increased in the Bush Suburban area in 2024, while it decreased in Neighbourhood and Local Living areas compared to 2023**. Between 2023 and 2024, dwelling units per hectare decreased by 5% in Knox Neighbourhood areas and by 17% in Local Living areas, a departure from the previous year's trend of increases across all Housing Strategy Areas (HSAs). However, dwelling density in Bush Suburban areas increased significantly by 38% during the same period. If this growth continues, the density in Bush Suburban areas could surpass that of Knox Neighbourhood areas within a decade. This would not be the preferred growth pattern, as it could negatively impact Knox's significant biological (flora and fauna) and landscape values.
- **In 2024, approvals for residential aged care facilities rebounded, while apartment approvals declined compared to 2023**. In 2024, a 96-bed residential aged-care facility was approved, unlike in 2022 and 2023. This aligns with the trend in 2021, when 214 beds were approved. Additionally, planning permits approved in 2024 would result in 39 new apartments if enacted, a decrease from the 59 apartments approved in 2023. Despite this decline, the 2024 figure is an improvement over 2022, where no apartments were approved (only 4 apartments were approved in 2021).
- **In 2024, Knox achieved the minimum target of 78 residential aged care places per 1,000 people aged 70 and above**. In 2024, Knox reached the minimum national benchmark of 78 residential aged care places per 1,000 people aged 70 and above, the lowest ratio since 2015. This decline has been ongoing since 2015, and without a significant increase in RACF[45], Knox will likely fall below this benchmark next year. The population aged 70 and over in Knox is growing by at least 2% every five years, rising from 10.2% in 2016 to 12.4% in 2021 (ABS, 2022). Urgent action is needed to address this decline.

[45] Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF)

- **Building permits issued in 2024 increased by 35% compared to the previous year**. In 2024, 869 building permits were issued, compared to 643 in 2023 and 588 in 2022. This figure is above the 8-year average of 800 approvals. While 2022 had the lowest number of approvals since 2017, 2017 saw the highest with 1,136 permits. Tracking building permits is crucial as they provide more certainty about future construction in Knox than planning permits, offering a clearer indication of whether the housing challenge can be addressed in the short term.
- **Escalating housing costs and a severe shortage of affordable rental options.** Access to affordable housing remained a critical issue in Knox in 2024. Only 0.1% of rentals and 1% of property sales were affordable to 'very low income' households. Rental affordability has consistently deteriorated since 2020. For instance, 42% of rental properties were affordable to 'very low' and 'low income' households in 2020, but this dropped to 29% in 2024. The rate of this decline is troubling. A review of the actions outlined in the *Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027 should be* undertaken as part of a mid-term review to address this looming crisis.
- **A significant shortfall in social and affordable housing supply remains a critical policy concern in Knox in 2024.** In 2024, Knox fell short of the minimum estimated supply of social and affordable housing by 298 dwellings, creating a significant gap between available housing and the estimated need. With 1,505 social and affordable housing dwellings currently available and an estimated need of 2,407, there is a substantial shortfall of 902 dwellings. The decline of 31 social housing dwellings in 2024 further exacerbates the issue. Considering this growing challenge, it may be beneficial for Council to consider complementing existing approaches with alternative advocacy and forward-looking strategies. Exploring new and creative pathways could help support meaningful progress in addressing this important issue.
- **Growth in small dwellings (≤2 bedrooms) fell by 11% in 2024**. In 2024, only 21% of approved dwellings in Knox were small (two bedrooms or less), totalling 69 dwelling units, down from 32% (122 units) in 2023. The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* and *Plan for Victoria* highlight the need for diverse housing, yet large dwellings dominate in Knox. Council could collaborate with landowners/developers in Strategic Investigation Sites to develop apartments, increasing the availability of small dwellings. This would help meet the housing needs of the growing number of lone person and couple-only households, which currently make up 45.7% of households in Knox.
- **VCAT decisions on planning permits slightly increased in 2024 after hitting a low in 2023.** VCAT decided 15 residential planning applications for Knox in 2023, up from 12 in 2023 and 14 in 2022 and 2021. The 2023 figure was the lowest since 2012. In 2024, the number of cases remained below the six-year average of 24. Since 2014, 66% of Knox's planning permit refusals were overturned by VCAT. In most cases where Council's refusals were overturned by VCAT, applicants submitted amended applications that Council officers supported. Continuing to encourage amendments to address concerns could reduce appeals, saving time and benefiting both parties.
- **Knox achieved 100% of its ESD targets for potable water consumption and GHG emissions reduction in 2023-2024.** This implied that all permits for applicable new dwellings in 2022-2023 met both targets. This was equally the case in 2021-2022 financial year. In 2023-24, ESD data showed a 38% average reduction in potable water consumption and a 61% average reduction in GHG emissions for approved planning applications.

Next Steps: Future Knox Housing Monitoring Program

The *Knox Housing Strategy 2015* explicitly specified that its performance would be monitored and reported annually through the *Knox Housing Monitoring Program*. In line with this directive, the *Knox Housing Monitoring Program* Report will continue to be published annually. As new data sources become available, additional indicators will be developed and refined to accurately track and monitor the performance of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*.

Mapping tree canopy regularly would help monitor changes in tree canopy coverage. Council is exploring various means of accessing consistent, comparable, and reliable data sources for tree canopy measurements. In the meantime, some tree canopy data from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) has been presented in this report. However, DEECA has not made any firm commitments regarding the release of subsequent tree canopy coverage data in the near future. Therefore, to enable future reports to examine changes in tree canopy cover in Knox over time, Council needs to expedite action and take concrete and timely steps to map and measure these changes. The Knox *Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024–2034* recommends that Council set incremental canopy milestones leading up to the 2050 target of 30% canopy cover in Knox. This is crucial because, without incremental targets, it is impossible to assess progress towards the 2050 goal. Even with available tree canopy data, the Housing Monitoring Program Report cannot confirm if Council is on track until 2050.

Future disaggregation of building permit data would provide more certainty about what is likely to be built in the near future. Planning approvals only indicate what might be built, as not all planning permits result in new residential development. Building permit numbers have been reported in the 2024 Housing Monitoring Program Report and previous reports. The challenge with building permit data is that, unlike planning permit data, it does not identify the number of bedrooms in approved residential developments. This makes it impossible to determine the dwelling size from the building permit. It is hoped that future Australian Bureau of Statistics building permit data may be further disaggregated to include the number of bedrooms.

Over the past few years, Council has explored the creation of an interactive Power BI dashboard to enhance data visualization and real-time reporting on key targets and indicators as part of the *Knox Housing Strategy 2015*. A dashboard was created for the 2023 *Knox Housing Monitoring Program* Report, and another has been developed for 2024, with plans to continue in subsequent years. It is important to note that the interactive dashboard will not replace the annual Housing Monitoring Program report but will complement it with housing-related data from Council's Pathway database. Since the dashboard feeds on live data from Pathway, there may be minor variations between the data in the report and the dashboard. In such cases, the data used in the report remains accurate as of the date/time of publication.

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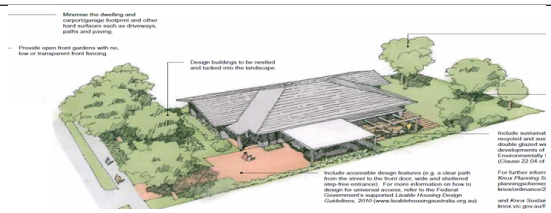
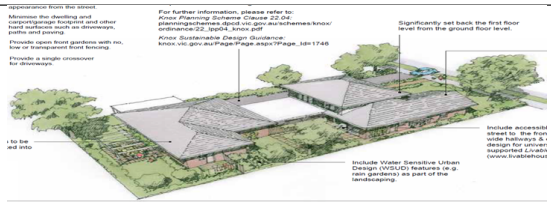
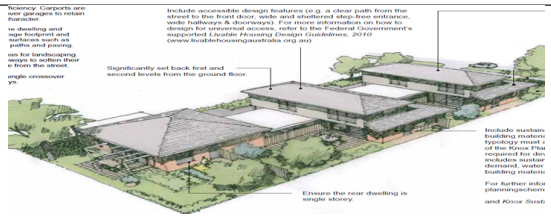
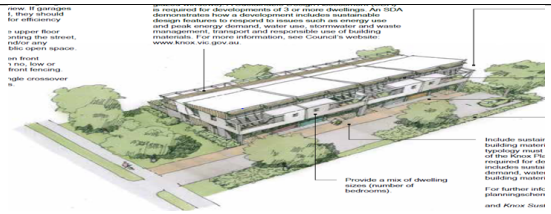
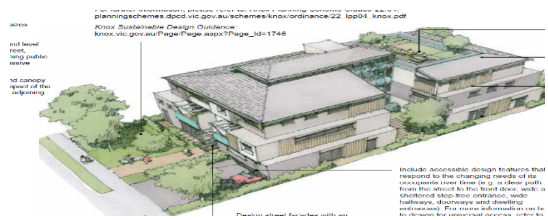
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Attachment 1: Definition of Housing Types

Table 3. Housing types as defined in the Knox Housing Strategy

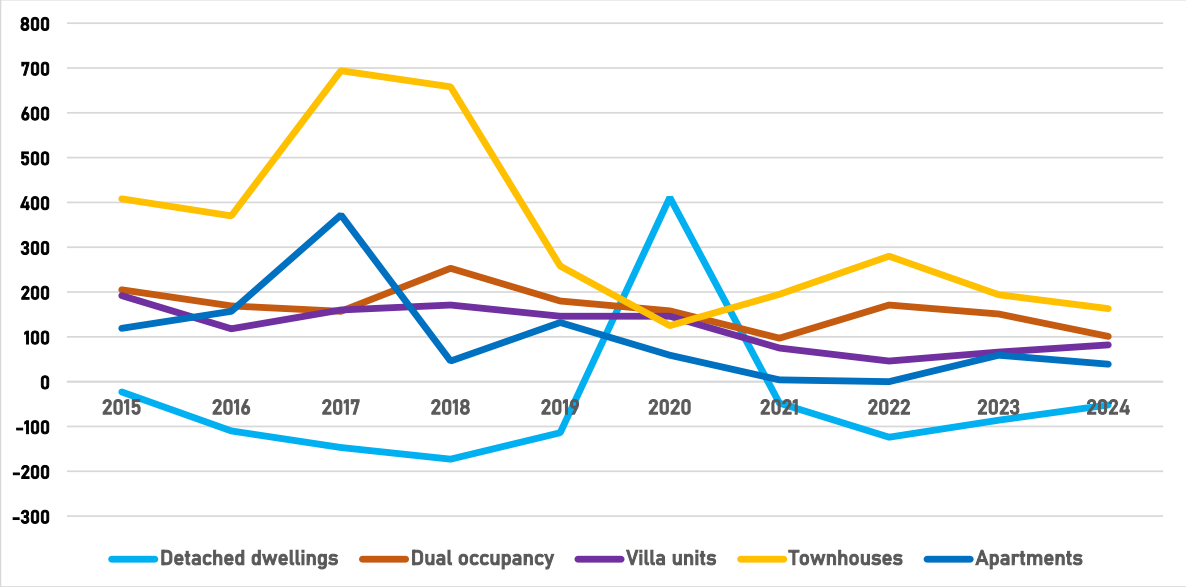
Housing Type Definition	Indicative Lot Layout: Perspective View
Detached dwelling: one dwelling on a lot.	
Dual occupancy: two dwellings on a lot (can include retention of an existing dwelling).	
Villa units: three or more dwellings on a lot with no shared walls.	
Townhouses: three or more dwellings on a lot sharing a wall or roof.	
Apartments: development of three or more stories in a single mass or multi-unit dwelling, usually with a common entrance.	

For further details, see the Knox Residential Design Guidelines 2015 – revised 2019 (p.24-28).

Attachment 2: Net growth in dwellings by Typology, 2015 to 2024

Figure 17. Net Growth in Dwellings by Typology

Townhouses remain the predominant dwelling type in terms of net growth since 2016[46]



The only exception to this trend was in 2020, where detached dwellings was the dominant typology.

[46] From 2015 to 2018, calculations of net growth by type are based on an assumption that all demolished dwellings were detached dwellings. Analysis of demolitions data from 2019 to 2022 suggests that this was accurate of 96.5% of demolitions.

Figure 18. Square Metres per Dwelling in Housing Strategy Areas

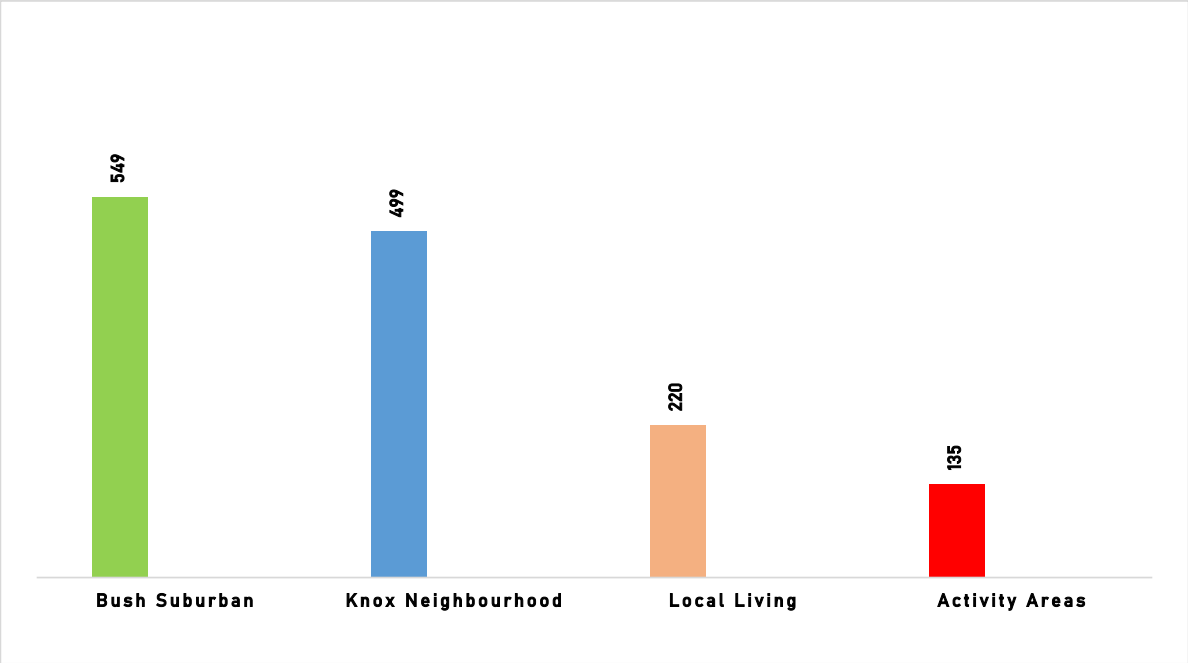


Table 4. Household Annual Income Ranges for 2024

Informed Decisions (.id), Housing Monitor: Income Ranges for Greater Melbourne 2024			
	Very Low	Low	Moderate
Lone person	Up to $26,085	Up to $41,737	Up to $62,606
One parent family	Up to $42,824	Up to $68,519	Up to $102,779
Couple	Up to $61,701	Up to $98,721	Up to $148,083
Couple family with children	Up to $85,487	Up to $136,779	Up to $205,169
Group household	Up to $62,250	Up to $99,600	Up to $149,400
Total	Up to $56,392	Up to $90,226	Up to $135,340
Planning and Environment Act 1987: Specification of Income Ranges for Greater Melbourne (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)			
	Very Low Income Range (Annual)	Low Income Range (Annual)	Moderate Income Range (Annual)
Single adult	Up to $30,640	$30,641 to $49,020	$49,021 to $ 73,530
Couple, no dependant	Up to $45,950	$45,951 to $73,530	$73,531 to $110,300
Family (with one or two parents) and dependent children	Up to $64,330	$64,331 to $102,950	$102,951 to $154,410

8.2 Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For Decision
Author:	Piers Burgoyne, Program Manager
	Jen Reid, Head of Strategy and Business Intelligence
Manager:	Manager Strategy Transformation, Liesl Westberry
Executive:	Director, Customer & Performance, Greg Curcio

SUMMARY
Under the Local Government Act 2020, a Council must prepare and adopt a Council Plan for a period of at least the next four financial years after a general election in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices.

This report presents the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 ('The Plan'), incorporating the Community Vision 2035, Council Plan, and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, for Council endorsement. This document represents Council's promise to the Knox community and delivers on the community's aspirations and needs. The Plan is a vital commitment from Council to enhance the quality of life for all residents by addressing the key social, economic, and environmental challenges facing Knox. It also sets the path for how the Knox Community Vision 2035 can be achieved.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolve to:

1. Adopt the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 as set out in Attachment 1 in accordance with *s90 of the Local Government Act 2020* and s26 and s27 of the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.
2. Rescind the existing Community Plan 2021-2031 as the Community Vision has been integrated into the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Knox Community Vision 2035

During the 2021-2025 planning process, nearly 4,500 community members shared their thoughts on shaping Knox's future. This engagement aimed to understand the community's aspirations and what the Knox community loves about Knox.

In 2020, the community told Council that they envision Knox as a vibrant business hub supported by local jobs, innovative industries, and strong educational opportunities for all ages. Priorities that were shared included protecting vulnerable community members through affordable housing, fostering sustainability through accessible developments, and preserving natural spaces with a focus on energy efficiency and waste reduction. There was also emphasis on the importance of health and wellbeing, cultural inclusion, community safety, and ensuring that every voice is heard in local decision-making.

In 2024, Council revisited the Community Vision through broad community engagement as well as with a representative community panel through a deliberative engagement process. The community were once again asked to imagine life in Knox ten years from now and what it would look like if the vision was achieved. Responses closely aligned with those which contributed to the development of the Community Vision in 2020 and reaffirmed that the Community Vision is still relevant and reflects community sentiment. The community panel agreed, with most members expressing support for retaining the Community Vision as it stands.

During our most recent engagement, the community shared hopes for an inclusive and connected community where diversity is celebrated, safety is a priority, public spaces can be enjoyed by all without fear, there is better access to sustainable transport, housing, education, and local jobs. There was also a desire for more transparent Council communication, strong financial accountability, and meaningful community involvement in decisions. There was emphasis on the need to protect the environment, support local businesses, and ensure Knox is prepared for natural disasters while continuing to grow in a way that respects local character and community wellbeing.

In summary, the Knox community expressed pride in Knox as a place to live, work, and thrive, and hope for improved physical and mental wellbeing through accessible services, safe and secure housing, green spaces, and well-maintained streets. The community envisions a fulfilling life with easy access to jobs, services, and entertainment, and a connected, vibrant community celebrating diverse cultures.

Given the renewed connection, affirmation and support for the current Community Vision statement, evidenced through the 2024 community engagement activities which include the community panel recommendations, the Vision will be retained for this new Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan and extended to 2035.

Community Vision 2035
Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.

1.2 Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029
This report presents the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, our integrated Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan for 2025-2029. This document represents Council's promise to the Knox community and delivers on the community's aspirations and needs. This plan is a vital commitment from Council to enhance the quality of life for all residents by addressing the key social, economic, and environmental challenges facing Knox. It sets the path for how the Community Vision 2035 can be achieved.

This Plan was informed by extensive and deliberative community engagement, as detailed in Section 2 of this report. The development of this Plan commenced with a new State of Knox Report 2024, which provided updated data on local conditions. An analysis of more than 100 community engagement activities undertaken over the last three years was conducted to help identify recurring themes and community priorities. Then, over 1,000 community members were involved in one or more of the community engagement activities undertaken over several months in early 2024. A strong focus was placed on equity, with targeted efforts to include voices from multicultural communities, First Nations people, individuals with disabilities, and young people.

Nominations were sought from across Knox to form a representative community panel to interpret the broad community engagement and use this to draft the themes, strategic objectives, strategies, and priorities that define the Plan. This contribution was instrumental in ensuring that the community voice has been heard and has helped inform how Council plans for Knox and delivers on community priorities in the coming years. Over the next four years, the Plan will guide Council's efforts to build a more inclusive, connected, and resilient municipality where health and wellbeing are central to every initiative.

Importantly, the Plan serves as both a strategic roadmap and a promise to the community. It outlines how Council will allocate resources, improve services and infrastructure, and ensure that decision-making is guided by data, community feedback, and emerging needs. By focusing on wellbeing, social connection, and sustainable growth, the Plan aims to build a thriving future for all. It reinforces Council's commitment to gender equality, community resilience, and inclusive opportunities, and invites everyone in Knox to be part of the journey toward a healthier, stronger, and more vibrant community.

The Plan is centred on six themes that highlight what we will focus on to achieve our Community Vision and eight health and wellbeing priorities that highlight what we will focus on to improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life for the local community.

Our themes

- Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources
- Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity
- Caring for and enhancing our environment
- Leading, listening and governing responsibly
- Being a strong voice for safety
- Planning our future city

Our health and wellbeing priorities

- Reduce harm from alcohol, smoking, vaping and gambling
- Promote equal participation opportunities and celebrate our diverse community
- Support access to affordable and nutritious food
- Create opportunities for active living
- Advocate for equity across our community
- Support prevention of all forms of violence by promoting safety and respect
- Build resilience to emergencies and threats, including climate change
- Improve social connection and mental wellbeing

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, included as Attachment 1, is presented to Council for adoption.

1.3 Rescinding the Community Plan 2021-2031

Every four-years, Council has the opportunity to consider and refresh its key strategic documents – including its Community Vision, Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. As part of this process, councillors and council officers have reflected on previous learnings and undertaken an analysis of the Community and

Council Plan development process. Using the insights, Council reconnected with the community on the Community Vision, as outlined above.

Knox City Council is committed to ongoing improvement of and transparency in its strategic documents. As part of the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, councillors and council officers considered the opportunity to simplify Council's strategic landscape, consolidating these into one integrated and aligned document. Therefore the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 incorporates the Community Vision 2035, Council Plan, and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Rather than three standalone documents, the consolidation of these into a single, comprehensive Plan eliminates duplication, reduces complexity, and ensures that our priorities and community objectives are clear and aligned. This consolidation enables easier access to relevant information for all stakeholders, supports better decision-making, and enhances transparency and accountability. The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 (Attachment 1) has been developed with this in mind and so contains greater focus on the Community Vision and context on what that vision means to the community. This was the only content that was not duplicated across the current Community Plan 2021-2031 and the current Council Plan 2021-25. This transition reflects our commitment to a more simplified and integrated approach to strategic planning.

A unified document ensures that community aspirations are directly embedded within the broader framework of Council governance and operational priorities. This not only streamlines reporting and evaluation processes but also strengthens the connection between community needs and council actions. Overall, this change represents a more progressive, efficient, and user-friendly planning model.

1.4 Integrated Planning and Reporting at Knox

Knox's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework guides Council in identifying and delivering on community needs and aspirations over the long term (Community Vision), medium term (Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29) and short term (Annual Budget and Action Plan).



The key themes, strategic objectives, and health and wellbeing priorities of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan are integrated across Council's other key Strategies and Plans. This approach provides a line of sight through every service in Council to achieve and report back on our community's vision and our wellbeing commitment.

To ensure Council remains responsive to the community's evolving needs and priorities, the current financial year actions have been published in the Annual Budget and will continue to be published in this manner each financial year. The Annual Budget and Action Plan also includes an annual target for each performance measure of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan. Achievement of annual actions and performance measure targets will be reported each year in Council's Annual Report.

All parts of Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework include opportunities for community and stakeholder input. This is important to ensure transparency and accountability. Council will monitor and regularly report back to the community on progress through several different mechanisms to ensure greater openness and understanding.

2. ENGAGEMENT

The design of the community engagement program for the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 was informed by the Knox Community Engagement Policy and the Local Government Act 2020.

This design considered feedback from the Knox community, gathered through the review of the Community Engagement Policy in 2023-24, on what good engagement looks like to them, as follows:

- Engage only when there is genuine opportunity for influence.
- Engage early when the community has the most influence.

- Combining similar engagements to avoid over consultation and avoid asking the same questions over again.
- Provide varied ways to participate, including considering the needs of diverse audiences and include opportunities to "go to the community".

The community engagement process has included both broad community engagement and deliberative community engagement, planned and facilitated by an expert consultant. The expert consultants that were engaged in this work are Capire Consulting Group, a firm specialising in community engagement.

In early 2024, Capire developed a detailed scope for community engagement that considered learnings from the Council Plan 2021-2025 community engagement activities, and opportunities to do things better. It included approaches to best engage with hard-to-reach communities to ensure we are hearing from a diverse audience by their preferred method.

In addition to the broad community engagement, to achieve the legislated deliberative engagement requirement, a representative community panel was convened. The panel was provided with a clear scope and mandate to ensure all participants were clear about how their feedback would be used and what it would inform.

As defined in the community engagement approach recommended by Capire, the following key engagement activities were undertaken:

- Activity 1: Existing Community Engagement Data Analysis (January to February 2024)
- Activity 2: Phase 1 - Broad Community Engagement (March 2024)
- Activity 3: Phase 2 - Deliberative community engagement panel (April 2024 – February 2025)
- Activity 4: Phase 2 - Deliberative community engagement panel (budget) (November 2024)

Details of these activities were included in the report presented to the 28 May 2025 Council meeting presenting the Draft Corporate Suite of Documents to Council for release to the community.

Public questions and feedback

The draft Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 was released for public questions and feedback from Tuesday 27th May until Monday 9th June 2025. The document was made available on Council's website, and the community notified of its availability through a website news article, weekly e-news (published Wednesday 28th May), and through an update to the existing ("Our Knox") Have Your Say page.

The community were able to provide feedback and ask questions via:

- Submitting a form on the Have Your Say website
- Calling the Community Engagement team on (03) 9298 8000
- Emailing ourknox@knox.vic.gov.au, or
- Visiting the Customer Service Desk at the Knox Civic Centre.

During this engagement, there were 178 unique visitors who viewed the content for the draft Plans and Annual Budget and 11 unique contributors who provided feedback.

All contributions detailing questions and feedback have been provided to Councillors for consideration prior to the adoption of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan. These have also been included in the 23 June 2025 Council Report for the Annual Budget 2025-26.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 contains details of a wide range of commitments to deliver important community services to the Knox community.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS
The subject of this report has been considered in the context of climate change and its relevance to the Knox Climate Response Plan 2021 – 2031.
Implementation of the recommendation will positively impact on Council's Net zero 2030 target by funding activities identified in the Climate Response Plan.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS
The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 recognises the leadership role Council has within the community to actively address the impacts of sustainability and to facilitate other levels of government and the community to act in a similar vein.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 actions are included in the 2025-26 Annual Budget, ensuring Council remains financially sustainable in the long-term to continue to invest in the future generations of our people and communities.

7. RISKS
The development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 prioritised the assessment of risk throughout the process.

There are several inherent risks in developing a four-year Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan, including:

- Lack of alignment with community needs, particularly vulnerable groups. This has been mitigated through the extensive community engagement outlined in Section 2, as well as the annual community engagement that will be undertaken to inform each year's actions and performance measure targets.
- Financially constrained environment, adding additional financial risk to the operations of the organisation. This has been taken into consideration in the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan, and the shift to annual actions and performance measure targets published in the Annual Budget.
- Inadequate performance monitoring, limiting accountability and progress reporting. This has been mitigated through the development of the new Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, which includes quarterly progress reporting to community about the delivery of the Plan.
- Changing policy or legislative environment, impacting the deliverability of the Plan. This has been taken into consideration in the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan, and the shift to annual actions and performance measure targets published in the Annual Budget.

- Insufficient resources to deliver on the Plan, due to workforce constraints or unplanned staff turnover, impacting delivery. This has been taken into consideration in the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan, and the shift to annual actions and performance measure targets published in the Annual Budget. Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan actions are cascaded as priority through to internal Service and Workforce Planning.
- Unforeseen emergencies or external shocks, such as natural disasters or pandemics, divert resources or shift priorities, delaying or disrupting delivery. This will be mitigated through annual planning, allowing the organisation to remain responsive to community needs, as well as clear business continuity arrangements.

These risks have been considered and mitigated throughout the process to ensure the Plan is appropriate and responsible.

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.

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

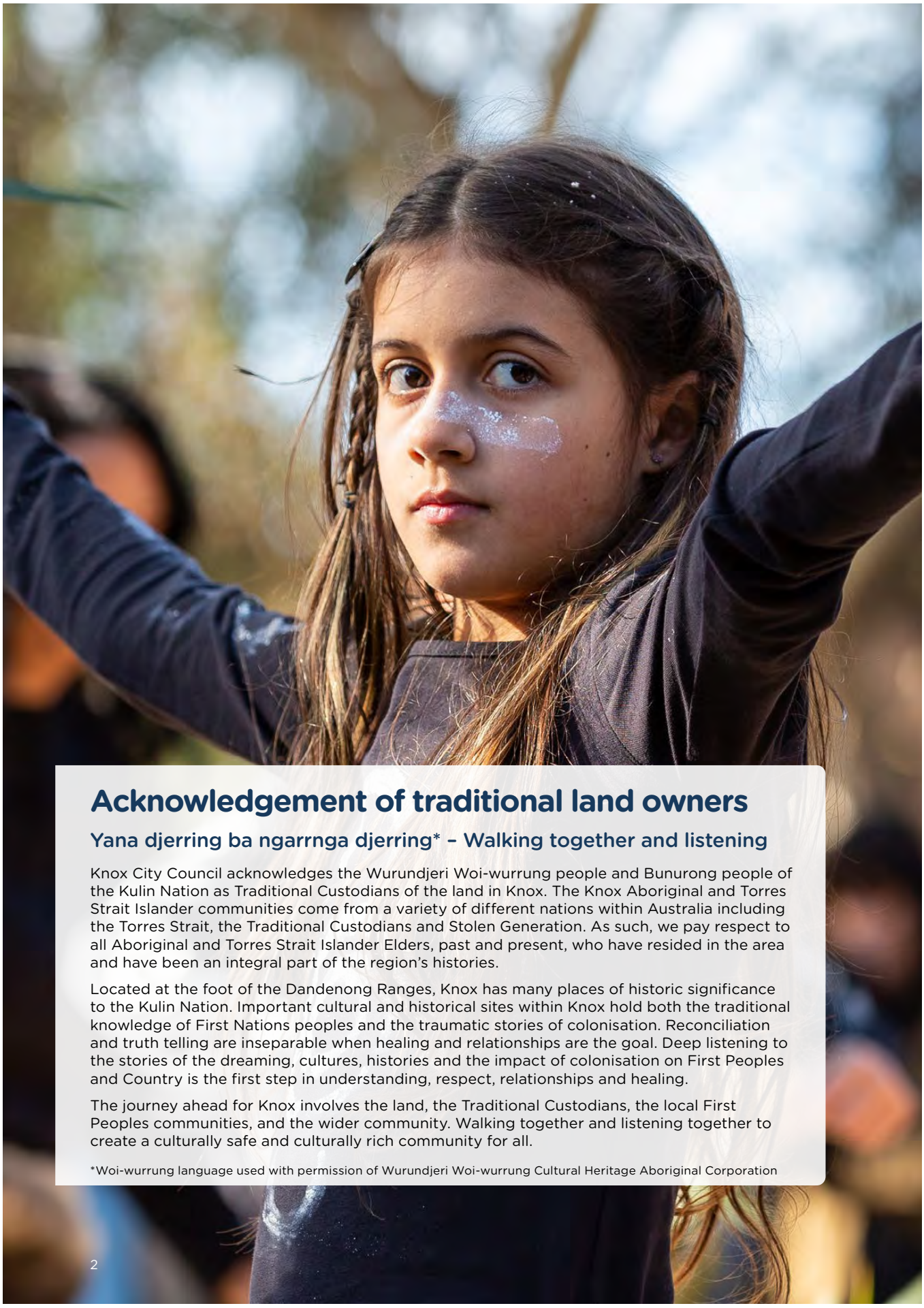
1. Attachment 1 - Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 [**8.2.1** - 60 pages]

Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029



knox

Knox City Council



Acknowledgement of traditional land owners

Yana djerring ba ngarrnga djerring* – Walking together and listening

Knox City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land in Knox. The Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities come from a variety of different nations within Australia including the Torres Strait, the Traditional Custodians and Stolen Generation. As such, we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's histories.

Located at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges, Knox has many places of historic significance to the Kulin Nation. Important cultural and historical sites within Knox hold both the traditional knowledge of First Nations peoples and the traumatic stories of colonisation. Reconciliation and truth telling are inseparable when healing and relationships are the goal. Deep listening to the stories of the dreaming, cultures, histories and the impact of colonisation on First Peoples and Country is the first step in understanding, respect, relationships and healing.

The journey ahead for Knox involves the land, the Traditional Custodians, the local First Peoples communities, and the wider community. Walking together and listening together to create a culturally safe and culturally rich community for all.

*Woi-wurrung language used with permission of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation

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Front cover: Members of the Knox community enjoying a nature walk with a Bushland Officer
Page 2: Sorry Day

Message from our Councillors

On behalf of Knox City Council, we are proud to present the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, our integrated Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan for 2025-2029. This document represents our promise to the Knox community and delivers on your aspirations and needs.

Our aspirations for our elected term are to maintain and protect our green spaces, work to keep everyone safe with a roof over their heads and nutritious food at their tables, responsibly and sustainably manage the finances and resources of the city and ensure our community is engaged in our big decisions.

To inform this plan, over 1,100 community members were involved in one or more of the community engagement activities undertaken over several months in 2024. Your contribution has been instrumental in ensuring that the community voice has been heard and has helped inform how we plan for Knox and deliver your priorities in the coming years. We thank all of those who participated and represented the voice of the community. We couldn't have done it without you.

Over the next four years, we are committed to addressing the key challenges and opportunities facing our community, fostering growth and development, and ensuring that the health and wellbeing of our residents are at the forefront of everything we do. This Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan reflects the values, aspirations, and needs of our diverse community and outlines the strategies we will take to improve the quality of life for all.

As your elected representatives, we are dedicated to working together to achieve our shared vision. By delivering this plan, we will continue to strengthen community connections, promote social and economic resilience, elevate our commitment to gender equality, and create opportunities for a healthier and happier future for everyone.

We invite you to read the plan and get involved in the exciting journey ahead. Together, we can continue to build a thriving community for generations to come.



Mayor, Cr Lisa Cooper



Deputy Mayor, Cr Glen Atwell



Cr Peter Lockwood



Cr Paige Kennett



Cr Chris Duncan



Cr Robert Williams



Cr Meagan Baker



Cr Parisa Considine



Cr Susan Pearce

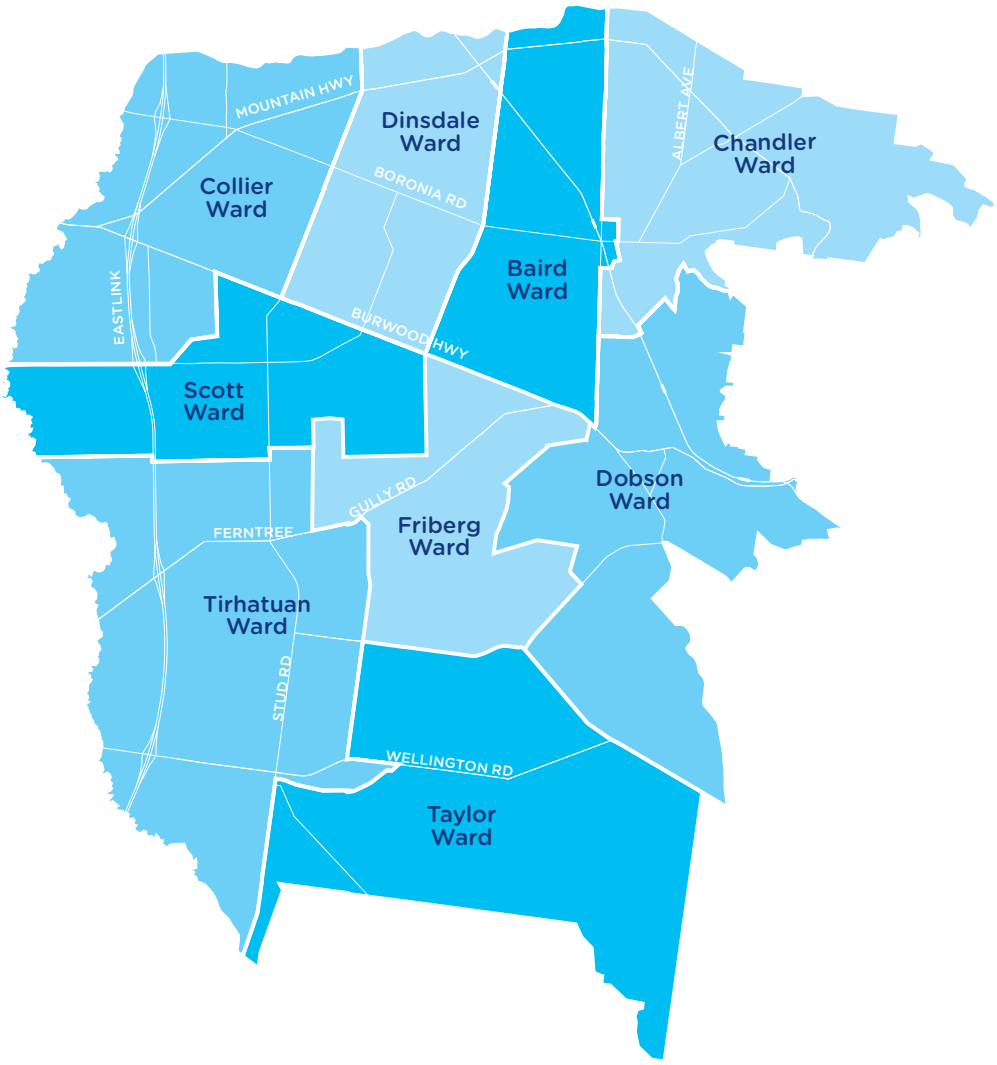


Left to right: Cr Parisa Considine, Cr Robert Williams, Cr Peter Lockwood, Cr Chris Duncan, Mayor Lisa Cooper, Cr Paige Kennett, Deputy Mayor Glen Atwell, Cr Susan Pearce and Cr Meagan Baker.

Our Councillors

The municipality of Knox is made up of 11 suburbs, approximately 25 kilometres from the Melbourne central business district. Knox will be governed for the next four years by the nine Councillors who were elected by our community in October 2024.

Our Councillors work together to set and guide strategic direction and make decisions as representatives of our community. Every decision they make is guided by the needs of the people of Knox, and they work closely with the Chief Executive Officer and the organisation to do this.





Cr Peter Lockwood
Baird Ward

Current term: November 2024 – current
t. 0499 111 639
e. Cr.Peter.Lockwood@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Chris Duncan
Collier Ward

Current term: November 2024 – current
t. 0492 032 772
e. Cr.Chris.Duncan@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Meagan Baker
Dobson Ward

Current term: November 2020 – current
t. 0437 808 011
e. Cr.Meagan.Baker@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Lisa Cooper
Scott Ward

Current term: March 2015 – current
Mayoral term: November 2024 - current
t. 0407 240 275
e. Cr.Lisa.Cooper@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Glen Atwell
Tirhatuan Ward

Current term: November 2024 – current
Deputy Mayoral term: November 2024 - current
t. 0499 884 585
e. Cr.Glen.Atwell@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Paige Kennett
Chandler Ward

Current term: November 2024 – current
t. 0498 880 807
e. Cr.Paige.Kennett@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Robert Williams
Dinsdale Ward

Current term: November 2024 – current
t. 0488 333 975
e. Cr.Robert.Williams@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Parisa Considine
Friberg Ward

Current term: November 2024 – current
t. 0499 444 850
e. Cr.Parisa.Considine@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Susan Pearce
Taylor Ward

Current term: November 2024 – current
t. 0499 660 084
e. Cr.Susan.Pearce@knox.vic.gov.au

Our Community Vision 2035

Our Community Vision describes our community's long-term hopes and aspirations for Knox. It helps us plan for the needs of our community now and into the future.

> **"Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive."**

Crafting our Community Vision

During the 2021-2025 planning process, nearly 4,500 community members shared their thoughts on shaping Knox's future. This engagement aimed to understand the community's aspirations and what you love about Knox.

Throughout that engagement process, you, our Knox community, were very clear about what was important to you.

In 2020, you told us that:

- you envision Knox as a thriving business hub with new industries, start-ups and more local jobs.
- protecting those who are vulnerable in our community is crucial, with a focus on affordable and social housing.
- good education is a priority, with access to learning opportunities for all ages.
- you want to see sustainable developments suitable for all ages and abilities, with accessible neighbourhoods featuring good footpaths, reliable public transport, and safe roads.
- you value natural spaces and want a focus on energy conservation, recycling, and reducing waste and carbon emissions.
- good health and wellbeing are essential, with access to healthy food, physical activities, and social connection, including celebrating First Nations culture.
- ensuring all voices are heard in decision-making, community safety and addressing family violence and elder abuse were also key priorities.

> **"Residents would regularly participate in local events, workshops, and community driven projects, fostering a strong sense of belonging and cooperation."**
>
> **2024 survey respondent**

Reflecting on our Community Vision

In 2024, we revisited the Community Vision through broad community engagement as well as with a representative community panel through a deliberative engagement process. The community panel worked together over several sessions to develop recommendations for the plan and to review the Community Vision in light of the feedback from the broad engagement.

We asked you to once again imagine life in Knox 10 years from now and what it would look like if the vision was achieved. Your responses closely aligned with those who contributed to the development of the Community Vision in 2020 and reaffirmed that the Community Vision is still relevant and reflects community sentiment. The community panel agreed, with the majority of members expressing support for retaining the Community Vision as it stands.



Community members of Knox

Our Community Vision 2035

In 2024, you told us that you:

- hope for an inclusive, connected community where people have opportunities to come together, and celebrate and welcome diversity.
- want everyone to feel safe both at home and in the community, and people can fully experience and enjoy the many parks, public places and open spaces across Knox without fear.
- want Council to prioritise the safety of children and those in our community who are experiencing family violence.
- want a variety of sustainable transport options to get you to work, school, appointments or to services.
- having access to quality education, housing and local employment remains a priority.
- desire more transparent and accessible communication from and with Council, and want to be confident that your thoughts and feedback are reflected in Council decisions.
- remain very interested in the allocation of council resources and want Council to be financially accountable.
- want Council to stay focused on enhancing the wellbeing of all community members in Knox to work with other agencies and levels of government to ensure equality and fairness for all.
- would like to see growth of the area that is respectful of the natural environment, maintains the local character and to ensure new infrastructure is safe, good quality and meets the evolving needs of the community.
- are keen for businesses to be supported to thrive and be attracted to establish in Knox, increasing local employment opportunities.
- want to take care of our environment by exploring sustainable waste options and protecting biodiversity and precious natural waterways.
- are concerned that natural disasters and emergencies are impacting the Knox community and that activities to prepare, respond and build resilience against threats will be increasingly essential.

Our young people in Knox told us that they care deeply about the future and want to be active in ensuring Knox remains inclusive and safe for all. They want to see facilities and services available to support mental health and reduce uncertainty for those in our community who experience challenge and disadvantage.

Our First Nations residents like seeing references to country in their local community as it supports them to feel culturally safe and proud of where they live. They appreciate it when Aboriginal voice is considered in the community and council.

> **“Seamless connection between people and environment. Green infrastructure.”**
>
> **2024 pop-up engagement participant**



Pop up engagement for the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Reaffirming our Community Vision

In summary you, our Knox community, expressed pride in Knox as a place to live, work, and thrive. You hope for improved physical and mental wellbeing through accessible services, safe and secure housing, green spaces, and well-maintained streets. You envisioned a fulfilling life with easy access to jobs, services, and entertainment, and a connected, vibrant community celebrating diverse cultures.

Given the renewed connection, affirmation and support for the current Community Vision statement, evidenced through the 2024 community engagement activities which include the community panel recommendations, the Vision will be retained for this new Knox Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

"Knox would be a safe place for all, with little to no crime. It would be a community environment that offers support and help to all those who need it."

2024 survey respondent

Our community



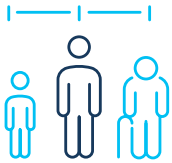
161,770
Total population in 2023



21%
of residents aged 0-17 years



24%
of residents aged 60 years and over



40
is the median age



48%
of households are families with one or more children



21%
of households accommodate a lone person



11%
are older couples without children



11.5%
of Knox residents live in a low-income household



57.3%
of Knox residents living in low-income households are women



6%
of people require assistance in their day-to-day lives due to disability, long-term health condition or old age



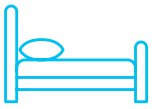
Almost
1 in 5
of Knox residents have a self-reported disability



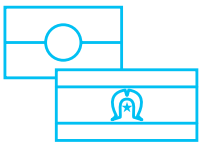
$1,866
Median weekly household income, the same as the Greater Melbourne average



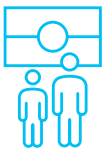
12.3%
of households have a mortgage or rent that costs greater than 30% of their annual household income



8 in 10
households in Knox have at least one spare bedroom in 2021



In 2021
1,022
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in Knox, representing the second largest population of First Nations people in Melbourne's eastern metropolitan region



21.3%
of First Nations community in Knox are young adults



33%
of residents were born overseas.

Of those born overseas the top countries of birth are China, UK, India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and New Zealand



29%
of people speak a language other than English at home.

Five most common languages other than English spoken at home: Mandarin, Cantonese, Sinhalese, Greek, Hindi

Our health and wellbeing



71.3 per 10,000 residents

in Knox had alcohol-related hospitalisations compared to 58.6 per 10,000 residents in Metropolitan Melbourne in 2023



$76 million

of Knox residents lost on Electronic Gaming Machines in 2023, averaging $586.24 per person, which is higher than the Melbourne metropolitan average of $548.12



7.7%

of adults ran out of food and could not afford to buy more in 2023

28%

of adults worried about food insecurity in 2023



60% of women

in 2021 compared to 40% men were unpaid carers for people with disabilities, long-term illnesses, or old age



8.9%

of residents in 2023, reported harmful drinking pattern



11.4%

of Knox residents in 2023 smoked or vaped daily compared to 14.5% in Victoria



35%

of Knox adults in 2023 consumed the recommended level of fruits and only 4% consumed the recommended level of vegetables



47.1%

of females in 2021 earned below the minimum weekly wage compared to 31.0% of males



80%
of people in Knox in 2020 relied on private vehicles as their main mode of travel on weekdays, with only 13% using active transport like walking or cycling



nearly 50%
of residents that live alone are aged 65 or over compared to 38% for greater Melbourne in 2023



22.7%
of residents in 2023 self-reported fair or poor health, compared to 20.9% in Victoria



34%
of women in 2020 felt safe in their neighbourhood at night compared to 71% of men



11.2%
of adults identify as LGBTIQA+



64%
of the Knox population in 2023 agreed that multiculturalism makes life in Knox better

About this plan

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 has been shaped by our community and reflects the vision, values, and aspirations of the people of Knox.

It is the result of the invaluable input we received from you, our residents, local businesses, partners, community groups, staff and other stakeholders. Together, we've created a plan that will help us keep our community's health and wellbeing at the forefront of everything we do and build a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable future for Knox.

This plan progresses our Community Vision and guides Council's strategic direction, planning, and resource allocation over the next four years, bringing the Community Vision to life in meaningful ways. It provides a roadmap for how we will improve services, infrastructure, and support for residents, while ensuring our decisions are informed by data, feedback, and emerging needs. It is Council's promise to the Knox community, guiding where we put our focus and effort.



Community Panel



Community Panel members during a panel session

How we created this plan together

To ensure Knox's Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 reflects the voice of our community, a detailed research and engagement program was undertaken:

- The State of Knox Report 2024 enabled us to understand key demographics and changes in our community since 2020, including social, economic, and environmental conditions in Knox.
- Using over 100 previous engagement activities, we analysed the recurring themes and what matters most to you when it comes to your values, aspirations, and priorities.
- An equity impact assessment was undertaken to ensure the voices of our diverse community were incorporated through targeted and deliberative engagement. This enabled us to capture voices representative of our multicultural community, First Nations people, people with a disability, children and young people.
- We held many community engagement activities where more than 1100 Knox community members shared insights, helping us to validate what we've learned, to identify current challenges and aspirations, and to shape priorities for the next four years.
- A representative Community Panel took part in deliberative engagement, helping us interpret the findings from the broader community, providing recommendations, and shaping the key elements of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, including themes, strategic objectives and strategies, along with confirming health and wellbeing priorities.
- Councillors and staff were also engaged to ensure that the plan reflects the role of Council.

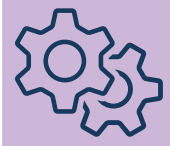
Our themes

Based on research and engagement, six key themes were developed that highlight what we, as a community, are going to focus on to achieve our Community Vision.



Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Our community can access important local services and resources through Council's delivery, advocacy, and partnerships.



Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Our community feels empowered, heard, and has trust in Council through responsible governance, proactive communication and engagement, and transparent decision making.



Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

Our diverse and connected community is strengthened by creating opportunities to actively participate, connect and learn.



Being a strong voice for safety

Our community feels safe, respected and supported in public spaces and at home through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships.



Caring for and enhancing our environment

Our environment is greener, healthier and sustainable through Council's environmental protection and enhancement, working in collaboration with our community.



Planning our future city

Our neighborhoods, housing and infrastructure meet the needs of our changing community through effective planning, delivery and advocacy.



Traffic school at Marie Wallace Bayswater Park

Council and what we do

Council delivers 34 services to support our community at all stages of life, aligned to the six Council and Health and Wellbeing themes. We are committed to continuously improving our services to best meet the needs of our diverse community now and into the future.

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources	Embracing connection inclusion and diversity	Caring for and enhancing our environment	Leading, listening and governing responsibly	Being a strong voice for safety	Planning our future city
Cemetery	Arts & Culture	Fleet, Plant & Machinery	Customer Service	Community Laws	Capital Works Planning
Economic Development	Early years	Open Space & Biodiversity	Data, Information & Technology	Community Safety	Property & Facilities
Health	Festivals & Events	Sustainability & Climate Response	Finance	Emergency Management	Statutory Planning
Libraries	Seniors	Waste	Governance	Food Safety	Strategic Land Use Planning
Roads & Transport	Social Research, Policy & Planning	Water & Drainage	People	Statutory Building	
	Sport & Leisure		Procurement		
	Youth		Risk Management		
			Strategy & Performance		

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

We maintain:

- 729 km of roads

In an average year, there are over:

- 5,500 community transport trips made
- 860,000 physical library items loaned & 560,000 digital library items loaned
- 1,000 cyclists on a typical day at a typical site on Knox's shared path networks

In an average year, we provide:

- Immunisation for over 4,500 infants

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

We maintain:

- 64 sportsgrounds & reserves

In an average year, we provide:

- Maternal and Child Health services to 4,600 children.
- 31,000 meals through Meals on Wheels

In an average year, there are over:

- 337,000 visits to aquatic facilities

Caring for and enhancing our environment

We maintain:

- 39,547 drainage pits
- 1,100 kW of solar across 50 buildings
- 209 playgrounds

In an average year, there are over:

- 32,000 hard-waste bookings lodged
- 2,200 trees planted by Council

Leading, listening and governing responsibly

In an average year, we receive over:

- 125,000 online service requests
- 11,000 visits to Council's customer service centre
- 99,000 phone calls

In an average year, we have:

- 45 engagements on Have Your Say to seek community feedback
- Over 6,000 people subscribed to the Have Your Say platform to participate in community engagement

Being a strong voice for safety

In an average year we:

- Receive over 1,100 animal management requests
- Inspect over 1,150 food premises
- Inspect over 1,000 buildings
- Support 311 individuals with enquiries or required assistance around housing

Planning our future city

We maintain:

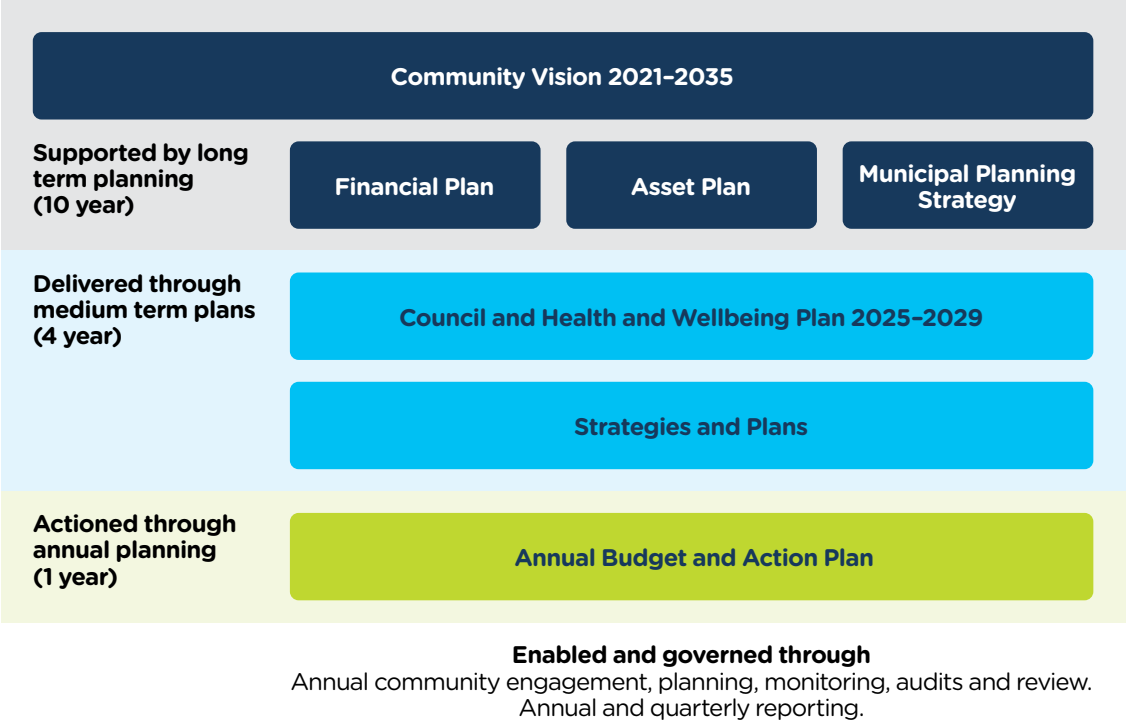
- 283 Council-owned buildings

In an average year, there are:

- 660 to over 950 planning applications received
- 19,000 m^2 to over 22,500m^2 of graffiti removed from Council's assets

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Council takes an integrated approach to planning and reporting, with the 10-year Community Vision directly informing short, medium and long-term planning.



Knox's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework guides Council in identifying and delivering on community needs and aspirations over the long term (Community Vision), medium term (Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029) and short term (Annual Budget and Action Plan).

A number of other plans also guide our long-term and medium-term planning. They include plans about how we're going to manage our financial resources (the Financial Plan), manage and maintain our assets (the Asset Plan), plan for our future city (Municipal Planning Strategy) and plan and prioritise our service delivery (strategies and plans).

The key themes, strategic objectives and health and wellbeing priorities of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan are also integrated across our other key strategies and plans. This approach provides a line of sight through every service in Council to achieve and report back on our community's vision and our wellbeing commitment.

To ensure that Council remains responsive to the community's evolving needs and priorities, each financial year, actions are published in the Annual Budget. The development of the Annual Budget and Action Plan also includes setting an annual target for each performance measure of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan. In Council's Annual Report, we report back to the community on the actual result of each performance measure compared to the target, as well as on the achievement of the annual actions.

All parts of the integrated planning and reporting framework include opportunities for community and stakeholder input. This is important to ensure transparency and accountability. We monitor and regularly report back to the community on our progress through different mechanisms to ensure greater openness and understanding.



Members of the community having their say



Community members enjoying Lewis Park

Our commitment to health and wellbeing

At Knox City Council, we recognise that health and wellbeing are the cornerstones of a strong, cohesive, and resilient community.

Knox's Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 integrates the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan with the Council Plan, ensuring that our priorities for supporting, protecting, and improving the health and wellbeing of our community are at the forefront of everything we do. These priorities are embedded in the plan's themes, strategic objectives, strategies and measures, reflecting our commitment to a holistic approach to community health.

Knox commits to develop actions annually to respond to the health and wellbeing priorities that the community and research has told us are important to address. Progress against these actions will be monitored and reported annually alongside the review of the health and wellbeing components of the integrated plan.

The widely accepted social determinants of health encompass a range of factors such as income, education, employment, social support networks, and access to healthcare. Addressing these determinants, and focusing on planning and prevention, is crucial for improving health outcomes and promoting equity. Additionally, the physical environment is a critical determinant of health. Access to public open spaces, quality and affordable housing, ability to connect with each other and our community, nutritious food, and efficient and reliable transport systems can significantly influence our individual choices and overall wellbeing.

Knox's Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 focuses on addressing these determinants through our eight health and wellbeing priorities.

To influence health and wellbeing outcomes we undertake a multi-faceted approach including working with key stakeholders, advocating, educating and providing services.

Some Knox residents face more challenges than others in their daily lives, which can lead to poorer health outcomes and lower life satisfaction. The following groups are considered priority populations and Council acknowledges the need to apply additional considerations to these groups so that all people can feel welcome and participate fully in life in Knox.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), including migrant and refugee community
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Plus (LGBTQIA+) community
- Older people
- People from low socio-economic background
- People who experience homelessness
- People with a disability
- Women who experience family violence
- Young people

Our health and wellbeing priorities

Knox City Council understands that the health and wellbeing of our community is essential for our collective prosperity and quality of life. By measuring and addressing wellbeing, we can identify areas of need, track progress, and implement targeted interventions to create a healthier, more resilient community.

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029 meets requirements of the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 to develop a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan every four years. Eight priority areas have been identified for Council to work on to improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life for the local community.

The priorities are informed by local health and social data, community needs, the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan priorities, feedback from key community stakeholders and feedback from the broad community engagement that was undertaken in 2024. The deliberative Community Panel undertook activities to confirm the proposed health and wellbeing priorities and to ensure they reflect the diverse voices and experiences of the community.



Reduce harm from alcohol, smoking, vaping and gambling

Gambling losses can lead to financial problems, stress, anxiety, and depression. They can also result in increased use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs as coping mechanisms, exacerbating mental health issues and affecting work or study performance.

Relationship problems and family violence are common consequences, as financial strain and gambling behaviour create tension within families. Addressing these issues through community education, support groups, and regulations is vital for promoting safer, healthier lifestyles.

Smoking and vaping have significant health impacts. Smoking is a leading cause of preventable diseases and deaths, causing various cancers, respiratory diseases, and cardiovascular issues. Vaping, while often considered less harmful, still poses risks such as nicotine addiction, lung injuries, and exposure to harmful substances.

Both smoking and vaping contribute to high healthcare costs and productivity loss. Quitting smoking and vaping can lead to substantial health benefits and reduce the risk of many diseases.

Promote equal participation opportunities and celebrate our diverse community

Ensuring equal participation opportunities for all community members fosters inclusivity and strengthens social cohesion. Initiatives like multicultural festivals, support services, and inclusive community programs can help achieve this goal. Celebrating our multicultural community enhances social capital and contributes to a more inclusive society.

In 2021, people with a disability in Knox aged between 20-59 years account for 24% of all people with a disability, 61% of people with a disability are aged 60 years and over, of which 20% of those are aged 85 years and older. This is important to consider when planning health and wellbeing services.

Our health and wellbeing priorities

Support access to affordable and nutritious food

By improving access to affordable and nutritious food, we can enhance overall health and wellbeing, particularly for those experiencing greater disadvantage and hardship.

Nutritious food and healthy eating habits ensure that there are enough essential nutrients to support the body and prevent chronic diseases. Additionally, maintaining a balanced diet can improve mental clarity and emotional stability, contributing to a more productive and fulfilling life.

Knox City Council collaborates with local welfare agencies and community groups, allocating grants to support emergency food relief programs. Each week Knox food relief providers are:

- Serving or distributing more than 2,000 cooked meals – a 167% increase in less than two years.
- Assisting with over 2,200 grocery packs or pantry visits – a 550% increase in less than two years.

Initiatives such as these aim to reduce food insecurity, foster community engagement, and ensure that all residents have access to nutritious food to support their physical health and reduce the risk of diet-related diseases.

Create opportunities for active living

Encouraging physical activity is essential for maintaining good health, and Knox is well-positioned to promote active living. With 80% of Knox dwellings within 400 meters of open space, residents have ample opportunities to enjoy parks and recreational facilities.

However, 48.5% of Knox residents do not undertake the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity each week. Additionally, 43.6% of Knox residents aged 18+ spend six or more hours sitting still each day. Increasing physical activity is crucial for preventing chronic diseases, improving mental health, and enhancing overall wellbeing. By providing accessible spaces and programs, we can encourage residents to engage in regular exercise.

When last surveyed in 2019, the percentage of women in Knox who met the Australian Physical Activity Guidelines was 48.7%, lower than the 53.0% of men who met the guidelines. Factors contributing to this disparity include barriers such as caring responsibilities, fear of judgment, and perceptions of safety.

Knox aims to address barriers to active living by promoting the benefits and options for active recreation, welcoming community participation through supportive programming, adapting infrastructure to meet changing needs, and partnering with community groups to sustain activities and services.

Advocate for equity across our community

Advocating for equity ensures that all residents have access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive. Addressing health inequities involves identifying and removing barriers to health and wellbeing.

Despite a 34% increase in median household income over the past decade, housing affordability remains a challenge in Knox, with 11.5% of residents living below the poverty line alongside an unemployment rate of 4%. Knox City Council advocates for more industry investment to boost job growth and improve transport options so people can access health services and employment.

It's also crucial to ensure that the mix and depth of services available in Knox matches the community's needs.

For our First Nations population, 49.6% rent, compared to 21.3% for the non-Indigenous population in Knox. For the health and wellbeing of the Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to flourish, initiatives must include a holistic, whole of life cycle view of health that includes physical, cultural, spiritual, emotional, economic (including housing) and mental health and wellbeing.



Bike riding on shared paths

Our health and wellbeing priorities

Support prevention of all forms of violence by promoting safety and respect

Safety is a top priority for Knox residents, with 77% of households expressing concerns about crime. Promoting safety and respect helps prevent violence and creates a secure environment for everyone.

Gender inequality significantly impacts family violence by creating power imbalances and reinforcing harmful norms. When women and girls are viewed as less valuable or secondary, it can lead to environments where violence against them is tolerated or even justified. This inequality is both a cause and consequence of family violence, perpetuating a cycle of abuse.

Discriminatory laws, exclusionary social norms, and limited access to resources and opportunities for women further exacerbate the issue. Addressing gender inequality in Knox is crucial in preventing family violence and promoting a safer, more equitable society.

Family violence rates in Knox were higher than the Metropolitan Melbourne rate in 2022 and 2023. Knox has experienced an upward trend in reported family violence incidents (4.6% increase since 2019) and has had the highest rate of reported family violence in Melbourne's outer east for more than 20 years.

In 2023-24, 1131 people in Knox sought assistance with housing due to family violence issues in the home. Knox City Council has endorsed a Statement of Commitment to the Prevention of Family Violence and has developed a Gender Equality Action Plan.

The rate of drug-related crime in Knox is also higher than the metropolitan Melbourne rate, with 655 incidents per 100,000 population compared to the Melbourne average of 424 in 2023.

Violence of all forms undermines community health and safety. Promoting respect and safety through education and support services will help prevent violence and foster a secure and safe environment for all.



Knox staff member engaging with members from the community

Build resilience to emergencies and threats, including climate change

In recent years, our Knox community has faced numerous challenges from natural disasters such as floods, storms, bushfires, and heat health emergencies. These events have highlighted the need for comprehensive support for residents, not only in preparation and during the events, but also throughout the recovery phase.

The impacts of climate change demand our urgent attention. Significantly, 67% of the Victorian population is concerned about climate change and believes that immediate action is necessary.

Mitigating and adapting to climate change can bring numerous health benefits, including improved mental health, lower cancer rates, fewer deaths from extreme heat, increased food security, and decreased cardiovascular and respiratory diseases.

Building resilience to both emergencies and climate change is crucial for protecting our community and ensuring long-term sustainability. As climate change and emergencies continue to pose significant health risks, our collective efforts in resilience and adaptation will be vital.

Knox City Council has endorsed the Climate Response Plan 2021–3031 and aims to protect our community from the effects of climate change and reduce both Council and community greenhouse emissions.

Improve social connection and mental wellbeing

Social connection is a cornerstone of positive mental health. Programs and initiatives that increase social connection, such as community events, support and interest groups, learning opportunities, social and sporting groups can help residents build meaningful connections, reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness, and increase mental wellbeing.

In Knox, 21% of households are single person households, which can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and impact mental health.

When it comes to diagnosed mental health conditions, women are nearly twice as likely as men to suffer from a mental illness. Females in Knox have a higher rate at 1057 per 10,000 compared to 665 for males. Hospital admission numbers for self-harm in 2021 also reflect this disparity, with 70 admissions for females and 37 for males. For Knox's First Nations population, 15.1% of residents disclose that they live with mental health conditions.

By prioritising social connection and mental wellbeing, we can create a more supportive and resilient community.

By addressing these 8 health and wellbeing priorities, Knox City Council is committed to creating a healthier, more equitable, and resilient community.

How to read this plan and how it will be delivered

Themes: Broad focus areas that reflect community priorities and aspirations.

Strategic objectives: High level outcomes the community wants Council to achieve under each theme.

What's most important: What the community said was most important.

Strategies: How Council will achieve the strategic objectives.

Health and wellbeing priorities: How delivery of the strategies will improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

Our services: The services Council provide to support the strategic objectives.

Performance measures: A measure used to evaluate progress towards achieving each strategic objective.

To ensure Council delivers on the objectives of this plan and remains responsive to the changing needs of the community, the annual actions and performance measure target ranges will be published in each Annual Budget and progress monitored in quarterly and annual performance reporting.

There are various roles that we play in leading, guiding and managing our city and community.

Advocate – we raise awareness at state and federal government levels and with other stakeholders about the issues and needs of the Knox community, as well as initiating or supporting campaigns for positive change.

Partner – we develop trusting formal and informal relationships and alliances, working with others to achieve common goals.

Provide – we offer a range of services and support, preventative interventions, infrastructure and facilities to individuals and groups.

Fund – we provide grants, funding and subsidies to local groups and agencies to progress and develop services and infrastructure for individuals and groups.

Educate – we share information, raise awareness, and develop knowledge and skills to empower individuals and groups.

Plan – we proactively plan for services and infrastructure that respond to current and future community needs.

Regulate – we provide governance and regulatory controls such as local laws and health and building controls.

Research – we collect and analyse data to inform planning, priority setting, decision-making and evaluation.

Our partnerships

Knox City Council acknowledges that outcomes for the community will be achieved and amplified through the strength of strategic partnerships. This is particularly so regarding health and wellbeing where multiple government, non-government and community agencies can play an important collaboration role to deliver the right services to the right people at the right time.

Two key partnerships are with other council groups who work together to achieve joint outcomes for our communities – the Eastern Region Group of Councils (ERG) and Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM).

The ERG is committed to work together to develop opportunities for shared services, joint procurement and the shared use of community infrastructure. As a member of the ERG Knox can amplify Council's voice and impact, be more efficient and effective, and improve community access to infrastructure and services across the municipality.

GSEM advocates for jobs, infrastructure, investment, liveability, sustainability and wellbeing for the southeast and everyone who works and lives in the region. Working together with partners ensures that our community can access the services it needs most.

Council has established the Community Safety and Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee to contribute to the development and implementation of actions to address the health and wellbeing priorities, participate in the annual review, provide advice and join together for advocacy efforts. This advisory committee includes up to 13 representatives from safety, health and wellbeing organisations, alongside the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and Victoria Police. We thank them for their enduring support of our Knox community.



Members from Templeton Cricket Club

Theme 1
Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Strategic objective

Our community can access important local services and resources through Council's delivery, advocacy, and partnerships.



Parent and child reading in the Knox Library

What our community says is most important

- Improve access to services through better public and active transport options that enable people to get to work, education and health services easily
- Make community-based education opportunities more accessible to support people participating in lifelong learning experiences that connect them and provide personal growth and improved wellbeing
- Local employment opportunities for all people, including those from diverse backgrounds and circumstances
- Access to affordable food for those in need so that everyone has equal opportunity to access sufficient nutrition to stay healthy

> **"Opportunities for meaningful employment and volunteering for vulnerable community groups."**
>
> **Survey respondent**

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priorities
Strategy 1.1 A variety of transport options is available through the effective planning, advocacy and management of efficient, active, sustainable and accessible transport modes, particularly in growth locations.	
Strategy 1.2 Our community can access diverse training and life-long learning opportunities through delivery, promotion and partnerships with relevant organisations.	
Strategy 1.3 Local businesses and our economy are strong and resilient and there are increased employment opportunities through development, attracting investment, embracing technology and innovation, and advocacy.	
Strategy 1.4 Access to affordable and nutritious food is enhanced through advocacy and working in partnership with relevant organisations to raise awareness and promote available community programs.	
Strategy 1.5 Our community's health and wellbeing is improved through proactive planning, delivery, partnerships and advocacy that enable access to services, education and programs.	



Volunteer delivering Meals on Wheels to a Knox resident

Theme 1
Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Delivering on our health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will feel better supported and more informed. They will be able to access the jobs, services, and the nutrition they need to sustain a healthy, and satisfying lifestyle.

Leading Council services

- Cemetery
- Economic Development
- Health
- Libraries
- Roads & Transport

Performance measures	Health & wellbeing priorities
Kilometres of new active transport in Knox aligned with the Knox Cycling Action Plan and other active transport plans.	
Community satisfaction with bike and shared paths (both on-road and off-road and including shared paths).	
Community satisfaction with the maintenance and repair of sealed and local roads.	
Number of visits to libraries in the Knox municipality.	
Community satisfaction with local library services.	
Number of planning permits issued for commercial, office or retail use and development.	
Value of grants provided to emergency relief organisations.	
Self-reported health status of Knox residents.	
Amount of gross regional product (GRP) ($) generated by businesses in Knox.	
Community satisfaction with Council services and facilities.	



Community members looking at the vegetable garden at Orana Neighbourhood House

Theme 2
Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

Strategic objective
Our diverse and connected community is strengthened by creating opportunities to actively participate, connect and learn.



Community members catching up at a local reserve

What our community says is most important

- A community that respects, supports and values all people so that everyone in Knox feels welcome and an important part of the fabric of local community life
- More opportunities to celebrate diversity by promoting and delivering local community events and interest groups that bring people together from across Knox
- Knox residents know how to access the local businesses, programs and services that are available for them to get the support they need
- Enhanced and accessible public spaces so that everyone can participate

> **"Opportunities to share, interact, enjoy and create a sense of community and belonging."**
> Survey participant

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priorities
Strategy 2.1 Our community's diverse needs are addressed by ensuring equity and inclusion are considered in decision making and strategic planning.	
Strategy 2.2 Cultural diversity is celebrated through assisting, participating in, facilitating and delivering accessible programs, initiatives and events in partnership with our community, community groups and service providers.	
Strategy 2.3 Our community is supported to thrive during all stages of life through the promotion and provision of services, advocacy and partnerships with local service providers.	
Strategy 2.4 There are opportunities for social connection and active living through planning, provision of facilities, program delivery and support for local groups.	



Dancers at Knox Fest

Theme 2
Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity



Delivering on our health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will feel valued, connected and included.

Leading Council services

- Arts & Culture
- Early Years
- Festivals & Events
- Seniors
- Social Research, Planning & Policy
- Sport & Leisure
- Youth

Performance measures	Health & wellbeing priorities
Participation of young people in Youth Services programs.	
Participation in social inclusion programs and intergenerational initiatives.	
Community satisfaction with community and cultural activities, festivals, and events.	
Number of health promotion initiatives targeted at reducing alcohol-related harm.	
Number of volunteers that attend volunteer training and education.	
Participation of people living with disability and their carers in targeted events, programs and professional development opportunities.	
Number of residents accessing the Knox community transport bus outings.	
Number of upgrades that provide for gender inclusion in Council owned pavilions.	
Community satisfaction with services for youth.	
Community satisfaction with sports ovals and other outdoor sporting facilities.	



Members of the Bayswater Junior Football Club

Theme 3
Caring for and enhancing our environment

Strategic objective

Our environment is greener, healthier and sustainable through Council's environmental protection and enhancement, working in collaboration with our community.



Gilbert Park wetlands

What our community says is most important

- Better waste management and waste education so that everyone understands the individual contribution they can make to protecting the environment for future generations
- Encouraging people to use their cars less and use alternative forms of transport
- Community awareness of renewable energy options so that businesses and households can be proactive in reducing energy consumption
- Maintaining and improving green spaces and biodiversity for enjoyment and protection of our natural environment

> **"Make sure that all new developments are encouraged to provide a greener aspect to properties."**
>
> **Survey respondent**

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priorities
Strategy 3.1 Our environment is healthy and sustainable by considering environmental factors when planning for and making decisions.	
Strategy 3.2 Green spaces and waterways are protected, enhanced and enjoyed through planning, promotion and maintenance of our built and natural environment.	
Strategy 3.3 Minimise waste to landfill through access to a suite of waste services and education.	
Strategy 3.4 Energy consumption and the use of renewable energy resources are positively impacted through investment in assets, education, planning and advocacy.	



Residents putting their bins out

Theme 3
Caring for and enhancing our environment



Delivering on our health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will be able to enjoy the benefits of a well maintained and sustainable environment to support their mental health and vitality.

Leading Council services

- Fleet, Plant & Machinery
- Open Space & Biodiversity
- Sustainability & Climate Response
- Waste
- Water & Drainage

Performance measures	Health & wellbeing priorities
Community satisfaction with the provision and maintenance of parks and gardens.	
Net change in Council trees (planted vs removed).	
Waste diverted from landfill.	
Council's greenhouse emissions (CO2 equivalent).	
Electrification of Council Buildings (removal of gas and/ or installation of solar and/or battery connection).	



Members from Friends of Blind Creek Llewellyn

Theme 4
Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Strategic objective

Our community feels empowered, heard, and has trust in Council through responsible governance, proactive communication and engagement, and transparent decision making.



Customer being served at the Civic Centre Building and Planning counter

What our community says is most important

- Issues are responded to promptly to keep everyone safe
- Genuinely listening to the voices of our diverse community and consider what is heard when planning and making decisions
- Communication is accessible to all so that no one misses out on the opportunity to contribute
- Spend money sensibly so that Council can afford to continue the delivery of essential services for the community
- Accountability, honesty and transparency in order to build trust and understanding of local government

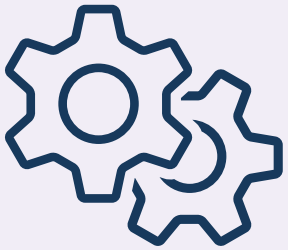
> **"Stronger community representation in Council decisions."**
> Survey respondent

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priorities
Strategy 4.1 Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.	
Strategy 4.2 Our diverse community is informed and has opportunities to participate and provide feedback through clear and meaningful communication and engagement.	
Strategy 4.3 Council services are efficient and optimised through ongoing improvement, and focused investment in innovation, technology and capability.	
Strategy 4.4 The changing needs of our community are met through informed policy and strategy that maximises value, collaboration and partnerships with other councils and local organisations.	
Strategy 4.5 Council is financially sustainable through long-term strategic, financial and asset planning, and the responsible prioritisation, allocation and use of resources.	



Community member having their say

Theme 4
Leading, listening and governing responsibly



Delivering on our health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will feel heard and considered which will enhance community cohesion and a sense of belonging.

Leading Council services

- Customer Service
- Data, Information & Technology
- Finance
- Governance
- People
- Procurement
- Risk Management
- Strategy & Performance

Performance measures	Health & wellbeing priorities
Community satisfaction with Council's community consultation and engagement.	
Adjusted underlying surplus.	
Community satisfaction with Council having a sound direction for the future.	
Community satisfaction with Council's representation, lobbying, and advocacy on behalf of the community.	
Community satisfaction with customer service.	
Community satisfaction with Council's overall performance.	
Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public.	


Sorry Day
49

Theme 5
Being a strong voice for safety

Strategic objective

Our community feels safe, respected and supported in public spaces and at home through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships.



Knox staff member supporting our residents

What our community says is most important

- People feel safe at home and out and about in the community
- Public facilities and spaces are designed and maintained to deliver safer environments for people to enjoy
- Education programs and services relating to both personal and community safety are accessible to build individual and group resilience when emergencies happen
- Increase cultural safety and pride so that everyone feels welcome and there is no discrimination

> **"Knox would be a safe place for all, with little to no crime. It would be a community environment that offers support and help to all those who need it."**
>
> **Survey respondent**

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priorities
Strategy 5.1 Our community feels safer in public spaces and facilities through planning, maintenance, education, design and proactive program delivery for Council owned and managed spaces and via advocacy for others.	
Strategy 5.2 Safety and liveability are prioritised through the planning, delivery and enforcement of local laws and regulatory services.	
Strategy 5.3 Our community is more secure, connected and feel less isolated through planning, partnerships, advocacy and targeted support for our most vulnerable.	
Strategy 5.4 People feel safe in their homes and in the community through the development of partnerships, planning and promotion of programs, services and education that focus on connection, safety and respect.	
Strategy 5.5 Our community is resilient in the face of emergencies through planning, education, emergency response and support.	



Young people at Pride March

Theme 5
Being a strong voice for safety



Delivering on our health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will feel safer and more resilient, knowing that the Council is working together with community and agencies to create safe places and spaces and promote respect.

Leading Council services

- Community Laws
- Community Safety
- Emergency Management
- Food Safety
- Statutory Building

Performance measures	Health & wellbeing priorities
Perception of community safety in public areas of Knox.	
Perception of community safety at home.	
Number of days taken to follow up a major or critical food notification or outbreak.	
Percentage of high-risk buildings (large public buildings such as shopping centres, aged care facilities, hospitals or entertainment venues) audited annually, for compliance with safety requirements.	
Animal Management Prosecutions.	



Knox school crossing mascot, Lottie presenting to school students on road safety

Theme 6
Planning our future city

Strategic objective
Our neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure meet the needs of our changing community through effective planning, delivery and advocacy.



Bayswater Activity Centre

What our community says is most important

- Advocate for affordable, social and community housing options so that people of all ages and stages can live comfortably in Knox
- Develop and grow in a way that respects the character of Knox, is sustainable and maintains our beautiful and plentiful green spaces
- Be able to feel proud of where we live because of the great local amenities and public places we have
- Social and community infrastructure that facilitates access to local services, provides places to meet, learn and celebrate

> **"Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of the community and natural environment in which it resides."**
> Survey respondent

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priorities
Strategy 6.1 There is improved access to a diverse range of housing options through effective planning, advocacy, and identifying opportunities for social and affordable housing supply.	
Strategy 6.2 High quality, integrated community services and facilities are available through the planning, design and maintenance of multifunctional places that promote connection and utilisation.	
Strategy 6.3 Our evolving neighbourhoods are liveable and sustainable through planning and design that responds to population growth and our community's changing needs.	
Strategy 6.4 Our community's expectations and aspirations for housing development and land use are considered through planning, advocacy, partnerships and decision-making.	



Tim Neville Arboretum

Theme 6
Planning our future city



Delivering on our health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will be able to fully enjoy their local area, knowing that what they need now and into the future has been considered and planned. They will feel proud of where they live.

Leading Council services

- Capital Works Planning
- Property & Facilities
- Statutory Planning
- Strategic Land Use Planning

Performance measures	Health & wellbeing priorities
Community satisfaction with planning for population growth.	
Number of one and two bedroom dwellings approved in planning permits.	
Extent of housing development that is consistent with housing strategy expectations.	
Percentage and proportion housing defined as affordable for very low and low income earners sales.	
Percentage and proportion housing defined as affordable for very low and low income earners rentals.	
Percentage of Asset Renewal Program completed.	



Members from the Knox Inclusive Basketball League

Implementation and monitoring our progress

To ensure we stay on track toward our shared Community Vision and meet the legislative requirements of the Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan, ongoing monitoring and evaluation are essential. Knox City Council plays a key role, but we know that success depends on the collaboration of community members, businesses, agencies, and other levels of government.

By working together, we will continuously assess our progress and adapt to the evolving needs of our community, while keeping our long-term goals at the forefront.

Our Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework will help guide the delivery of strategies and track progress, providing transparency for everyone involved.

Performance measures and annual targets will be used to assess how effectively we're meeting our objectives, and quarterly reports will provide regular updates to ensure we're on course. An Annual Report will provide a more detailed review of our achievements, challenges, and areas for improvement, ensuring we remain accountable to our community.

Every two years, a report will be submitted to the State Government highlighting progress against the health and wellbeing priorities and actions.

Engagement with partners and stakeholders will be ongoing, with regular feedback from community surveys and consultations helping us refine our approach. A mid-term review will also assess overall progress, allowing us to make adjustments as needed to ensure we stay on track to achieve the Community Vision. By working collaboratively and staying responsive, we can ensure Knox remains a great place to live, work, and play.

Equity Impact Assessment

An Equity Impact Assessment (EIA) was completed to ensure the elevation of the needs of priority populations through the delivery of Knox's Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

The following recommendations will be implemented over the life of the Plan:

- Ensure communications such as language, visuals and messaging from leadership and as an organisation, reflect and reinforce intersectional gender equality and inclusion.
- Strengthen relationships with diverse stakeholders and community agencies who work towards improving community safety, health, gender equality and wellbeing in Knox.
- Strengthen use of gender disaggregated data to understand community need and inform planning and delivery of programs, initiatives and services.

Keeping in touch and opportunities to have your say

Knox City Council is committed to seeking feedback, making sure you are aware of issues that affect you and providing opportunities to have your say. There are a number of ways you can do this.

Visit our Have Your Say website to see how you can contribute to projects and tell us what you think of our draft plans and strategies:
www.knox.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay

Knox City Council has several Advisory Committees that provide advice on the development, implementation, monitoring, and review of programs or activities.

These committees are made up of community members, staff and current Councillors.

Find out if there are opportunities available in your area of interest on our website:
www.knox.vic.gov.au/our-council/about-council/council-committees

Sign up to receive Knox eNews, our weekly email newsletter which will keep you informed about the latest news, events and activities across the community:
www.knox.vic.gov.au/email-newsletter



Knox intergenerational program with Boronia K-12 College

Knox City Council

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National Relay Service: 133 677 (ask for 03 9292 8000)
Speak and Listen: 1300 555 727 (ask for 03 9298 8000)

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8.3 Annual Budget 2025-26

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin
Executive: Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Dobson

SUMMARY
In accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Council is required to prepare and adopt an annual budget by 30 June each year.

Key components of the Annual Budget 2025-26 include:

- The Budget invests $122.4 million in a wide range of services to the community to ensure Knox is a place where people and businesses can thrive.
- A $57.8 million capital works program of which $39.3 million is allocated to maintaining and renewing community assets and $18.5 million is to be invested in new and upgraded community assets.
- Continuation of the $100 rebate in relation to rates and charges for all eligible recipients.
- The Budget includes a 3.00% increase in overall rates and charges (excluding the waste charges) in accordance with the rate cap requirements outlined in Section 94(3) of the Act, and in line with the increase in rates permissible under the State Government determined rate cap.
- Council's Residential Garbage Charge has been set at $415.15, which is a $13.05 reduction from last year's charge.
- The Budget includes new borrowings in 2024-25 of $6.000 million to fund capital works projects.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolve to:

1. Adopt the Annual Budget 2025-26 as set out in Attachment 1 in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and as defined by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*;
2. Declare the Rates, Levies and Annual Service Charges for the 2025-26 financial year provided in Attachment 2;
3. Grant rate rebates for the 2025-26 financial year as per Attachment 2, paragraphs 12 – 15.
4. Adopt the Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 as set out in Attachment 3;
5. Adopt the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029 as set out in Attachment 4;
6. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to procure up to $6.000 million of loan borrowings from Treasury Corporation of Victoria, up to 30 June 2026, within the following criteria:
    a. All loan parcels drawn down will be greater than $1 million; and
    b. All loan parcels will be fixed rate and over a period of 10-years; and
    c. All loan parcels will be drawn down progressively based on cash flow requirements.
7. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign and seal all relevant documents necessary to give effect to the above resolution.

1. DISCUSSION

At its ordinary meeting of 26 May 2025, Council resolved to make available to the community its Draft Budget 2024-25, 2025-26 to 2034-35 Financial Plan and 2025-2029 Revenue and Rating Plan (the Plans). The Plans were developed in line with what the community told us was important to them.

Council continues to deliver services for the community at all stages of life. We are there for new parents and infants through our maternal and child health centres. Our school crossing supervisors are helping children to get to school safely. We are supporting the mental, physical and social wellbeing of our young people through youth programs and services. We're improving our parks and reserves, sporting facilities, local roads, footpaths and shared paths to enable active living and social connection. We are creating an accessible and inclusive city for those living with disability, and assisting older residents to stay connected, active and engaged.

This budget is significant for Knox, as we launch our new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. It brings to life the first year of this new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan. It sets out the year one actions we will take to respond to the changing needs of our community, shaped by our community's aspirations, needs, values and priorities, and taking into account our long-term financial position.

The Annual Budget 2025-26 seeks to balance the competing demands for Council services and infrastructure using prudent financial management principles to provide long-term financial sustainability.

The budget invests $122.4 million in services and $57.8 million in the capital works program to ensure Knox is a place where people and businesses can thrive. It sets the groundwork to action the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan and things that the community told Council were most important to them in the future while being conscious of what we need and can afford right now.

This is a responsible, realistic and well-considered budget, shaped by a range of influencing factors. It has been informed by conversations with our community about what is most important to them. It also reflects the significant financial constraints of the state government's mandated rate capping at 3.00 per cent, in line with the State Governments rate cap.

The budget includes investment in the capital works program of $57.8 million with continued investment in asset renewal and new capital works to support the delivery of the Community and Council Plan.

Significant capital works for 2025-26 include:

- $10.7 million on renewing and improving local roads, bridges and associated road infrastructure
- $9.2 million to improve sporting pavilions, including Park Ridge Reserve, Wally Tew Reserve, Tormore Reserve and Carrington Park
- $4.8 million to improve footpaths and cycling paths
- $4.7 million to improve the condition of Council buildings, Early Years facilities and community halls

- $4.5 million to improve sports fields and training facilities, including Marie Wallace Bayswater Oval
- $3.6 million to renew critical drainage infrastructure throughout the municipality
- $1.5 million to implement masterplan and landscape plan initiatives at Wantirna Reserve, Carrington Park, Lewis Park, Kings Park, Gilbert Park and The Basin Triangle
- $1.4 million to improve car parks, including at Wantirna Reserve and Knox City Tennis Club
- $1.3 million to renew local playgrounds, including Bluett Reserve (Ferntree Gully) and Suffern Reserve (Bayswater)

The Annual Budget 2025-26 includes an increase in total general rates income of 3.00 percent as set by general order and in accordance with Section 94(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The additional Council eligible pensioner rebate of $100 continues.

Council's Residential Garbage Charge has been set at $415.15, which is a $13.05 reduction from last year's charge. The standard residential waste charge includes an 80L rubbish bin, 240L recycle bin and 240L food and garden bin. If residents have opted for a larger 120L rubbish bin then the charge has been set at $463.65, which is a $17.65 reduction from last year's charge. Both options also include two hard waste collections and a green bundled waste collection service. These charges have been set at an amount to ensure only full cost recovery inclusive of the State Government Landfill Levy. Further charges apply where residents have elected to have a larger general waste (rubbish) bin and/or additional bins.

1.1 Financial Plan 2025-26 – 2034-35

Under the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) Council must develop or review the Financial Plan in accordance with its deliberate engagement practices and adopt the Financial Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election. The Act also states that the scope of the Financial Plan is a period of at least 10-years.

The Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 (Attachment 3) comprises the Financial Statements and Financial Indicators across a 10-year period. The Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 has been updated in line with the 2025-26 Budget.

1.2 Revenue and Rating Plan 2025 – 2029

Council's Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029 (Attachment 4) outlines the principles and strategic framework that Council utilises in calculating and distributing the rating burden to property owners, however, the quantum of rate revenue and rating differential amounts are determined in the annual Knox City Council budget. The plan also sets out guiding principles for generating revenue from sources other than rates.

The Revenue and Rating plan explains how Council applies rates and, where differential rating is used, outlines the objectives for each differential category (Appendix A, Attachment 4).

In line with the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Council must prepare and adopt a Revenue and Rating Plan by the next 30 June after a general election for a period of at least the next 4 financial years. This was a new requirement in line with the 2020 Act, as such this is the second Revenue and Rating Plan for Knox.

Knox utilises a rating structure comprised of seven differential rates (residential, retirement village, commercial, industrial, recreational, vacant land or derelict). These rates are structured in accordance with the requirements of Section 161 'Differential Rates' of the *Local Government Act 1989*, and the *Ministerial Guidelines for Differential Rating 2013*.

1.3 Borrowings

Section 104 of the the Act gives Council the power to borrow. It states that Council cannot borrow money unless the proposed borrowings were included in its budget or a revised budget.

Council's 2025-26 Budget, if adopted at the meeting of Meeting of Council on 23 June 2025, includes borrowings of $6.000 million. Council can borrow up to this amount without needing to revise the 2025-26 Budget, as per Section 104 of the Act.

Although Council has made provision for these borrowings in its budget, a resolution is required to authorise the Chief Executive Officer to draw down the borrowings as they are required and determine an appropriate term and interest rate.

Approval is being sought to borrow up to $6.000 million through Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV), by progressively drawing down loan funds as required during the 2025-26 financial year, to assist in funding the $57.8 million capital works program.

The 2025-26 Budget was developed through a comprehensive review process and sound financial management principles as required by Section 101 of the Act. Councillors, together with staff, rigorously analysed available information and financial data to ensure the Budget delivers Council's objectives and financial plans.

Council has a very robust and diligent budget setting framework in place, focused on delivering community services and infrastructure whilst ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the organisation.

Council's budget is developed over a six-month period, during which extensive Councillor workshops are undertaken examining Council's financial position and proposed operational and capital expenditure for the budget year. An important component of this budget framework is the development of Council's long term Financial Plan. The Financial Plan is an important "roadmap" that informs the affordability of investments Council makes in its community and provides assurance regarding long term financial sustainability.

Importantly, underpinning the Financial Plan are principles that govern Council's financial decisions to ensure debt servicing can be managed within the context of Council's annual cash flow, and to ensure liquidity is always sufficient to meet Council's short term payment obligations and repay any debt.

A further key consideration for undertaking borrowings is Counci'ls Loan Borrowing Policy. Table 1 provides a summary of the policy requirements and demonstrates compliance with the policy requirements.

Table 1: Compliance with Loan Borrowing Policy

Policy Requirement	**Compliance with Policy**
Council will not undertake any borrowings for recurrent expenditure or for asset renewal works on the basis that it aims to meet these annual requirements from annual funding sources	Capital expenditure of $57.8 million in the 2025-26 Budget includes $39.3 million for renewing community assets the remaining $18.5 million is to be invested in new and upgraded community assets and funded through other sources such as loan borrowings
The loan term must not exceed (20) years	The loan term proposed is 10-years
The minimum loan threshold is $1.0 million	The CEO not be authorised to draw down loan parcels less than $1 million
Total Debt Servicing (interest expense) to be below 5.0% of Total Revenue	Total debt servicing is 1.8% of total revenue for the 2025-26 Budget
Total Indebtedness to be below 80% of Annual Rate Revenue	Indebtedness is budgeted to be 54.97% of rate revenue for the 2025-26 Budget which is in line with the Treasury Corporate Victoria framework which requires interest bearing loans and borrowings to not exceed 60%.
Working Capital Ratio (Current Assets/Current Liabilities) must remain in excess of 100% or 1.0	Budgeted working capital ratio in 2025-26 is 134% or 1.34

Treasury Corporation Victoria

Council has been approved to borrow through TCV however, the approval is subject to the following conditions:

- security is required in the form of a charge over the Council's General Rates
- the Council will be required to maintain compliance against the following financial covenants:
    - Interest Cover Ratio not to be less than 2:1 (Interest Cover Ratio = EBITDA : Interest Expense)
    - Interest bearing loans and borrowings not exceeding 60 per cent of Own Source Revenue (Interest bearing liabilities / Own Source Revenue)

Council's Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 demonstrates that the proposed new borrowings included in the 2025-26 Budget are within the required financial parameters set out by TCV.

TCV is the preferred lender with the most competitive rates available. The rates available through TCV are on average one per cent less than major lending institutions. TCV is able to borrow funds at a low cost as a result of its diverse funding sources, strong financial market standing, Government guarantee and that they operate as a not-for-profit entity. Their loan pricing policy passes this cost advantage on to their clients.

The objectives of the TCV loan framework are:

- to provide councils with access to lower cost debt which is ultimately to the benefit of ratepayers;
- to provide councils with access to treasury information and advice which will result in more efficient debt management practices;
- to incentivise councils to consider the strategic use of debt to fund capital expenditure that provides intergenerational community benefits;
- to incentivise councils to bring forward community infrastructure delivery by providing increased opportunities to access affordable finance; and
- to support a range of local community projects which ultimately deliver on the objectives of both the Victorian Government and the local council and maximise community access and benefit.

Council's endorsement is sought for the budgeted borrowings of up to $6.000 million to be progressively drawn down over the 2025-26 financial year as required by Council's cash flow through TCV. The loan terms to be undertaken for each parcel drawn down is:

- the amount will not be less than $1 million;
- the interest rate will be fixed; and
- the period of the loan will be 10-years.

Approval is also sought to delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer to determine the appropriate timing of these borrowings, which will be governed by the delivery of Council's capital works program and overall cash flow requirements.

Council's Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 has been prepared based on a fixed rate loan structure. A principal and fixed interest loan facility provides Council with long-term certainty on the interest rate and repayment requirement. Entering into any fixed rate agreement requires Council to accept that if a decision is made to make additional repayments or end the loan term earlier, break costs would be incurred. Break costs are calculated at the time the event occurs, but depending on when this is, costs can be material.

Break costs mean all amounts including interest determined by the lender in good faith to be its costs and losses in respect of any fixed rate agreement and arising as a result of a failure to settle, early termination or repayment, including, without limitation, any loss of bargain, costs of funding or loss or costs incurred as a result of that failure to settle, early termination or repayment, liquidation, obtaining or re-establishment of any hedge mechanism or related trading position, together with out of pocket expenses incurred by reason of the enforcement or attempted enforcement of its rights and obligations under any such hedge mechanism or relating trading mechanism.

2. ENGAGEMENT

The design of the community engagement program for the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 was informed by the Knox Community Engagement Policy and the Local Government Act 2020.

This design considered feedback from the Knox community, gathered through the review of the Community Engagement Policy in 2023-24, on what good engagement looks like to them, as follows:

- Engage only when there is genuine opportunity for influence.
- Engage early when the community has the most influence.
- Combining similar engagements to avoid over consultation and avoid asking the same questions over again.
- Provide varied ways to participate, including considering the needs of diverse audiences and include opportunities to "go to the community".

The community engagement process has included both broad community engagement and deliberative community engagement, planned and facilitated by an expert consultant. The expert consultants that were engaged in this work are Capire Consulting Group, a firm specialising in community engagement.

In early 2024, Capire developed a detailed scope for community engagement that considered learnings from the Council Plan 2021-2025 community engagement activities, and opportunities to do things better. It included approaches to best engage with hard-to-reach communities to ensure we are hearing from a diverse audience by their preferred method.

In addition to the broad community engagement, to achieve the legislated deliberative engagement requirement, a representative community panel was convened. The panel was provided with a clear scope and mandate to ensure all participants were clear about how their feedback would be used and what it would inform.

As defined in the community engagement approach recommended by Capire, the following key engagement activities were undertaken:

- Activity 1: Existing Community Engagement Data Analysis (January to February 2024)
- Activity 2: Phase 1 - Broad Community Engagement (March 2024)
- Activity 3: Phase 2 - Deliberative community engagement panel (April 2024 – February 2025)
- Activity 4: Phase 2 - Deliberative community engagement panel (budget) (November 2024)

Details of these activities were included in the report presented to the 28 May 2025 Council meeting presenting the Draft Corporate Suite of Documents to Council for release to the community.

Public questions and feedback

The draft 2025-26 Budget, 2025-26 to 2034-35 Financial Plan and 2025-2029 Revenue and Rating Plan (the draft Plans) were released for public questions and feedback from Tuesday 27th May until Monday 9th June 2025. The documents were made available on Council's website, and the community notified of their availability through a website news article, weekly e-news (published Wednesday 28th May), and through an update to the existing ("Our Knox") Have Your Say page.

The community were able to provide feedback and ask questions via:

- Submitting a form on the Have Your Say website;
- Calling the Community Engagement team on (03) 9298 8000;

- Emailing ourknox@knox.vic.gov.au; or
- Visiting the Customer Service Desk at the Knox Civic Centre.

During this engagement, there were 178 unique visitors who viewed the content for the draft documents and 11 unique contributors who provided feedback.

All contributions detailing questions and feedback have been provided in Attachment 5 for consideration prior to the adoption of the 2025-26 Budget and 2025-26 – 2034-35 Financial Plan. Officer comments have been included for each of the contributions made.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
The Annual Budget 2025-26 contains resourcing for a wide range of programs to deliver important community services to the Knox community.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS
The subject of this report has been considered in the context of climate change and its relevance to the Knox Climate Response Plan 2021 – 2031.

Implementation of the recommendation will positively impact on Council's Net zero 2030 target by funding activities Climate Response Plan.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS
The Annual Budget 2025-26 recognises the leadership role Council has within the community to actively address the impacts of sustainability and to facilitate other levels of government and the community to act in a similar vein.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
The Annual Budget 2025-26 has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.

The Annual Budget 2025-26 Annual Budget closely accords with the financial framework established by Council in its Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 and Revenue and Rating Plan, and also aligns with the Financial Principles contained within the Annual Budget 2025-26.

Remaining financially sustainable is a key focus and is becoming more challenging with a rate capping environment. This means Council continues to prioritise which services it can afford to deliver alongside phasing the capital program to align with available funds.

7. RISKS
There is inherent risk in developing a budget based on assumptions that are unknown or uncertain. Further, a constrained financial environment adds additional financial risk to the operations of the organisation. These risks have been considered in the development of the Budget and Financial Plan.

8. KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025

Civic Engagement & Integrity

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 - Adopted Budget 2025-26 [**8.3.1** - 160 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Adopted Budget 2025-26 - Declaration of Rates and Charges [**8.3.2** - 15 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - 2025-26 Revenue and Rating Plan [**8.3.3** - 28 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - Adopted Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-2035 [**8.3.4** - 36 pages]
5. Attachment 5 - Community Questions and Feedback 27 May 2025 - 9 June 2025 [**8.3.5** - 3 pages]

Annual Budget

2025–2026



knox

Knox City Council

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Mayor and CEO's Introduction

On behalf of Knox City Council, we are pleased to present our annual budget for 2025-26.

Council continues to deliver services for the community at all stages of life. We are there for new parents and infants through our maternal and child health centres. Our school crossing supervisors are helping children to get to school safely. We are supporting the mental, physical and social wellbeing of our young people through youth programs and services. We're improving our parks and reserves, sporting facilities, local roads, footpaths and shared paths to enable active living and social connection. We are creating an accessible and inclusive city for those living with disability, and assisting older residents to stay connected, active and engaged.

This budget is significant for Knox, as we launch our new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29. It brings to life the first year of this new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan. It sets out the year one actions we will take to respond to the changing needs of our community, shaped by our community's aspirations, needs, values and priorities, and taking into account our long-term financial position.

Consultation to inform this budget has built upon the extensive community engagement undertaken to develop the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29. Some of the things we heard are important include access to services and jobs, feeling safe, being heard and looking after our environment. These themes have guided the actions that Council can take to achieve the community's aspirations for Knox.

This budget invests $122.4 million in services and facilities, focusing on our community's priorities. These include community safety, sustainability, climate response, economic development and improving your experience with Council.

Highlights of the 2025-26 capital works program, totalling nearly $58 million (including nearly $16 million worth of projects carried forward from 2024-25), include:

- $10.7 million on renewing and improving local roads, bridges and associated road infrastructure
- $9.2 million to improve sporting pavilions, including Park Ridge Reserve, Wally Tew Reserve, Tormore Reserve and Carrington Park
- $4.8 million to improve footpaths and cycling paths
- $4.7 million to improve the condition of Council buildings, Early Years facilities and community halls
- $4.5 million to improve sports fields and training facilities, including Marie Wallace Bayswater Oval
- $3.6 million to renew critical drainage infrastructure throughout the municipality
- $1.5 million to implement masterplan and landscape plan initiatives at Wantirna Reserve, Carrington Park, Lewis Park, Kings Park, Gilbert Park and The Basin Triangle
- $1.4 million to improve car parks, including at Wantirna Reserve and Knox City Tennis Club
- $1.3 million to renew local playgrounds, including Bluett Reserve (Ferntree Gully) and Suffern Reserve (Bayswater)

Rates make up over 70% of Council's revenue and help us to deliver vital community services and infrastructure projects for our community. Average residential rates in Knox continue to be among the lowest in metropolitan Melbourne. Overall rates revenue will increase by an average of 3% in line with the Victorian Government's rate cap. Rates will vary across individual properties and rating categories depending on valuations conducted independently.

The cumulative effects of 10 years of rate capping place Council's budget under real pressure. Rising inflation has increased the cost of construction materials and many other essentials necessary to provide services to benefit the community. This has been further exacerbated by instances of cost shifting, whereby government funding has not kept pace with the increasing cost of Council services.

This budget has been developed with a focus on our financial sustainability and a particular focus on reducing our forecast borrowings by $18 million over the next 10 years. In a financially constrained environment, we have sought to direct spending to the areas our community has told us are important. We have worked hard to achieve operational savings over several years, with a further $2 million in savings identified for 2025-26. This has been achieved by identifying more efficient ways of working, reviewing user-pay fees and updating service levels.

Council has also retained the rate rebate of up to $100 for all eligible pensioners, representing a $1.1m budget investment. This is on top of the Victorian Government's pensioner rebate. In addition, Council continues to offer rate relief through payment assistance options for people who are in financial difficulty.

We look forward to delivering on our first Budget in addressing the needs of our community and responding to the new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29.



Cr Lisa Cooper

Mayor



Bruce Dobson

Chief Executive Officer

Executive Summary

Council has prepared a Budget for 2025-26 which is aligned to the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. The budget seeks to prioritise services to align with the available budget, improve infrastructure and deliver Council Plan actions, while ensuring Council remains financially sustainable in the long-term to continue to invest in the future generations of our people and communities.

Remaining financially sustainable is a key focus and is more challenging within a rate capped environment. This means Council continues to prioritise which services it can afford to deliver alongside phasing the capital program to align with available funds.

The Rate Rise

The Minister for Local Government has set the rate cap for the 2025-26 financial year at 3.00%. Council has elected not to apply to the Essential Services Commission (ESC) for a variation.

It is important to note, the actual rate increases experienced by individual ratepayers may differ from the 3.00% increase due to revaluations. Rate increases are impacted by the average rate increase (3.00%) and the property valuation increases (or decreases) of individual properties relative to the average across the municipality. If your property increased in value by more than the average for the Council (the average was a decrease of less than 1%), your rates will increase by more than 3.00%. If your property value increased by less than the average, your rates will increase by less than 3.00% and may in fact reduce from the previous year. While total rates will increase in the 2025-26 financial year, average residential rates in Knox remain among the lowest in metropolitan Melbourne.

Refer to section 4.1.1 Rates and Charges for more information.

Operating Result

Planning for a surplus is fiscally responsible to maintain uninterrupted service delivery to our community and to provide essential funding for capital works including the redevelopment of community facilities. The expected operating result for the 2025-26 year is a surplus of $21.764 million, with the budgeted surplus to be in excess of $15 million in subsequent years. Operating surpluses enable Council to fund capital works such as upgrades or redevelopment of community facilities, and fund Council's repayment of loans.

Financial Sustainability

This budget has been developed through a rigorous process. More detailed budget information is available throughout this document.

The introduction of rate capping in the 2016-17 rating year by the State Government was a major change to the way that councils were able to raise rate revenue. For Knox City Council rate revenue represents approximately 72% of our total revenue. The State Government rate cap has a compounding impact on Council's rate revenue annually.

A major challenge Council faces is the need to renew existing and ageing infrastructure and at the same time invest in new infrastructure assets such as road improvements, drainage upgrades, better parks and recreational and community assets and establishing footpaths in areas where none currently exist. Council's capital works plan allocates money to these activities on a prioritised basis.

For Council finances to remain sustainable and our services to remain affordable for the community, Council will need to continually assess the performance and future for current services to understand whether they are relevant and whether Council needs to continue to deliver them or whether there is a role for an alternative delivery model.

A further financial challenge comes from increased demand (and change in the service mix) arising from a growing and more diverse population. A growing population leads to increased service demand, placing a greater load on existing services and assets, resulting in more wear and tear and adding to the cost of service provision.

The rising costs of getting our work done and cumulative effects of rate capping continue to put pressure on our budget. Knox Council's average residential rates continue to be among the lowest in metropolitan Melbourne.

In summary, from a financial perspective Council has the same dilemma as most individuals - it has a limited budget yet many and competing demands on where to allocate its scarce resources.

Funding in 2025-26

Delivery of ongoing services:

Council has allocated $122.494 million towards the wide-ranging delivery of services to the Knox community. These services are summarised from page 9 with Council's initiatives and service performance indicators.

Capital works program:

Council is budgeting to undertake an extensive Capital works program of $57.845 million (including $15.723 million worth of projects carried forward from 2024-25). Of this, $39.318 million is allocated for renewing community assets and $18.527 for new, upgraded and expanded community assets.

Key Financial Statistics

	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2024-25 $'000
Total revenue	222,308	222,059
Total expenditure	193,154	202,428
Account result - surplus/(deficit) (*Refer Income Statement in Section 3.1)*	29,154	19,631
Underlying operating result - surplus/(deficit) *(Note: Underlying operating result is an important measure of financial sustainability as it excludes income which is to be used for capital, from being allocated to cover operating expenses.)*	19,454	8,113
Total Capital Works Program funded from	57,845	76,563
Council operations (rates funded)	37,806	28,833
External grants and contributions	10,383	11,713
Borrowings	6,000	21,800
Asset sales	3,656	14,217

Budget Influences

This section sets out the key budget influences arising from the internal and external environment within which Council operates. The four years represented within the Budget are 2025-26 through to 2028-29. In preparing the 2025-26 budget, a number of these influences have been taken into consideration which are outlined below:

- **Rate Capping** – The Victorian State Government continues with a cap on rate increases. The cap for 2025-26 has been set at 3.00%. This follows the 2023-24 rate cap of 2.75% versus inflation of over 4%.
- **Pensioner $100 rate rebate** – the State Government provides a pensioner rate rebate to which Council provides an additional $100 to reduce the overall general rates bill for pensioners. This equates to an annual cost of $1.1 million.
- **Cost shifting** - this occurs where Local Government provides a service to the community on behalf of the State and/or Federal Government. Over time, the funds received by Local Governments do not increase in line with real cost increases, such as school crossing and library services, resulting in a further reliance on rate revenue to meet service delivery expectations.
- **Employee costs** - largely driven by Council's Enterprise Agreements. In 2025-26 the compulsory Superannuation Guarantee Scheme (SGC) will increase from 11.50% to 12.00%.
- **Superannuation** – Council has an ongoing obligation to fund any investment shortfalls in the Defined Benefits Scheme. The last call on Local Government was in the 2011-12 financial year where Council was required to pay $11.6 million to top up its share of the Defined Benefits Scheme. The amount and timing of any liability is dependent on the global investment market. The timing of a call is unknown, the fund is presently performing above 100%. Council is planning for a call to be made within the next 5-10 years.
- **Borrowing costs** - Interest rates are subject to fluctuations and may change over time.
- **Capital Grant Funding** – capital grant opportunities if they arise, may re-prioritise projects in order to maximise funding opportunities.
- **Supplementary Rates** – Supplementary rates are additional rates received after the budget is adopted each year, for the part of the year when a property value increases in value (e.g. due to improvements made or change in land class), or new residents become assessable. Supplementary rates income is based on historical and forecast data and is set at anticipated levels.
- **Waste Disposal Costs** – The Environment Protection Agency (EPA) regulation has a sustained impact on Council with regards to compliance with existing and past landfills sites. Waste disposal costs are also impacted by industry changes such as increasing EPA landfill levies and negotiation of contracts e.g. recycling, sorting and acceptance.

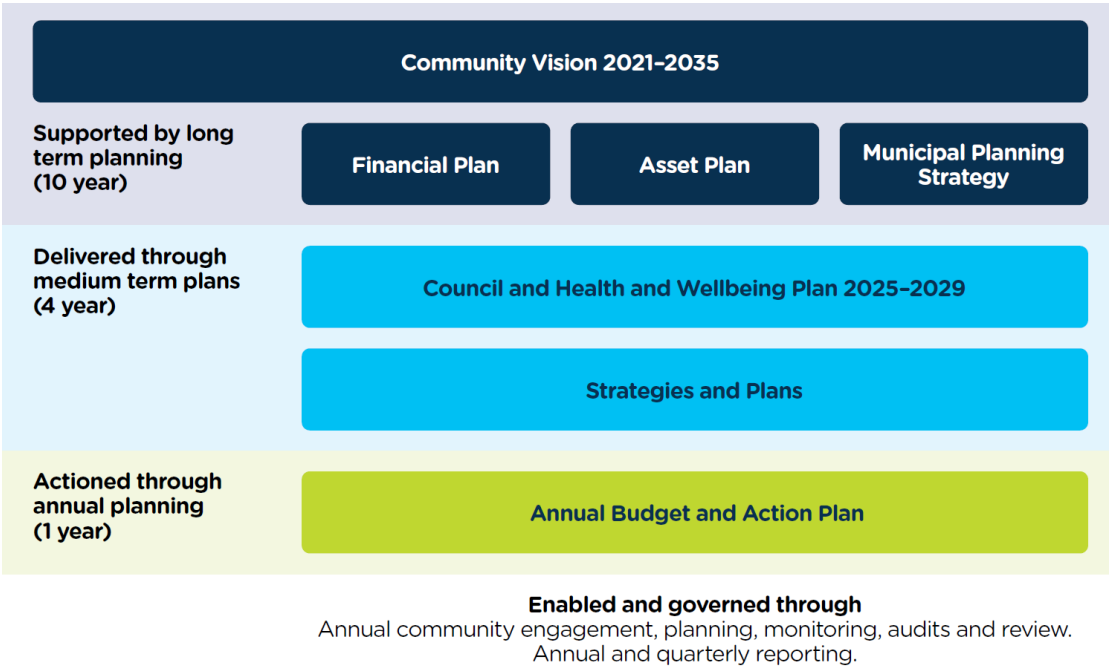
- **Development Contributions** – The rate of growth and flow of development contributions income depends on land sales and the desire of developers to construct new developments within the municipality. With the current economic environment we are expecting to continue to experience decreased development contributions.
- **Levy Collected on behalf of State Government** - Effective from 1 July 2025, the Victorian State Government is proposing to replace the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) with the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF), expanding funding to include other emergency services beyond fire, with CFA and VICSES volunteers exempt from the levy on their principal place of residence. Councils are required to collect this levy on behalf of the State Government, rebates for those eligible will be provided by the State Government, should the legislation be passed.
- **Natural disasters** – the timing and impact of these events are unknown and unfortunately the regularity is increasing because of climate change. Whilst Council undertakes prevention measures, these events have a significant impact on the community, businesses, and the economy, as well as Council's human and financial resources.
- **Public infrastructure maintenance** – councils across Australia raise approximately 3% of the total taxation collected by all levels of government in Australia. In addition, councils are entrusted with the maintenance of more than 30% of all public assets, including roads, bridges, parks, footpaths, and public buildings. This means that a large proportion of Council's income must be allocated to the maintenance and replacement of these valuable public assets to ensure the quality of public infrastructure is maintained at satisfactory levels.

Link to the Community Vision and the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

This section describes how the Budget links to the achievement of the integrated Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 within an overall integrated planning and reporting framework. This framework guides Council in identifying community needs and aspirations over the long term (Community Vision), medium term (Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029) and short term (Annual Budget and Action Plan) and then holding itself accountable (Annual Report).

Planning and Accountability Framework

The Budget is a rolling four-year plan that outlines the financial and non-financial resources that Council requires to achieve the key Themes described in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. The diagram below depicts Knox's integrated planning and reporting framework. At each stage of the integrated planning and reporting framework there are opportunities for community and stakeholder input. This is important to ensure transparency and accountability.



Our Community Vision

Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.

Themes and Strategic Objectives

Together with the community, Council identified six key themes and strategic objectives, with associated strategies, to ensure we progress towards achievement of the vision.

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Our community can access important local services and resources through Council's delivery, advocacy, and partnerships.

Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Our community feels empowered, heard, and has trust in Council through responsible governance, proactive communication and engagement, and transparent decision making.

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

Our diverse and connected community is strengthened by creating opportunities to actively participate, connect and learn.

Being a strong voice for safety

Our community feels safe, respected and supported in public spaces and at home through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships.

Caring for and enhancing our environment

Our environment is greener, healthier and sustainable through Council's environmental protection and enhancement, working in collaboration with our community.

Planning our future city

Our neighborhoods, housing and infrastructure meet the needs of our changing community through effective planning, delivery and advocacy.

Health and wellbeing priorities

Knox City Council understands that the health and wellbeing of our community is essential for our collective prosperity and quality of life. By measuring and addressing wellbeing, we can identify areas of need, track progress, and implement targeted interventions to create a healthier, more resilient community. Eight priority areas have been identified in our Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29 for Council to work on to improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life for the local community.



The health and wellbeing priorities were at the forefront of decision making when developing the strategies, performance measures and actions for the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29. The relevant priority icons are displayed next to each of these to show how we will deliver on the health and wellbeing priorities.

Services, Annual Actions and Performance Measures

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 was developed with the community and adopted by Council in June 2025. The plan identifies the strategic objectives that Council will deliver on over the four years to support the achievement of our Community Vision. It also demonstrates our commitment to the health and wellbeing of the community by integrating Knox's Council Plan with our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Progress against each of the health and wellbeing priorities is indicated by the relevant health and wellbeing icon.

The Annual Budget includes the following information that will support the delivery of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029:

Services: the services that Council provides to the Knox community are listed in the Budget document under the key theme where they make a significant contribution.

Annual Actions: the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 actions that will be funded in the current financial year are listed in the Budget. These are the major initiatives that will be delivered during this financial year.

Performance measures: the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures that we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving each Strategic Objective. We have set a target result that we will endeavour to achieve for each performance measure.

Note: The performance measures will be included in the draft Annual Budget 2025-26. Targets will be published in the Adopted Budget.

Additionally, there are a number of prescribed measures that are listed in the Budget and will be audited and included in the Performance Statement. These measures form part of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF). The LGPRF is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian councils. It ensures that all councils are measuring and reporting on their performance in a consistent way to promote transparency and accountability in the local government sector.

For the 2025-26 financial year, Council is required to set targets for the current budgeted year and the next three future years for eight LGPRF measures as part of our budget.

The targeted performance measures are detailed in 5a) Targeted Performance Measures. Results against these measures and targets will be reported in Council's Performance Statement included in the Annual Report.

Council is required by legislation to identify the strategies, annual actions and performance measures in the Annual Budget and report against them in their Annual Report to support transparency and accountability.

This section provides a description of the services and the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29 initiatives to be funded in the 2025-26 Annual Budget.

Theme 1:
Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Our community can access important local services and resources through Council's delivery, advocacy, and partnerships.

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
Strategy 1.1 A variety of transport options is available through the effective planning, advocacy and management of efficient, active, sustainable and accessible transport modes, particularly in growth locations.	
Strategy 1.2 Our community can access diverse training and life-long learning opportunities through delivery, promotion and partnerships with relevant organisations.	
Strategy 1.3 Local businesses and our economy are strong and resilient and there are increased employment opportunities through development, attracting investment, embracing technology and innovation, and advocacy.	
Strategy 1.4 Access to affordable and nutritious food is enhanced through advocacy and working in partnership with relevant organisations to raise awareness and promote available community programs.	
Strategy 1.5 Our community's health and wellbeing is improved through proactive planning, delivery, partnerships and advocacy that enable access to services, education and programs.	

1.1 Services

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
Cemetery				
This service is responsible for the management and operation of the Ferntree Gully Cemetery, including grounds maintenance and care, administration, interment and memorialisation services, safety and security.	Income	178	185	193
	Expense	233	273	287
	Net Deficit	55	88	94
Economic Development				
This service provides advice and support to help businesses grow and succeed. In addition, this service supports the development of the local economy by attracting businesses and investment in key areas. It includes but is not limited to providing an initial point of contact for business permit support, providing advice and information, managing and promoting business networking events.	Income	496	158	14
	Expense	1,218	952	851
	Net Deficit	722	794	837
Health				
This service is responsible for health planning, promotion and education, as well as the prevention of adverse health outcomes through initiatives and enforcement. It includes, but is not limited to immunisation services, investigation of complaints, education and development of health facilities.	Income	403	521	490
	Expense	992	1,023	992
	Net Deficit	589	502	502
Libraries				
This service includes 5 libraries that provide a range of services and programs, including access to books and resources, internet, photocopiers, school holiday activities, and book club events.	Income	0	0	0
	Expense	4,974	5,267	5,227
	Net Deficit	4,974	5,267	5,227

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
Roads & Transport				
This service supports the safe movement of people and vehicles throughout Knox, by planning for the renewal and maintenance of roads, footpaths, bike paths and street lighting. Other services include traffic control and parking management, behavioural change programs, and advocacy for improved state roads and transport infrastructure.	Income	467	601	631
	Expense	7,682	7,702	7,900
	Net Deficit	7,215	7,101	7,269
Total				
	Income	1,543	1,465	1,328
	Expense	15,097	15,217	15,257
	Net Deficit	13,554	13,752	13,929

1.2 Annual actions

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 actions that will be funded in the current financial year to progress towards achieving this strategic objective. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each action are reflected by the applicable icon.

2025-26 actions	Health and wellbeing priorities
Implement Economic Development's 2025-26 events program to strengthen capacity building for local businesses.	
Promote Your Library activities, programs and events that focus on lifelong learning, increase social connection and improve access to technology.	 
Lead and deliver the Knox Food Relief Taskforce and actively participate and contribute to the Knox Emergency Relief Network.	
Improve our shared path network through new and renewed upgrades including the Liverpool Road shared path.	
Advocate for enhanced bus service frequency and coverage across the Knox network and for release of the business case for transport options in the Caulfield-Rowville corridor.	 
Finalise and commence implementation of a Cemetery Landscape Masterplan to guide development of new ashes interment areas that meet community needs while complementing the existing amenity of the cemetery.	
Collaborate with Yarra Ranges Shire and Maroondah City Council to develop the Bayswater Business Precinct Spatial Plan.	N/A

1.3 Performance measures

Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this strategic objective. We have set a target range that we will endeavour to achieve for each performance measure. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each performance measure are reflected by the applicable icon.

Performance measure	Health and wellbeing priorities	Target range 2025-26
Kilometres of new active transport network in Knox aligned with the Knox Cycling Action Plan and other active transport plans.		2 kms
Community satisfaction with bike and shared paths (both on road and off-road and including shared paths).		79-80
Community satisfaction with the maintenance and repair of sealed and local roads.	N/A	68-70
Number of visits to libraries in the Knox municipality.		625,000–640,000
Community satisfaction with local library services.		8.5-8.6
Number of planning permits issued for commercial, office or retail use and development.	N/A	130-150
Value of grants provided to emergency relief organisations.		$100,000
Self-reported health status of Knox residents.		36%-38%
Amount of gross regional product (GRP) ($) generated by businesses in Knox.	N/A	$9.4B-$9.7B
Community satisfaction with Council services and facilities.		7.7-7.9

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures that we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this Strategic Objective. The expected range is in line with that indicated by Local Government Victoria.

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
Recently purchased library collection	[Number of library collection items purchased in the last 5 years / Number of library collection items] x 100	40% to 90%
Cost of library service	Direct cost of the library service / Population	$10 to $90
Library loans per population	Number of collection item loans / Population	4 to 8
Library membership	[The number of registered library members / Population] x100.	20% to 40%
Library visits per population	Number of library visits / Population	2 to 6
Sealed local road requests	[Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x 100	10 to 120 requests
Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards	[Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	80% to 100%
Cost of sealed local road reconstruction	Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed	$24 to $240
Cost of sealed local road resealing	Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed	$5 to $40

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
Satisfaction with sealed local roads	Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads	50 to 100

Theme 2:
Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

Our diverse and connected community is strengthened by creating opportunities to actively participate, connect and learn.

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
Strategy 2.1 Our community's diverse needs are addressed by ensuring equity and inclusion are considered in decision making and strategic planning.	
Strategy 2.2 Cultural diversity is celebrated through assisting, participating in, facilitating and delivering accessible programs, initiatives and events in partnership with our community, community groups and service providers.	
Strategy 2.3 Our community is supported to thrive during all stages of life through the promotion and provision of services, advocacy and partnerships with local service providers.	
Strategy 2.4 There are opportunities for social connection and active living through planning, provision of facilities, program delivery and support for local groups.	

2.1 Services

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
Arts & Culture				
This service focuses on arts and cultural programs to build community connections, contribute to community identity, and promote cultural diversity. It includes but is not limited to development and management of arts and cultural venues, identifying and managing community resources, and delivering public art projects and community functions.	Income	433	346	339
	Expense	2,093	1,880	1,955
	Net Deficit	1,660	1,534	1,616
Early Years				
These services are designed to support children's development and family needs, including Maternal and Child Health (MCH), Early Childhood Education and Care, playgroups, and inclusion support services.	Income	17,212	15,900	12,005
	Expense	21,407	21,645	14,902
	Net Deficit	4,195	5,745	2,897
Festivals & Events				
This service provides free community events that are family friendly, promotes connectivity, and celebrates community life. It includes but is not limited to supporting community run events, delivering major festivals and pop-up programs, and coordinating citizenship events.	Income	23	38	23
	Expense	942	799	742
	Net Deficit	919	761	719
Seniors				
This service provides a range of programs to assist residents aged 65 years and over, to live independently and safely in their homes. Support includes food services, occupational therapy, home modifications and maintenance, and housing support. In addition, this service supports seniors' clubs, social connections, active ageing programs, carers, people with disability, community transport, short term support, and planning for an ageing community.	Income	2,487	1,752	1,783
	Expense	5,324	4,365	4,573
	Net Deficit	2,837	2,613	2,790

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
Social Research, Policy & Planning				
This service conducts a range of in-depth research and planning for social policy, strategic and local area plans to enable Council and community partners to make informed decisions to improve community health and wellbeing. Areas include gender equity, community access and inclusion, reconciliation, social and affordable housing, community development and mental health.	Income	297	215	184
	Expense	3,723	3,505	3,687
	Net Deficit	3,426	3,290	3,503
Sport & Leisure				
This service supports community sporting and leisure clubs through planning, advocacy and consultation on facility and venue development. It provides training opportunities and funding support for minor projects. This service also manages sport and leisure facilities, either directly or through partnerships with other organisations.	Income	2,751	2,165	2,154
	Expense	6,803	6,954	6,910
	Net Deficit	4,052	4,789	4,756
Youth				
This service seeks to support physical, social and mental wellbeing of young people through programs and advocacy. It includes but is not limited to providing individual and group support programs, school focused youth care, and family support.	Income	232	394	277
	Expense	1,277	1,343	1,045
	Net Deficit	1,045	949	768
Total				
	Income	23,435	20,811	16,766
	Expense	41,571	40,491	33,815
	Net Deficit	18,136	19,680	17,049

2.2 Annual actions

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 actions that will be funded in the current financial year to progress towards achieving this strategic objective. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each action are reflected by the applicable icon.

2025-26 actions	Health and wellbeing priorities
Consider the child perspective in service delivery, decision making and design through a Child Friendly Cities Education Campaign to build capability of our staff.	
Deliver the 2025-26 actions of the Alcohol Statement of Commitment implementation plan.	
Partner with our diverse and multicultural community, key services and networks to support and celebrate our diversity, including the coordination of the Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing and Multicultural Advisory Committees.	
Review the Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025 and develop the next iteration of the plan.	
Deliver volunteer training sessions and promote opportunities to strengthen social and community networks and reduce loneliness.	
Undertake the Knox Aquatics Feasibility Study.	
Deliver targeted programs for priority population groups, including intergenerational initiatives, for example an annual fishing program, to strengthen community connections.	
Deliver the bi-annual Youth Summit to hear from the voices of young people on issues which are important to them.	
Strengthen the ongoing partnership with sessional kindergarten providers operating from Council facilities through enhancement of processes and partnership meetings.	
Deliver sporting club capacity-building sessions in partnership with key stakeholders.	

2.3 Performance measures

Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures that we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this strategic objective. We have set a target result that we will endeavour to achieve for each performance measure. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each performance measure are reflected by the applicable icon.

Performance measure	Health and wellbeing priorities	Target range 2025-26
Participation of young people in Youth Services programs.		7,500-8,000
Participation in social inclusion programs and intergenerational initiatives.		4,000-4,200
Community satisfaction with community and cultural activities, festivals, and events.		8.0-8.2
Number of health promotion initiatives targeted at reducing alcohol-related harm.		8-9
Number of volunteers that attend volunteer training and education.		275-325
Participation of people living with disability and their carers in targeted events, programs and professional development opportunities.		1,800-2,000
Number of residents accessing the Knox community transport bus outings.		5,000-5,500
Community Satisfaction with services for youth.		8.0-8.1
Community Satisfaction with sports ovals and other outdoor sporting facilities.		8.2-8.3
Number of upgrades that provide for gender inclusion in Council owned pavilions.		1-2

Performance measure	Health and wellbeing priorities	Target range 2025-26
		

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures that we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this Strategic Objective. The expected range is in line with that indicated by Local Government Victoria.

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
Infant enrolments in the MCH service	[Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service / Number of birth notifications received] x 100	90% to 110%
Participation in MCH service	[Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in a year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100.	70% to 100%
Participation in MCH service by Aboriginal children	[Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100.	60% to 100%
Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit	Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received	90% to 110%
Cost of MCH service	Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses	$50 to $200
Health inspections of aquatic facilities	Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities	1 to 4 inspections

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
Utilisation of aquatic facilities	[Number of visits to aquatic facilities / population].	1 to 10 visits
Cost of aquatic facilities	Direct cost of the aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to the aquatic facilities	$0 to $30

Theme 3:

Caring for and enhancing our environment

Our environment is greener, healthier and sustainable through Council's environmental protection and enhancement, working in collaboration with our community.

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
Strategy 3.1 Our environment is healthy and sustainable by considering environmental factors when planning for and making decisions.	
Strategy 3.2 Green spaces and waterways are protected, enhanced and enjoyed through planning, promotion and maintenance of our built and natural environment.	
Strategy 3.3 Minimise waste to landfill through access to a suite of waste services and education.	
Strategy 3.4 Energy consumption and the use of renewable energy resources are positively impacted through investment in assets, education, planning and advocacy.	

3.1 Services

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
Fleet, Plant & Machinery				
This service is designed to ensure that the Council's Fleet, Plant, and Machinery are effectively managed in a sustainable manner. It encompasses activities such as timely servicing, repair, and capital renewal for each resource, thereby promoting their longevity and operational efficiency.	**Income**	35	54	42
	Expense	-143	-241	-339
	Net Deficit	-178	-295	-381
Open Space & Biodiversity				
This service focuses on improving and managing an integrated network of public open spaces, including the protection and enhancement of a network of habitat corridors across Knox. The service utilises research and best practice to support the local flora, fauna and ecosystems that contribute to a healthy natural environment. In addition, it manages and preserves trees and vegetation in public areas.	**Income**	181	153	152
	Expense	13,942	14,559	15,408
	Net Deficit	13,761	14,405	15,256
Sustainability & Climate Response				
This service is responsible for guiding Council and the community's response to climate change, including energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives, community education, and engagement programs on environmental sustainability and climate mitigation.	**Income**	0	197	133
	Expense	937	1,045	1,137
	Net Deficit	937	848	1,004
Waste				
This service is responsible for the collection and disposal of kerbside waste, recyclables, green organics and hard waste. Other services include clearing and maintenance of public litter and recycle bins, waste collection from Council venues,	**Income**	5,961	5,174	4,570
	Expense	27,472	31,637	30,193
	Net Deficit	21,511	26,463	25,623

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
landfill rehabilitation, waste management planning, waste education, and compliance with legislated waste reforms.				
Water & Drainage				
This service develops strategies to plan and manage stormwater drains and protect water quality in urban areas, including promotion of Water Sensitive Urban Design, flood mapping, supporting stormwater and wastewater management.	**Income**	115	96	165
	Expense	2,801	2,825	3,113
	Net Deficit	2,686	2,729	2,948
Total				
	Income	6,292	5,675	5,062
	Expense	45,009	49,825	49,513
	Net Deficit	38,717	44,150	44,451

3.2 Annual actions

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 actions that will be funded in the current financial year to progress towards achieving this strategic objective. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each action are reflected by the applicable icon.

2025-26 actions	Health and wellbeing priorities
Finalise the first draft of the 10-year Open Space Strategy.	
Deliver the year two funded actions of the Biodiversity and Resilience Strategy 2024-2034 Action Plan.	
Deliver the annual Sustainability Initiatives of Council's Capital Works Program to reach net zero emissions by 2030.	
Conduct the mid-term review of Council's Climate Response Plan 2021-2031.	
Advocate to Federal and State Governments to reconsider the kerbside glass only service reform, in favour of an expanded Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) to enhance glass recycling and reduce cost to the Knox community.	N/A
Progressively replace fleet vehicles with zero/low emission vehicles.	N/A
Participate in the South East Metropolitan Advanced Waste Processes Project Oversight Group, to oversee facility construction and report back to Council.	N/A

3.3 Performance measures

Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Performance Measures

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this strategic objective. We have set a target result that we will endeavour to achieve for each performance measure. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each performance measure are reflected by the applicable icon.

Performance measure	Health and wellbeing priorities	Target range 2025-26
Community satisfaction with the provision and maintenance of parks and gardens.		7.8-8.0
Net change in Council trees (planted vs removed).		1,250-1,350
Waste diverted from landfill.	N/A	72-74
Council's greenhouse emissions (CO2 equivalent).		1,800-1,850
Electrification of Council Buildings (removal of gas connection and/or solar installation and/or battery connection).		3-5 buildings per financial year

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures that we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this strategic objective. The expected range is in line with that indicated by Local Government Victoria.

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
Kerbside collection bins missed	[Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x 10,000	1 to 20 bins
Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service	Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage	$44 to $164

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
	collection bins	
Cost of kerbside recyclables bin collection service	Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins	$11 to $86
Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill	[Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100.	20% to 60%

Theme 4:
Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Our community feels empowered, heard, and has trust in Council through responsible governance, proactive communication and engagement, and transparent decision making.

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
Strategy 4.1 Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.	
Strategy 4.2 Our diverse community is informed and has opportunities to participate and provide feedback through clear and meaningful communication and engagement.	
Strategy 4.3 Council services are efficient and optimised through ongoing improvement, and focused investment in innovation, technology and capability.	
Strategy 4.4 The changing needs of our community are met through informed policy and strategy that maximises value, collaboration and partnerships with other councils and local organisations.	
Strategy 4.5 Council is financially sustainable through long-term strategic, financial and asset planning, and the responsible prioritisation, allocation and use of resources.	

4.1 Services

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
Customer Service				
The service supports the organisation in providing personalised, responsive customer service via all Council's contact channels. The team provides support for all customer interactions and exists to support information and connection between Council and the community.	Income	0	0	0
	Expense	4,646	5,151	5,445
	Net Deficit	4,646	5,151	5,445
Data, Information & Technology				
The Information Technology service provides computer hardware, software, telecommunications, business information and systems analytics, project and business improvement services to support the organisation to deliver Council services in accordance with City and Council Plan.	Income	0	12	0
	Expense	9,176	10,558	11,632
	Net Deficit	9,176	10,546	11,632
Finance				
The Finance Department provides the strategic thinking, leadership, service delivery and management of all matters relating to financial management, involving budgeting and forecasting, regular financial reporting, Annual Financial Accounts preparation, rating services and management of the creditors and debtors.	Income	388	394	404
	Expense	2,703	2,738	2,969
	Net Deficit	2,315	2,344	2,565
Governance				
The Governance service works across the organisation to advise, educate and build the capacity of Councillors and staff to promote and achieve good governance in Council's operations and more broadly, engage with the community to encourage greater participation in local democracy.	Income	43	85	101
	Expense	1,753	2,797	1,983
	Net Deficit	1,710	2,712	1,882

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
People				
This Service provides a range of strategic and operational functions that are aimed at ensuring that Council's human resource (HR) activities, programs, and strategies enhance staff performance and realise Council's Vision.	Income	258	175	30
	Expense	5,395	5,488	5,850
	Net Deficit	5,137	5,313	5,820
Procurement				
To ensure procurement activity is conducted in a honest, competitive, fair and transparent manner, delivering best value for money outcomes with consideration of Council's social, environmental, economic and governance objectives and legislations.	Income	11	0	0
	Expense	703	785	813
	Net Deficit	692	785	813
Risk Management				
This service is responsible of the identification, assessment and management of potential risks that may impact the Council's operations, providing a systematic and proactive approach to managing risks, with the ultimate goal of protecting the Council's interests.	Income	5	42	42
	Expense	2,313	2,535	2,838
	Net Deficit	2,308	2,493	2,796
Strategy & Performance				
Provides leadership, guidance and direction for the planned and measurable delivery of Council's Vision. This is achieved through: strategic planning, corporate planning, service planning & review, portfolio and change management, performance monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and business improvement projects.	Income	0	0	0
	Expense	2,065	2,385	2,465
	Net Deficit	2,065	2,385	2,465
Total				
	Income	706	709	577
	Expense	28,755	32,438	33,994
	Net Deficit	28,049	31,729	33,417

Service	2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000

4.2 Annual actions

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 actions that will be funded in the current financial year to progress towards achieving this strategic objective. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each action are reflected by the applicable icon.

2025-26 actions	Health and wellbeing priorities
Optimise Council's key communication channels to ensure our customers have easy access to relevant and timely information.	
Deliver the year one actions of Council's Organisation Strategy 2025-29.	N/A
Complete a community engagement program to inform Council's Annual Budget 2026-27.	
Develop and endorse Council's Asset Plan 2025-2035.	N/A
Develop and endorse Council's Annual Budget 2026-27.	N/A
Finalise the platform tender process for Core Business Systems to integrate technology systems into a single source of truth, optimising efficiency, cybersecurity and productivity.	N/A
Develop and launch a Continuous Improvement Framework and Year 1 program of initiatives to improve customer experience, staff experience, and operational efficiency.	N/A
Actively pursue and participate in collaborative procurement opportunities to maximise contract outcomes.	N/A

4.3 Performance measures

Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures that we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this strategic objective. We have set a target result that we will endeavour to achieve for each performance measure. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each performance measure are reflected by the applicable icon.

Performance measure	Health and wellbeing priorities	Target range 2025-26
Community satisfaction with Council's community consultation and engagement.		6.9-7.1
Adjusted underlying Surplus.	N/A	9.15%
Community satisfaction with Council having a sound direction for the future.		6.7-6.9
Community satisfaction with Council's representation, lobbying, and advocacy on behalf of the community.		6.7-6.9
Community satisfaction with Customer Service.		7.7-7.9
Community satisfaction with Council's overall performance.	N/A	6.9-7.1
Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public.	N/A	4%-6%

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures that we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this strategic objective. The expected range is in line with that indicated by Local Government Victoria.

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public	[Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council, or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors] x 100	0% to 30%
Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement	Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on community consultation and engagement.	40 to 70
Councillor attendance at Council meetings	The sum of the number of councillors who attended each council meeting / (Number of council meetings) × (Number of councillors elected at the last Council general election)	80% to 100%
Cost of elected representation	Direct cost of the governance service / Number of councillors elected at the last council general election	$30,000 to $80,000
Satisfaction with Council decisions	Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the performance of council in making decisions in the best interests of the community	40 to 70

Theme 5:
Being a strong voice for safety

Our community feels safe, respected and supported in public spaces and at home through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships.

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
Strategy 5.1 Our community feels safer in public spaces and facilities through planning, maintenance, education, design and proactive program delivery for Council owned and managed spaces and via advocacy for others.	
Strategy 5.2 Safety and liveability are prioritised through the planning, delivery and enforcement of local laws and regulatory services.	
Strategy 5.3 Our community is more secure, connected and feel less isolated through planning, partnerships, advocacy and targeted support for our most vulnerable.	
Strategy 5.4 People feel safe in their homes and in the community through the development of partnerships, planning and promotion of programs, services and education that focus on connection, safety and respect.	
Strategy 5.5 Our community is resilient in the face of emergencies through planning, education, emergency response and support.	

5.1 Services

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
Community Laws				
The service contributes to our community's safety and liveability by managing local laws, including nuisance complaints, parking compliance and animal management.	Income	3,230	4,192	4,259
	Expense	4,288	4,633	4,668
	Net Deficit	1,058	441	409
Community Safety				
This service contributes to the safety and well-being of the community. These services include, but are not limited to funding community safety initiatives, promoting safe driving, coordinating safety, resourcing of school crossings, initiatives to reduce alcohol and gambling related harm, and support services for people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.	Income	1,206	835	833
	Expense	2,505	2,311	2,465
	Net Deficit	1,299	1,476	1,632
Emergency Management				
This service is responsible for emergency preparedness, response and recovery in Knox, by working closely with emergency state agencies. In addition, this service inspects properties at risk of bushfires and helps property owners mitigate bushfire risk.	Income	9	5	12
	Expense	355	400	364
	Net Deficit	346	395	352
Food Safety				
This service manages food safety standards in the business industry, ensuring businesses are compliant to food safety regulations and tobacco compliance program. It also includes, but is not limited to, inspections and enforcement.	Income	652	706	679
	Expense	1,075	1,114	1,139
	Net Deficit	423	408	460

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
Statutory Building				
This service is responsible for managing building assessment and building compliance for property development. It includes, but is not limited to providing advice, assessing applications, issuing permits, enforcement, and protection of adjoining properties.	Income	792	1,040	1,250
	Expense	1,937	1,998	2,005
	Net Deficit	1,145	958	755
Total				
	Income	5,888	6,777	7,033
	Expense	10,159	10,456	10,641
	Net Deficit	4,271	3,678	3,608

5.2 Annual actions

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 actions that will be funded in the current financial year to progress towards achieving this strategic objective. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each action are reflected by the applicable icon.

2025-26 actions	Health and wellbeing priorities
Partner with key stakeholders to deliver community safety programs and initiatives that improve perceptions of safety and neighbourhood connection.	
Deliver year two of the Free From Violence project.	
Celebrate the achievements of women and progress towards gender equality through the delivery of International Women's Day event and 16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in partnership with our community.	
Complete the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-29.	N/A
Develop a first draft of a Public Lighting Policy for Knox to extend usable hours and improve perceptions of safety in public spaces.	
Participate in the Eastern Metropolitan Council's Emergency Management Partnership in order to deliver a collaborative approach to regional emergency preparation and preparedness.	

5.3 Performance measures

Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this strategic objective. We have set a target result that we will endeavour to achieve for each performance measure. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each performance measure are reflected by the applicable icon.

Performance measure	Health and wellbeing priorities	Target range 2025-26
Perception of community safety in public areas of Knox.		7.9-8.1
Perception of community safety at home.		8.2-8.3
Number of days taken to follow up a major or critical food notification or outbreak.	N/A	1-2
Percentage of high-risk buildings (large public buildings such as shopping centres, aged care facilities, hospitals or entertainment venues) audited annually, for compliance with safety requirements.		30%-35%
Animal Management Prosecutions.	N/A	95%-100%

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures that we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this Strategic Objective. The expected range is in line with that indicated by Local Government Victoria.

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
Time taken to action food complaints	Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints	1 to 10 days

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
Food safety assessments	[Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984 / Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984] x 100	50% to 100%
Cost of food safety service	Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the Food Act 1984	$300 to $1,200
Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications	[Number of critical and non-compliance outcome notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance outcome notifications about food premises] x 100	60% to 100%
Food safety samples	[Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance outcome notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance outcome notifications about food premises] x 100	50% to 100%
Time taken to action animal management requests	Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests	1 to 10 days

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
Animals reclaimed	[Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x 100	30% to 90%
Animals rehomed	[Number of unclaimed collected animals rehomed / Number of unclaimed collected animals] x 100	20% to 80%
Cost of animal management service	Direct cost of the animal management service / Population	$3 to $40
Animal management prosecutions	[Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Total number of animal management prosecutions] x 100.	0% to 200%

Theme 6:
Planning our future city

Our neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure meet the needs of our changing community through effective planning, delivery and advocacy.

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
Strategy 6.1 There is improved access to a diverse range of housing options through effective planning, advocacy, and identifying opportunities for social and affordable housing supply.	
Strategy 6.2 High quality, integrated community services and facilities are available through the planning, design and maintenance of multifunctional places that promote connection and utilisation.	
Strategy 6.3 Our evolving neighbourhoods are liveable and sustainable through planning and design that responds to population growth and our community's changing needs.	
Strategy 6.4 Our community's expectations and aspirations for housing development and land use are considered through planning, advocacy, partnerships and decision-making.	

6.1 Services

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
Capital Works Planning				
This Service aims to manage the Council's capital works and support the delivery of services to the community.	Income	0	0	0
	Expense	1,002	1,197	1,304
	Net Deficit	1,002	1,197	1,304
Property & Facilities				
This service manages Council's properties, including usage, renewal and maintenance, land management, and removal of graffiti vandalism.	Income	245	340	306
	Expense	5,204	5,369	5,465
	Net Deficit	4,959	5,029	5,159
Statutory Planning				
This service is responsible for providing planning advice and assessment of planning permit applications, including community engagement and planning enforcement.	Income	1,686	1,996	2,561
	Expense	4,140	4,117	4,379
	Net Deficit	2,454	2,121	1,818
Strategic Land Use Planning				
This service provides strategic and land use planning services, including development of planning controls within the Knox Planning Scheme, to guide land use and development that responds to Knox's housing, economic and environmental needs.	Income	90	8	17
	Expense	1,551	2,135	1,930
	Net Deficit	1,461	2,127	1,913

Service		2023-24 Actual $'000	2024-25 Forecast $'000	2025-26 Budget $'000
Total				
	Income	2,021	2,344	2,884
	Expense	11,897	12,818	13,077
	Net Deficit	9,876	10,474	10,193

6.2 Annual actions

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 actions that will be funded in the current financial year to progress towards achieving this strategic objective. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each action are reflected by the applicable icon.

2025-26 actions	Health and wellbeing priorities
Deliver the year three actions of the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2023-2027.	
Commence preparation of the Knox Housing Strategy review following release of the new Plan for Victoria and State housing targets to ensure that Knox is well placed to respond to legislative change and market demands.	
Prepare the Bayswater Renewal Strategy Planning Scheme Amendment for implementation into the Knox Planning Scheme.	N/A
Advocate and provide support for eligible community members over 55 to access safe and affordable housing.	
Assess building condition audit data and create renewal programs to align with building hierarchy and the long-term financial plan.	N/A
Review the Public Toilet Policy and develop the next iteration of the Policy and Implementation Plan.	
New or upgraded Council facilities are designed to be Disability Discrimination Act compliant.	

6.3 Performance measures

Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this strategic objective. We have set a target result that we will endeavour to achieve for each performance measure. The health and wellbeing priorities that align to each performance measure are reflected by the applicable icon.

Performance measure	Health and wellbeing priorities	Target range 2025-26
Community satisfaction with planning for population growth.		6.0-6.5
The number of one- and two-bedroom dwellings approved in planning permits.		50-60
Extent of housing development that is consistent with housing strategy expectations.		66%-76% alignment
Percentage and proportion housing defined as affordable for very low- and low-income earners – sales.		3.2%-3.5%
Percentage and proportion housing defined as affordable for very low- and low-income earners – rentals.		44%-47%
Percentage of Asset Renewal Program completed.	N/A	85%-95%

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service performance measures that we will monitor to demonstrate progress towards achieving this Strategic Objective. The expected range is in line with that indicated by Local Government Victoria.

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
Time taken to decide planning applications	The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the	30 to 110 days

LGPRF service performance measure	Computation	Expected range
	application	
Planning applications decided within required timeframes	[Number of planning application decisions made within 60 days for regular permits and 10 days for VicSmart permits / Number of planning application decisions made] x 100	40% to 100%
Cost of statutory planning service	Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received	$500 to $4,000
Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT	[Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x 100	0% to 100%

Reconciliation with Budgeted Operating Result

Key Themes	Income $'000	Expenditure $'000	Net Cost $'000
Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources	1,327	15,257	**13,929**
Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity	16,766	33,815	**17,049**
Caring for and enhancing our environment	5,062	49,513	**44,451**
Leading, listening and governing responsibly	576	33,994	**33,417**
Being a strong voice for safety	7,033	10,641	**3,608**
Planning our future city	2,884	13,077	**10,193**
Total Net Cost of Activities and Initiatives	**33,648**	**156,297**	**122,648**
Non Attributable Expenditure			
Effective corporate governance			199
Depreciation			25,329
Amortisation - intangible assets			903
Amortisation - right of use assets			1,176
Capital projects - operational expenses			5,200
Borrowing costs			3,599
Finance costs - leases			419
Total Non Attributable Expenditure			**36,825**
Deficit before Funding Sources			**159,473**
Funding Sources			
Rates and charges			126,640
Garbage charges			25,344
Victoria Grants Commission (VGC) - grants - operating - recurrent			7,799
Interest			950
Developers' contributions			5,000
Grants - capital			10,383
Contributions and donations - capital			0
Contributions - non monetary assets			2,000
Net gain on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant & equipment			10,506
Share of net profits of associates and joint ventures			4
Total Funding Sources			**188,627**
Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year			**29,154**

3. Financial Statements

This section presents information in regard to the Financial Statements and Statement of Human Resources. The budget information for the year 2025-26 has been supplemented with projections to 2028-29.

This section includes the following financial statements prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Capital Works
- Statement of Human Resources

Knox City Council

3.1 Comprehensive Income Statement

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	Notes	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Projections 2026-27 $'000	2027-28 $'000	2028-29 $'000
INCOME / REVENUE						
Rates and charges	4.1.1	150,482	153,826	165,163	163,587	167,716
User fees	4.1.2	13,310	13,677	13,931	14,475	15,065
Statutory fees and fines	4.1.3	4,691	5,458	5,551	5,746	5,887
Grants - operating	4.1.4	27,710	19,651	20,064	20,362	20,689
Grants - capital	4.1.4	6,670	10,383	2,918	3,006	3,021
Contributions - monetary	4.1.5	7,294	5,000	6,000	6,000	6,500
Contributions - non-monetary	4.1.5	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Net gain (loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		1,242	10,506	1,417	1,917	1,917
Share of net profits (or loss) of associates and joint ventures		59	4	7	10	13
Other income	4.1.6	3,625	1,803	1,824	1,850	1,874
TOTAL INCOME / REVENUE		**217,083**	**222,308**	**218,875**	**218,953**	**224,682**
EXPENSES						
Employee costs	4.1.7	79,965	77,377	78,669	79,923	81,641
Materials and services	4.1.8	82,715	77,100	82,940	79,593	80,843
Contributions and donations	4.1.9	6,049	6,138	6,188	6,343	6,501
Depreciation	4.1.10	25,025	25,329	26,055	26,611	27,123
Amortisation - intangible assets	4.1.11	903	903	903	903	903
Depreciation - right of use assets	4.1.12	1,185	1,176	1,205	1,216	1,246
Borrowing costs		3,767	3,599	3,611	3,747	3,772
Finance costs - leases		343	419	402	369	342
Allowance for impairment losses		408	317	321	329	337
Other expense	4.1.13	720	796	824	838	851
TOTAL EXPENSES		**201,080**	**193,154**	**201,118**	**199,872**	**203,559**
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		**16,003**	**29,154**	**17,757**	**19,081**	**21,123**
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE RESULT		**16,003**	**29,154**	**17,757**	**19,081**	**21,123**
LESS						
Grants - capital - non recurrent		3,474	7,700	0	0	0
Contributions and donations - capital		1,544	0	0	0	0
Contributions - non-monetary		2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
UNDERLYING SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		**8,985**	**19,454**	**15,757**	**17,081**	**19,123**

3.2 Balance Sheet

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	Notes	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Projections 2026-27 $'000	2027-28 $'000	2028-29 $'000
CURRENT ASSETS						
Cash and cash equivalents		42,932	37,123	33,004	33,384	40,391
Other financial assets		0	0	0	0	0
Trade and other receivables		21,339	21,898	23,368	23,336	23,976
Inventories		13	13	13	13	13
Prepayments		1,374	1,408	1,444	1,480	1,517
Other assets		2,400	2,460	2,522	2,585	2,649
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	4.2.1	**68,058**	**62,902**	**60,351**	**60,798**	**68,546**
NON CURRENT ASSETS						
Investments in associates		2,806	2,810	2,817	2,827	2,840
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		2,326,906	2,354,569	2,376,601	2,397,381	2,408,024
Right-of-use assets	4.2.4	4,762	5,987	5,575	4,732	4,466
Intangible assets		2,419	2,419	2,419	2,419	2,419
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	4.2.1	**2,336,893**	**2,365,785**	**2,387,412**	**2,407,359**	**2,417,749**
TOTAL ASSETS		**2,404,951**	**2,428,687**	**2,447,763**	**2,468,157**	**2,486,295**
CURRENT LIABILITIES						
Trade and other payables		13,169	13,465	13,778	14,094	14,417
Trust funds and deposits		2,624	2,690	2,757	2,826	2,896
Contract and other liabilities		3,915	0	0	0	0
Provisions		19,052	19,518	19,995	20,485	20,987
Interest-bearing liabilities	4.2.3	9,446	10,336	11,714	13,314	14,720
Lease liabilities	4.2.4	778	899	1,037	967	1,038
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	4.2.2	**48,984**	**46,908**	**49,281**	**51,686**	**54,058**
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES						
Provisions		2,896	2,923	2,951	2,980	3,010
Interest-bearing liabilities	4.2.3	74,360	69,790	69,126	68,688	63,578
Lease liabilities	4.2.4	4,164	5,365	4,947	4,264	3,987
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	4.2.2	**81,420**	**78,078**	**77,024**	**75,932**	**70,575**
TOTAL LIABILITIES		**130,404**	**124,986**	**126,305**	**127,618**	**124,633**
NET ASSETS		**2,274,547**	**2,303,701**	**2,321,458**	**2,340,539**	**2,361,662**
EQUITY						
Accumulated surplus		739,133	773,158	790,786	809,734	830,744
Reserves		1,535,414	1,530,543	1,530,672	1,530,805	1,530,918
TOTAL EQUITY		**2,274,547**	**2,303,701**	**2,321,458**	**2,340,539**	**2,361,662**

Knox City Council

3.3 Statement of Changes in Equity

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	Notes	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000	Other Reserves $'000
2025 FORECAST					
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		**2,258,544**	**723,126**	**1,516,301**	**19,117**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		16,003	16,003	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain (loss)		0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves		0	(10,729)	0	10,729
Transfer from other reserves		0	10,733	0	(10,733)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		**2,274,547**	**739,133**	**1,516,301**	**19,113**
2026 BUDGET					
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		**2,274,547**	**739,133**	**1,516,301**	**19,113**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		29,154	29,154	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain (loss)		0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	4.3.1	0	(9,778)	0	9,778
Transfer from other reserves	4.3.1	0	14,649	0	(14,649)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	4.3.2	**2,303,701**	**773,158**	**1,516,301**	**14,242**
2027					
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		**2,303,701**	**773,158**	**1,516,301**	**14,242**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		17,757	17,757	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain (loss)		0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves		0	(10,825)	0	10,825
Transfer from other reserves		0	10,696	0	(10,696)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		**2,321,458**	**790,786**	**1,516,301**	**14,371**
2028					
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		**2,321,458**	**790,786**	**1,516,301**	**14,371**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		19,081	19,081	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain (loss)		0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves		0	(10,875)	0	10,875
Transfer from other reserves		0	10,742	0	(10,742)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		**2,340,539**	**809,734**	**1,516,301**	**14,504**
2029					
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		**2,340,539**	**809,734**	**1,516,301**	**14,504**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		21,123	21,123	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain (loss)		0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves		0	(11,403)	0	11,403
Transfer from other reserves		0	11,290	0	(11,290)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		**2,361,662**	**830,744**	**1,516,301**	**14,617**

3.4 Statement of Cash Flows

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	Notes	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Projections 2026-27 $'000	2027-28 $'000	2028-29 $'000
		Inflows (Outflows)	**Inflows (Outflows)**	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES						
Rates and charges		150,059	153,411	163,842	163,773	167,236
User fees		13,214	13,576	13,827	14,367	14,954
Statutory fees and fines		4,650	5,415	5,506	5,700	5,839
Grants - operating		27,036	19,651	20,064	20,362	20,689
Grants - capital		9,211	6,468	2,918	3,006	3,021
Contributions - monetary		7,294	5,000	6,000	6,000	6,500
Interest received		2,000	950	950	950	950
Other receipts		1,625	853	874	900	924
Net movement in trust deposits		64	66	67	69	71
Employee costs		(79,407)	(76,884)	(78,163)	(79,405)	(81,110)
Materials and services		(82,871)	(77,237)	(83,026)	(79,681)	(80,934)
Contributions and donations		(6,049)	(6,138)	(6,188)	(6,343)	(6,501)
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments		(12)	(31)	(32)	(39)	(29)
Other payments		(708)	(765)	(792)	(799)	(822)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	4.4.1	**46,106**	**44,335**	**45,847**	**48,860**	**50,788**
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES						
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		11,283	11,256	2,167	2,667	2,667
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		(57,051)	(52,645)	(47,740)	(47,044)	(37,419)
Payments for investments		0	0	0	0	0
Proceeds from sale of investments		10,000	0	0	0	0
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES	4.4.2	**(35,768)**	**(41,389)**	**(45,573)**	**(44,377)**	**(34,752)**
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES						
Finance costs		(3,755)	(3,625)	(3,633)	(3,770)	(3,797)
Proceeds from borrowings		10,000	6,000	11,500	13,400	10,000
Repayment of borrowings		(8,865)	(9,680)	(10,785)	(12,238)	(13,705)
Interest paid - lease liability		(343)	(419)	(402)	(369)	(342)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(1,059)	(1,031)	(1,073)	(1,126)	(1,185)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) FINANCING ACTIVITIES	4.4.3	**(4,022)**	**(8,755)**	**(4,393)**	**(4,103)**	**(9,029)**
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH HELD		**6,316**	**(5,809)**	**(4,119)**	**380**	**7,007**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		36,616	42,932	37,123	33,004	33,384
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF YEAR		**42,932**	**37,123**	**33,004**	**33,384**	**40,391**

3.5 Statement of Capital Works

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	Notes	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Projections 2026-27 $'000	2027-28 $'000	2028-29 $'000
PROPERTY						
Land and Buildings		12,397	16,322	14,016	13,490	5,462
TOTAL PROPERTY		**12,397**	**16,322**	**14,016**	**13,490**	**5,462**
PLANT AND EQUIPMENT						
Plant, machinery and equipment		3,145	1,949	2,455	2,132	2,139
Computers and telecommunications		5,531	5,341	2,969	4,470	2,350
Artworks		325	210	498	250	253
TOTAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		**9,001**	**7,500**	**5,922**	**6,852**	**4,742**
INFRASTRUCTURE						
Roads		7,323	9,307	9,673	10,202	9,946
Bridges		993	973	996	944	962
Footpaths and cycleways		5,813	5,735	5,980	5,615	5,289
Drainage		6,893	4,868	4,893	4,750	4,344
Recreational, leisure and community facilities		15,595	10,721	8,339	7,298	7,266
Off street car parks		2,659	1,616	1,270	1,487	1,648
Other infrastructure		4,315	803	628	454	478
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE		**43,591**	**34,023**	**31,779**	**30,750**	**29,933**
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE	4.5.1	**64,989**	**57,845**	**51,717**	**51,092**	**40,137**
REPRESENTED BY						
Asset renewal		40,114	39,318	36,011	37,432	34,786
Asset upgrade		19,240	17,270	12,147	11,930	4,374
Asset new		5,132	1,227	3,559	1,730	977
Asset expansion		503	30	0	0	0
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE	4.5.1	**64,989**	**57,845**	**51,717**	**51,092**	**40,137**
CAPITAL WORKS FUNDING SOURCE						
EXTERNAL						
Loan proceeds		10,000	6,000	11,500	13,400	10,000
Grants - capital		6,670	10,383	2,918	3,006	3,021
Contributions - capital		1,544	0	0	0	0
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING		**18,214**	**16,383**	**14,418**	**16,406**	**13,021**
INTERNAL						
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets		14,217	3,656	2,167	2,667	2,667
Movement in reserve funds		10,733	10,769	6,777	6,784	7,292
Rate funding		21,825	27,037	28,355	25,235	17,157
TOTAL INTERNAL FUNDING		**46,775**	**41,462**	**37,299**	**34,686**	**27,116**
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS FUNDING SOURCES	4.5.1	**64,989**	**57,845**	**51,717**	**51,092**	**40,137**
LESS OPERATING PROJECTS EXPENDITURE						
Operating Projects Expenditure		7,938	5,200	3,977	4,048	2,718
NET CAPITAL WORKS (CAPITALISED EXPENDITURE EXCLUDING OPERATING PROJECTS EXPENDITURE)		**57,051**	**52,645**	**47,740**	**47,044**	**37,419**

3.6 Statement of Human Resources

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Projections 2026-27 $'000	2027-28 $'000	2028-29 $'000
STAFF EXPENDITURE					
Employee costs - operating	79,965	77,377	78,669	79,923	81,641
Employee costs - capital	7,412	6,691	6,442	6,360	6,454
TOTAL STAFF EXPENDITURE	**87,377**	**84,068**	**85,111**	**86,283**	**88,095**

	Forecast 2024-25 FTE	Budget 2025-26 FTE	Projections 2026-27 FTE	2027-28 FTE	2028-29 FTE
STAFF NUMBERS					
Full time equivalent (FTE) employees	672.94	650.05	641.85	635.43	632.23
TOTAL STAFF NUMBERS	**672.94**	**650.05**	**641.85**	**635.43**	**632.23**

A summary of human resources expenditure categorised according to the organisational structure of Council is included below:

	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Comprises Permanent Full Time $'000	Part Time $'000	Casual $'000	Temporary $'000
DEPARTMENT					
CEO	4,591	3,740	851	0	0
City Liveability	16,618	12,611	3,344	237	426
Connected Communities	22,674	13,368	8,317	180	809
Customer and Performance	16,015	12,859	2,744	12	400
Infrastructure	17,479	16,772	223	11	473
TOTAL PERMANENT STAFF EXPENDITURE	**77,377**	**59,350**	**15,479**	**440**	**2,108**
Capitalised labour costs	6,691				
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**84,068**				

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff in relation to the above expenditure is included below:

	Budget 2025-26 FTE	Comprises Permanent Full Time FTE	Part Time FTE	Casual FTE	Temporary FTE
DEPARTMENT					
CEO	27.78	21.00	6.78	0.00	0.00
City Liveability	126.74	88.00	34.50	2.04	2.20
Connected Communities	189.45	118.00	69.99	1.46	0.00
Customer and Performance	132.97	109.00	21.86	0.11	2.00
Infrastructure	173.11	168.00	2.27	0.11	2.73
TOTAL PERMANENT STAFF FTE	**650.05**	**504.00**	**135.40**	**3.72**	**6.93**

3.7 Summary of Planned Human Resources Expenditure

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	2025-26 $'000	2026-27 $'000	2027-28 $'000	2028-29 $'000
CEO				
Permanent - Full Time	3,740	3,828	3,926	4,024
Female	2,939	3,008	3,085	3,162
Male	801	820	841	862
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	851	871	893	916
Female	851	871	893	916
Male	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total CEO	**4,591**	**4,699**	**4,819**	**4,940**
City Liveability				
Permanent - Full Time	12,611	12,743	13,063	13,390
Female	6,135	6,199	6,355	6,514
Male	6,476	6,544	6,708	6,876
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	3,344	3,379	3,464	3,550
Female	2,594	2,621	2,686	2,753
Male	732	740	759	778
Self-described gender	18	18	19	19
Total City Liveability	**15,955**	**16,122**	**16,527**	**16,940**
Connected Communities				
Permanent - Full Time	13,368	13,674	13,912	14,258
Female	11,371	11,631	11,833	12,128
Male	1,997	2,043	2,079	2,130
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	8,317	8,508	8,655	8,870
Female	7,661	7,837	7,972	8,170
Male	656	671	683	700
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Connected Communities	**21,685**	**22,182**	**22,567**	**23,128**
Customer and Performance				
Permanent - Full Time	12,859	12,949	13,214	13,375
Female	8,341	8,399	8,571	8,675
Male	4,518	4,550	4,643	4,700
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	2,744	2,764	2,822	2,854
Female	2,364	2,381	2,430	2,459
Male	380	383	392	395
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Customer and Performance	**15,603**	**15,713**	**16,036**	**16,229**
Infrastructure				
Permanent - Full Time	16,772	17,136	17,118	17,481
Female	3,925	4,010	4,006	4,091
Male	12,847	13,126	13,112	13,390
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	223	227	227	232
Female	182	185	185	189
Male	41	42	42	43
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Infrastructure	**16,995**	**17,363**	**17,345**	**17,713**
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	2,548	2,590	2,629	2,691
Capitalised labour costs	6,691	6,442	6,360	6,454
Total staff expenditure	**84,068**	**85,111**	**86,283**	**88,095**

	2025-26 FTE	2026-27 FTE	2027-28 FTE	2028-29 FTE
CEO				
Permanent - Full Time	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00
Female	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00
Male	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78
Female	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78
Male	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total CEO	**27.78**	**27.78**	**27.78**	**27.78**
City Liveability				
Permanent - Full Time	88.00	87.00	87.00	87.00
Female	43.00	42.00	42.00	42.00
Male	45.00	45.00	45.00	45.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	34.50	33.30	33.30	33.30
Female	26.75	26.15	26.15	26.15
Male	7.56	6.96	6.96	6.96
Self-described gender	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19
Total City Liveability	**122.50**	**120.30**	**120.30**	**120.30**
Connected Communities				
Permanent - Full Time	118.00	117.00	117.00	117.00
Female	100.00	99.00	99.00	99.00
Male	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	69.99	69.99	68.57	68.57
Female	64.47	64.47	63.05	63.05
Male	5.52	5.52	5.52	5.52
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Connected Communities	**187.99**	**186.99**	**185.57**	**185.57**
Customer and Performance				
Permanent - Full Time	109.00	105.00	103.00	101.00
Female	71.00	68.00	67.00	67.00
Male	38.00	37.00	36.00	34.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	21.86	21.86	21.86	21.06
Female	18.83	18.83	18.83	18.03
Male	3.03	3.03	3.03	3.03
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Customer and Performance	**130.86**	**126.86**	**124.86**	**122.06**
Infrastructure				
Permanent - Full Time	168.00	167.00	164.00	164.00
Female	39.00	39.00	36.00	36.00
Male	129.00	128.00	128.00	128.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	2.27	2.27	2.27	1.87
Female	1.85	1.85	1.85	1.45
Male	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Infrastructure	**170.27**	**169.27**	**166.27**	**165.87**
Casuals and temporary staff	10.65	10.65	10.65	10.65
Capitalised labour	0	0	0	0
Total staff numbers	**650.05**	**641.85**	**635.43**	**632.23**

4. Notes on the Financial Statements

This section presents detailed information on material components of the financial statements. Council needs to assess which components are material, considering the dollar amounts and nature of these components.

4.1 Comprehensive Income Statement

4.1.1 Rates and charges

Rates and charges are required by the Act and the Regulations to be disclosed in Council's budget.

As per the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to have a Revenue and Rating Plan which is a four year plan for how Council will generate income to deliver the Council Plan, program and services and capital works commitments over a four-year period.

In developing the Budget, rates and charges were identified as an important source of revenue. Planning for future rate increases has therefore been an important component of the financial planning process. The Fair Go Rates System (FGRS) sets out the maximum amount councils may increase rates in a year. For 2025-26 the FGRS cap has been set at 3.00%. The cap applies to both general rates and municipal charges and is calculated on the basis of council's average rates and charges.

The level of required rates and charges has been considered in this context, with reference to Council's other sources of income and the planned expenditure on services and works to be undertaken for the community.

To achieve these objectives while maintaining service levels and a strong capital expenditure program, the average general rate will increase by 3.00% in line with the rate cap.

Council's Residential Garbage Charge for the 2025-26 financial year has been set at an amount to ensure only full cost recovery inclusive of the State Government Landfill Levy. Council applies an additional rebate of $100.00 for eligible pensioners. This is budgeted to cost $1,150,000 million in 2025-26.

This will bring the total rates and charges for 2025-26 to $153.826 million, including the residential garbage charge and the 120-litre bin surcharge, but excluding all other optional waste services and factoring in the reduction in rates revenue due to the pensioner rate rebate.

If you're having trouble paying your rates, please contact Council on 03 9298 8000 to discuss a payment arrangement that works for your circumstances.

4.1.1 (a) The reconciliation of the total rates and charges to the Comprehensive Income Statement is as follows:

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
General rates *	122,068	126,710	4,642	3.8%
Rate rebates	(1,144)	(1,175)	(31)	2.7%
Residential garbage charge	26,082	25,344	(738)	(2.8%)
Service rates and charges	2,004	1,843	(161)	(8.0%)
Supplementary rates and rate adjustments	652	500	(152)	(23.3%)
Interest on rates and charges	820	604	(216)	(26.3%)
Total rates and charges	**150,482**	**153,826**	**3,344**	**2.2%**

* General rates are subject to the rate cap established under the FGRS

4.1.1 (b) The rate in the dollar to be levied as general rates under section 158 of the Act for each type or class of land compared with the previous financial year

Type or Class of Land	Budget 2024-25 cents/$CIV	Budget 2025-26 cents/$CIV	Change %
Differential rate for Vacant Land	0.36626	0.37851	3.3%
Differential rate for Derelict Land	0.43951	0.45421	3.3%
Differential rate for Retirement Village Land properties	0.10988	0.11355	3.3%
Differential rate for Commercial Land properties	0.36626	0.37851	3.3%
Differential rate for Industrial Land properties	0.38824	0.40122	3.3%
Differential rate for Residential Land properties	0.14650	0.15140	3.3%
Differential rate for Recreational Land properties	0.14650	0.15140	3.3%

4.1.1 (c) The estimated total amount to be raised by general rates in relation to each type or class of land, and the estimated total amount to be raised by general rates, compared with the previous financial year

Type or Class of Land	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Rates				
Vacant Land	1,582	1,475	(107)	(6.8%)
Derelict Land	41	18	(23)	(56.6%)
Retirement Village Land	1,087	1,213	126	11.6%
Commercial Land	15,017	15,401	384	2.6%
Industrial Land	23,965	25,303	1,338	5.6%
Residential Land	80,974	83,743	2,769	3.4%
Recreational Land	54	58	4	7.1%
Total amount to be raised by general rates	**122,720**	**127,210**	**4,490**	**3.7%**

Total rates to be raised in the 2025-26 Budget includes Supplementary Rates of $500,000.

4.1.1 (d) The number of assessments in relation to each type or class of land, and the total number of assessments, compared with the previous financial year

Type or Class of Land	Budget 2024-25 Number	Budget 2025-26 Number	Change Number	Change %
Vacant Land	360	367	7	1.9%
Derelict Land	5	4	(1)	(20.0%)
Retirement Village Land	1,890	1,887	(3)	(0.2%)
Commercial Land	2,529	2,530	1	0.0%
Industrial Land	3,769	3,777	8	0.2%
Residential Land	61,018	61,604	586	1.0%
Recreational Land	7	7	0	0.0%
Total number of assessments	**69,578**	**70,176**	**598**	**0.9%**

4.1.1 (e) The basis of valuation to be used is the Capital Improved Value (CIV).

4.1.1 (f) The estimated total value of each type or class of land, and the estimated total value of land, compared with the previous financial year

Type or Class of Land	Budget 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Vacant Land	386,168	389,616	3,448	0.9%
Derelict Land	5,325	3,915	(1,410)	(26.5%)
Retirement Village Land	990,485	1,068,505	78,020	7.9%
Commercial Land	4,076,946	4,068,901	(8,045)	(0.2%)
Industrial Land	6,127,920	6,306,430	178,510	2.9%
Residential Land	55,129,590	54,981,460	(148,130)	(0.3%)
Recreational Land	36,950	38,200	1,250	3.4%
Total value of land	**66,753,384**	**66,857,027**	**103,643**	**0.2%**

4.1.1 (g) The rate or unit amount to be levied for each type of service rate or charge under Section 162 of the Act compared with the previous financial year

Type of Charge	Per Rateable Property 2024-25 $	Per Rateable Property 2025-26 $	Change $	Change %
Residential Garbage Charge - Standard Service (80 Litre Waste Bin, 240 Litre Recycle Bin, 240 Litre FOGO Bin, Hard Waste, Bundled Green Waste)	428.20	415.15	(13.05)	(3.0%)
Residential Garbage Charge - Reduced Service (80 Litre Waste Bin, 240 Litre Recycle Bin, Hard Waste, Bundled Green Waste) [1]	285.90	265.60	(20.30)	(7.1%)
Residential Garbage Charge - Additional Bin Exempt (80 Litre and 120 Litre Waste Bin, 240 Litre Recycle Bin, 240 Litre FOGO Bin, Hard Waste, Bundled Green Waste) [2]	428.20	415.15	(13.05)	(3.0%)
Garbage Surcharge – 120 Litre Bin	53.10	48.50	(4.60)	(8.7%)
Additional Household Bins - 120 Litre Bin	137.50	107.30	(30.20)	(22.0%)
Additional Food and Organics Bin (Previously Green Waste Bin)	142.30	149.55	7.25	5.1%
Additional Recycle Bin	72.65	62.00	(10.65)	(14.7%)
Additional Recycle Bin - Industrial / Commercial	203.90	197.95	(5.95)	(2.9%)
Optional Industrial / Commercial Garbage, Daily Service (Waste and Weekly Recycle)	2,457.55	2,763.70	306.15	12.5%
Optional Industrial / Commercial Garbage, Weekly Service (Waste and Weekly Recycle)	669.15	717.05	47.90	7.2%
Optional Industrial / Commercial Garbage, Daily Service (Waste Only)	2,253.65	2,565.70	312.05	13.8%
Optional Industrial / Commercial Garbage, Weekly Service (Waste Only)	465.25	519.05	53.80	11.6%
Waste Management and Recycling for Non Rateable Properties – Daily Service (240 Litre Bin)	2,325.80	2,473.45	147.65	6.3%
Waste Management and Recycling for Non Rateable Properties – Fortnightly Service (240 Litre Bin)	495.05	370.25	(124.80)	(25.2%)
Waste Management and Recycling for Non Rateable Properties – Fortnightly Service (120 Litre Bin)	389.00	252.15	(136.85)	(35.2%)
Dorset Square				
– Annual Waste Charge, office based premises	522.40	515.60	(6.80)	(1.3%)
– Annual Waste Charge, retail based premises	1,348.60	1,341.75	(6.85)	(0.5%)
– Annual Waste Charge, food based premises less than 200 square metres floor area.	3,834.15	3,827.30	(6.85)	(0.2%)
– Annual Waste Charge, food based premises greater than 200 square metres floor area.	8,801.70	8,794.85	(6.85)	(0.1%)
Additional Hard Waste Service	125.00	130.00	5.00	4.0%

Notes:

[1] To opt out of the FOGO service, you must show that you can compost all organic material at home, with no organic waste going to your household rubbish bin or collected in the bundled branch service.

[2] You can apply for a free extra 120 litre household rubbish bin if your household has extra waste needs. This includes households with extra medical waste needs, or two or more children in disposable nappies.

4.1.1 (h) The estimated total amount to be raised by each type of service rate or charge, and the estimated total amount to be raised by service rates and charges, compared with the previous financial year

Type of Charge	Forecast 2024-25 $	Budget 2025-26 $	Change $	Change %
Residential Garbage Charge	26,081,974	25,344,492	(737,482)	(2.8%)
Garbage Surcharge – 120 Litre Bin	2,003,729	1,843,437	(160,292)	(8.0%)
Additional Household Bins	291,500	227,369	(64,131)	(22.0%)
Optional Household Green Waste Bin	148,003	149,700	1,697	1.1%
Additional Recycle Bin	94,818	75,888	(18,930)	(20.0%)
Optional Industrial / Commercial Garbage Service	2,013,402	1,993,746	(19,656)	(1.0%)
Non Rateable Properties	151,842	64,892	(86,950)	(57.3%)
Dorset Square:				
Office based premises	7,313	7,734	421	5.8%
Retail based premises	17,532	16,101	(1,431)	(8.2%)
Food based premises less than 200 square metres floor area	15,337	15,309	(28)	(0.2%)
Food based premises greater than 200 square metres floor area	17,603	17,590	(13)	(0.1%)
Total	**30,843,053**	**29,756,258**	**(1,086,795)**	**(3.5%)**

4.1.1 (i) The estimated total amount to be raised by all rates and charges compared with the previous financial year

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Total General Rates to be Raised - Refer item 4.1.1(c)	122,720	127,210	4,490	3.7%
Total Service Charges and Service Rates to be Raised - Refer item 4.1.1(h)	30,843	29,756	(1,087)	(3.5%)
Total rates and charges	**153,563**	**156,967**	**3,404**	**2.2%**

4.1.1 (j) Fair Go Rates System Compliance

Knox City Council is fully compliant with the State Government's Fair Go Rates System (FGRS). The table below details the budget assumptions consistent with the requirements of the Fair Go Rates System.

	2024-25	2025-26
Total Rates	$ 118,803,324	$ 123,019,876
Number of Rateable Properties	69,578	70,176
Base Average Rate	$ 1,707.48	$ 1,753.02
Maximum Rate Increase (set by the State Government)	**2.75%**	**3.00%**
Capped Average Rate	$ 1,754.44	$ 1,805.61
Maximum General Rates and Municipal Charges Revenue	$ 122,070,415	$ 126,710,472
Budgeted General Rates and Municipal Charges Revenue	$ 122,070,415	$ 126,710,472
Budgeted Supplementary Rates	$ 500,000	$ 500,000
Budgeted Total Rates and Municipal Charges Revenue	$ 122,570,415	$ 127,210,472

4.1.1 (k) Any significant changes that may affect the estimated amounts to be raised by rates and charges

There are no known significant changes which may affect the estimated amounts to be raised by rates and charges. However, the total amount to be raised by rates and charges may be affected by:

- The making of supplementary valuations (2025-26: estimated $500,000 and 2024-25: $652,466)
- The variation of returned levels of value (e.g. valuation appeals)
- Changes of use of land such that rateable land becomes non-rateable land and vice versa
- Changes of use of land such that residential land becomes business land and vice versa.

4.1.1 (l) Differential rates

The rate and amount of rates payable in relation to land in each category of differential are:

- A general rate of 0.37851% (0.37851 cents in the dollar of capital improved value) for all rateable Vacant Land; and
- A general rate of 0.45421% (0.45421 cents in the dollar of capital improved value) for all rateable Derelict Land; and
- A general rate of 0.11355% (0.11355 cents in the dollar of capital improved value) for all rateable Retirement Village Land; and
- A general rate of 0.15140% (0.15140 cents in the dollar of capital improved value) for all rateable Recreational Land; and
- A general rate of 0.40122% for (0.40122 cents in the dollar of capital improved value) rateable Industrial Land; and
- A general rate of 0.37851% (0.37851 cents in the dollar of capital improved value) for all rateable Commercial Land; and
- A general rate of 0.15140% (0.15140 cents in the dollar of capital improved value) for all rateable Residential Land.

Each differential rate will be determined by multiplying the Capital Improved Value of each rateable land (categorised by the characteristics described below) by the relevant percentages indicated above.

Council believes each differential rate will contribute to the equitable and efficient carrying out of Council functions. Details of the objectives of each differential rate, the types of classes of land which are subject to each differential rate and the uses of each differential rate are set out below.

Vacant Land

Definition/Characteristics:

Any land on which there is no building.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Encouragement of development/and or improvement of land; and
2. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
3. Provision of community services; and
4. Provision of general support services; and
5. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake it's strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Derelict Land

Definition/Characteristics:

Any land that contains a building that is ordinarily adapted for occupation which is abandoned, unoccupied and in a very poor condition resulting from both disuse and neglect.

Land may become classified as derelict after previously being designated as Residential land, Vacant land, Retirement Village land, Industrial land, Commercial land, or Cultural and Recreational land.

An owner or occupier of land must not cause or allow that land to be kept in a manner which is or is likely to constitute a danger to health or property.

An owner or occupier of land must not cause or allow that land to be kept in a manner which is unsightly or detrimental to the general amenity of the neighbourhood in which it is located.

An owner or occupier of land must not cause or allow that land to be used in a manner so as to be detrimental to the amenity of the immediate area.

Dilapidated buildings

An owner or occupier of land:

a) must not allow a building located on that private land to:
    i. become dilapidated; or
    ii. become dilapidated further; and
b) must not fail to maintain any building on that private land in a state of good repair.

The owner or occupier of land on which there is a vacant dilapidated building must take all reasonable steps to secure the land from authorised access.

For the purposes of sub-clause (a), a building is dilapidated if it is in a state of disrepair or has deteriorated or fallen into a state of partial ruin as a result of age, neglect, poor maintenance or misuse.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Promote the property be maintained in a manner that does not constitute a danger to health or property or is detrimental to the general amenity of the neighborhood or immediate area.
2. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
3. Provision of community services; and
4. Provision of general support services; and
5. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake it's strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Retirement Village Land

Definitions/Characteristics:

Any land which is used primarily for the purposes of a retirement village.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Recognition of expenditures made by Council on behalf of the retirement village sector.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:

All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Residential Land

Definitions/Characteristics:

Any land which is not Vacant Land or Derelict Land, Retirement Village Land, Industrial Land, Commercial Land, or Cultural and Recreational Land.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake it's strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:

All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Commercial Land

Definitions/Characteristics:

Commercial Land is any land that does not have the characteristics of Residential, Retirement Village, Industrial, Vacant, Derelict or Cultural and Recreational Land and which is used, designed or adapted to be used primarily for the sale of goods or services or other commercial purposes.

The commercial businesses benefit from ongoing investment by Council in services and infrastructure. Council also notes the tax deductibility of Council rates for commercial properties which is not available to the residential sector, and the income generating capability of commercial based properties.

The Commercial differential rate is applied to recognise the additional demands placed on public infrastructure due to commerce attracting non-residents to the area, the higher demands of commercial properties on the natural environment.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Enhancement of the economic viability of the commercial and industrial sector through targeted programs and projects; and
6. Encouragement and advocacy of employment opportunities; and
7. Promotion of economic development; and
8. Analysis, maintenance and construction of public drainage infrastructure; and
9. Infrastructure investment and promotional activity is complementary to the achievement of industrial and commercial objectives.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:

All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Industrial Land

Definitions/Characteristics:

Industrial Land is any land that does not have the characteristics of Residential, Retirement Village, Commercial, Vacant, Derelict or Cultural and Recreational Land and which is used, designed or adapted to be used primarily for the sale of goods or services or other industrial purposes.

The industrial businesses benefit from ongoing investment by Council in services and infrastructure. Council also notes the tax deductibility of Council rates for industrial properties which is not available to the residential sector, and the income generating capability of commercial based properties.

The Industrial differential rate is applied to recognise the additional demands placed on public infrastructure due to commerce attracting non-residents to the area, the higher demands of commercial properties on the natural environment.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and

5. Enhancement of the economic viability of the commercial and industrial sector through targeted programs and projects; and
6. Encouragement and advocacy of employment opportunities; and
7. Promotion of economic development; and
8. Analysis, maintenance and construction of public drainage infrastructure; and
9. Infrastructure investment and promotional activity is complementary to the achievement of industrial and commercial objectives.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:

All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Recreational Land

Definitions/Characteristics:

Any land upon which sporting, recreational or cultural activities are conducted, including buildings which may be ancillary to such activities, in accordance with the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963*.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Recognition of expenditures made by Council in cultural and recreational sporting programs and infrastructure.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

4.1.2 User fees

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Registration and other permits	2,715	2,790	75	2.8%
Waste management services	3,170	2,727	(443)	(14.0%)
Child care/children's programs	2,263	2,690	427	18.9%
Leisure centre and recreation	2,245	2,283	38	1.7%
Building services	766	875	109	14.2%
Aged and health services	518	568	50	9.7%
Other fees and charges	1,633	1,744	111	6.8%
Total user fees	**13,310**	**13,677**	**367**	**2.8%**

User fees relate mainly to the recovery of service delivery costs through the charging of fees to users of Council's services. The principal sources of fee income arise from services such as child care, garbage charges for optional services, and animal registration fees. User fees are budgeted to increase by 2.8% on the current year forecast.

The increase in childcare fees is based on an anticipated greater utilisation at the Early Years Hubs, while the decrease in user fees for waste management services is related to the decrease in income expected for optional waste services.

4.1.3 Statutory fees and fines

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Permits	1,744	2,566	822	47.1%
Infringements and costs	2,229	2,231	2	0.1%
Town planning fees	596	530	(66)	(11.1%)
Land information certificates	121	130	9	7.4%
Other statutory fees and fines	1	1	0	0.0%
Total statutory fees and fines	**4,691**	**5,458**	**767**	**16.4%**

Statutory fees and fines relate mainly to fees and fines levied in accordance with legislation and include statutory planning fees and parking fines. Increases in statutory fees and fines are made in accordance with legislative requirements. Statutory fees and fines are budgeted to increase by 16.4% on the current year forecast due to an expected increase in building and development services permits (partially offset by a decrease in town planning fees).

A detailed listing of fees and charges is included as Appendix A.

4.1.4 Grants

Grants are required by the Act and the Regulations to be disclosed in Council's annual budget.

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Grants were received in respect of the following:				
Summary of grants				
Commonwealth funded grants	23,286	24,192	906	3.9%
State funded grants	11,094	5,842	(5,252)	(47.3%)
Total grants received	**34,380**	**30,034**	**(4,346)**	**(12.6%)**
(a) Operating grants				
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government				
Victoria Grants Commission	11,567	7,799	(3,768)	(32.6%)
Family and children - early years hubs	4,375	5,464	1,089	24.9%
General home care	1,114	1,105	(9)	(0.8%)
Aged care	101	104	3	3.0%
Recurrent - State Government				
Family and children - maternal and child health	1,964	1,833	(131)	(6.7%)
Family and children - early years hubs	856	1,002	146	17.1%
School crossing supervisors	815	833	18	2.2%
Family and children - kindergarten	4,126	391	(3,735)	(90.5%)
Family and children - youth services	394	277	(117)	(29.7%)
Community health	153	120	(33)	(21.6%)
Community safety	57	45	(12)	(21.1%)
Aged care	16	7	(9)	(56.3%)
Other	47	49	2	4.3%
Arts and cultural	23	0	(23)	(100.0%)
Total recurrent operating grants	**25,608**	**19,029**	**(6,579)**	**(25.7%)**
Non-recurrent - State Government				
Family and children - kindergarten	1,819	530	(1,289)	(70.9%)
Family and children - early years hubs	60	82	22	36.7%
Community safety	42	10	(32)	(76.2%)
Economic development	145	0	(145)	(100.0%)
Aged care	3	0	(3)	(100.0%)
Other	33	0	(33)	(100.0%)
Total non-recurrent operating grants	**2,102**	**622**	**(1,480)**	**(70.4%)**
Total operating grants	**27,710**	**19,651**	**(8,059)**	**(29.1%)**

Operating grants include all monies received from State and Federal Government sources which assists Council in funding the delivery of services to ratepayers. Overall, the level of operating grants is projected to decrease by 29.1% or $8.059 million compared to the 2024-25 forecast.

The Victoria Grants Commission 2024-25 funding was all received in the 2024-25 financial year, while it is forecast that 50% of the 2025-26 funding will be received in advance. The reduction in kindergarten grant income is due to most kindergarten services from January 2025 now being delivered in Council facilities through not-for-profit providers.

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
(b) Capital grants				
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government				
Victoria Grants Commission - local roads	2,243	1,510	(733)	(32.7%)
Roads to recovery	953	1,173	220	23.1%
Total recurrent capital grants	**3,196**	**2,683**	**(513)**	**(16.1%)**
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government				
Buildings	1,439	7,037	5,598	389.0%
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	1,194	0	(1,194)	(100.0%)
Footpaths and cycleways	300	0	(300)	(100.0%)
Non-recurrent - State Government				
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	302	663	361	119.5%
Drainage	239	0	(239)	(100.0%)
Total non-recurrent capital grants	**3,474**	**7,700**	**4,226**	**121.6%**
Total capital grants	**6,670**	**10,383**	**3,713**	**55.7%**
Total grants	**34,380**	**30,034**	**(4,346)**	**(12.6%)**

Capital grants include all monies received from State and Federal Government and community sources which assists Council in funding the capital works program. Overall the level of capital grants is projected to increase by 55.7% or $3.713 million compared to the 2024-25 forecast. The 2024-25 forecast includes $1.374 million received in the previous financial year but treated as unearned income at year-end, while it is projected that capital grants totalling $3.915 million will be received in 2024-25 but recognised as income in 2025-26. Capital grants are not budgeted for unless an agreement or commitment is in place at the time of preparation of the budget.

4.1.5 Contributions

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Monetary	7,294	5,000	(2,294)	(31.5%)
Non-monetary	2,000	2,000	0	0.0%
Total contributions	**9,294**	**7,000**	**(2,294)**	**(24.7%)**

Monetary contributions include charges paid by developers in regard to recreational lands, drainage and car parking in accordance with planning permits issued for property development. Monetary contributions are budgeted to decrease by 31.5% on the current year forecast. The 2024-25 forecast includes $1.544 million for non-recurring capital project contributions.

Non-monetary contributions are assets which transfer to Council from property developers at the completion of subdivision work. The assets generally consist of land used for public open space or infrastructure assets. Council recognises these new assets at ‘fair value’. No cash is transferred but the fair value of the assets is recorded as revenue in the year of the transfer.

4.1.6 Other income

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Interest	2,000	950	(1,050)	(52.5%)
Rent	728	633	(95)	(13.0%)
Reimbursements	666	127	(539)	(80.9%)
Other	231	93	(138)	(59.7%)
Total other income	**3,625**	**1,803**	**(1,822)**	**(50.3%)**

Other income relates to a range of items such as interest, rental income, cost recovery and other miscellaneous income items. Interest income is budgeted to reduce from the 2024-25 forecast due to lower cash balances and a reduction in interest rates.

4.1.7 Employee costs

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Wages and salaries	58,217	55,889	(2,328)	(4.0%)
Annual leave and long service leave	8,933	8,904	(29)	(0.3%)
Superannuation	7,662	7,632	(30)	(0.4%)
WorkCover	2,393	3,210	817	34.1%
Agency staff	2,447	1,429	(1,018)	(41.6%)
Fringe benefits tax	313	313	0	0.0%
Total employee costs	**79,965**	**77,377**	**(2,588)**	**(3.2%)**

Employee costs include all labour related expenditure such as wages and salaries, and on-costs including allowances, leave entitlements, employer superannuation and WorkCover. Employee costs are budgeted to decrease by 3.2% on the current year forecast. A primary driver of the decreased budget to forecast relates to the majority of kindergarten services from January 2025 being delivered by not-for-profit organisations.

In 2025-26 an increase has been allowed to cover the estimated Enterprise Agreement (EA) increment, together with an allowance for other periodic increments in employee banding structure provided for in Awards, and the increase in the superannuation guarantee rate from 11.50% to 12.00%.

4.1.8 Materials and services

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Contract payments				
Waste Management	27,776	27,308	(468)	(1.7%)
Operations Maintenance	9,534	9,532	(2)	(0.0%)
Operating Projects Expenditure	7,938	5,200	(2,738)	(34.5%)
Corporate Services	4,267	2,245	(2,022)	(47.4%)
Seniors	1,308	1,365	57	4.4%
People & Culture	482	492	10	2.1%
Community Law	559	550	(9)	(1.6%)
Arts & Cultural Services	579	516	(63)	(10.9%)
Other	2,546	1,758	(788)	(31.0%)
Administration costs	7,730	7,988	258	3.3%
Utilities	3,941	3,794	(147)	(3.7%)
Consumable materials and equipment	3,442	3,565	123	3.6%
Information technology	3,424	3,775	351	10.3%
Building maintenance	2,321	2,074	(247)	(10.6%)
Insurance	2,521	2,706	185	7.3%
Consultants	2,406	2,242	(164)	(6.8%)
Finance and legal costs	921	1,041	120	13.0%
General maintenance	1,020	949	(71)	(7.0%)
Total materials and services	**82,715**	**77,100**	**(5,615)**	**(6.8%)**

Materials and services include payments for the provision of services by external providers, materials and utility costs including electricity, water, gas and telephones. Materials and services are expected to decrease by 6.8% on the current year forecast.

Contract payments includes capital expenditure which is operational in nature. This is budgeted to decrease by $2.738 million on the current year forecast due to the capital projects being undertaken (including capital works to be carried forward to 2025-26).

Corporate services expenditure is budgeted to decrease by 47.4% due to the costs involved in holding the Councillor elections during the 2024-25 financial year (elections are held every four years).

4.1.9 Contributions and donations

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Contribution to Your Library Limited	4,511	4,563	52	1.2%
Community support payments	1,538	1,575	37	2.4%
Total contributions and donations	**6,049**	**6,138**	**89**	**1.5%**

Contributions and donations relate predominately to Council's share of costs associated with Your Library Limited and funds for the Community Grants Scheme.

4.1.10 Depreciation

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Property	5,735	5,699	(36)	(0.6%)
Plant and equipment	1,583	1,598	15	0.9%
Infrastructure	17,707	18,032	325	1.8%
Total depreciation	**25,025**	**25,329**	**304**	**1.2%**

Depreciation is an accounting measure which attempts to allocate the value of an asset over its useful life for Council's property, plant and equipment including infrastructure assets such as roads and drains. Depreciation is budgeted to increase by 1.2% on the current year forecast.

Refer to section 4.5 'Capital works program' for a more detailed analysis of Council's capital works program for the 2025-26 financial year.

4.1.11 Amortisation – Intangible assets

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Intangible assets	903	903	0	0.0%
Total amortisation - intangible assets	**903**	**903**	**0**	**0.0%**

Amortisation is an accounting measure which attempts to allocate the value of an intangible asset over its useful life. Council's intangible assets is software. Amortisation of intangible assets is budgeted to be consistent with the current year forecast.

4.1.12 Depreciation – Right of use assets

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Right of use assets	1,185	1,176	(9)	(0.8%)
Total depreciation - right of use assets	**1,185**	**1,176**	**(9)**	**(0.8%)**

Commencing for the 2019-20 financial year, the implementation of *AASB 16 Leases* requires most operating leases to be recognised on the balance sheet, including the creation of a right of use asset. Similar to intangible assets, right of use assets are amortised over the life of the lease.

4.1.13 Other expenses

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Councillors allowances	482	516	34	7.1%
Auditor's remuneration - internal	155	165	10	6.5%
Auditor's remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	68	84	16	23.5%
Operating lease rentals - short term, low value	15	31	16	106.7%
Total other expenses	**720**	**796**	**76**	**10.6%**

Other expenses relate to a range of unclassified items including Councillor allowances, internal audits and low value lease expenses. Other expenses are budgeted to increase by 10.6% on the current year forecast.

4.2 Balance Sheet

4.2.1 Assets

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash and cash equivalents	42,932	37,123	(5,809)	(13.5%)
Other financial assets	0	0	0	0.0%
Trade and other receivables	21,339	21,898	559	2.6%
Inventories	13	13	0	0.0%
Prepayments	1,374	1,408	34	2.5%
Other assets	2,400	2,460	60	2.5%
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	**68,058**	**62,902**	**(5,156)**	**(7.6%)**
NON CURRENT ASSETS				
Investments in associates	2,806	2,810	4	0.1%
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	2,326,906	2,354,569	27,663	1.2%
Right-of-use assets	4,762	5,987	1,225	25.7%
Intangible assets	2,419	2,419	0	0.0%
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	**2,336,893**	**2,365,785**	**28,892**	**1.2%**
TOTAL ASSETS	**2,404,951**	**2,428,687**	**23,736**	**1.0%**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash held in the bank, petty cash, and the value of investments in term deposits or other highly liquid investments with short maturities of three months or less. Other financial assets include term deposits held with an original maturity of greater than 90 days. These balances are projected to decrease by $5.809 million during 2025-26 mainly to fund the capital works program during the year.

Trade and other receivables are monies owed to Council by ratepayers and others. Short-term debtors are budgeted to increase by 2.6% on the current year forecast.

Prepayments are expenses that Council has paid in advance of service delivery.

Investments in associates is Council's 36.39% ownership interest in Your Library Limited.

Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment is the largest component of Council's worth and represents the value of all the land, buildings, roads, vehicles, equipment etc. which has been built up by Council over many years. The $27.663 million increase in this balance is attributable to the anticipated capitalisation of the budgeted capital works program of $57.845 million and the contribution of non-monetary assets of $2.000 million. This is offset by $26.232 million in depreciation and amortisation expense, $5.200 million in capital expenditure deemed to be operational in nature, and the disposal of $0.750 million of non-current assets through the sale of property, plant and equipment.

The implementation of *AASB 16 Leases* requires most operating leases to be recognised on the balance sheet as a right of use asset. Council's right of use assets primarily relate to property and information technology leases.

4.2.2 Liabilities

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Trade and other payables	13,169	13,465	296	2.2%
Trust funds and deposits	2,624	2,690	66	2.5%
Contract and other liabilities	3,915	0	(3,915)	0.0%
Provisions	19,052	19,518	466	2.4%
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	9,446	10,336	890	9.4%
Lease liabilities	778	899	121	15.6%
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	**48,984**	**46,908**	**(2,076)**	**(4.2%)**
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Provisions	2,896	2,923	27	0.9%
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	74,360	69,790	(4,570)	(6.1%)
Lease liabilities	4,164	5,365	1,201	28.8%
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	**81,420**	**78,078**	**(3,342)**	**(4.1%)**
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**130,404**	**124,986**	**(5,418)**	**(4.2%)**

Trade and other payables are those to whom Council owes money as at 30 June. Trade and other payables are budgeted to increase by 2.2% on the current year forecast.

Trust funds and deposits include refundable deposits, the fire services levy and retention amounts. Trust funds and deposits are budgeted to increase by 2.5% on the current year forecast.

Contract and other liabilities reflect consideration received in advance from customers in respect of operating and capital grants.

Provisions include accrued annual leave and long service leave owing to employees. These employee entitlements are split between those entitlements expected to be paid within twelve months and those expected to be paid beyond the next year.

Interest-bearing loans and borrowings are split between Council borrowings expected to be repaid within the next twelve months and those expected to be repaid beyond the next year. Refer to section 4.2.3 'Borrowings' for further information on Council's interest-bearing loans and borrowings.

The implementation of *AASB 16 Leases* requires most operating leases to be recognised on the balance sheet as a lease liability. The lease liability is split between lease liabilities expected to be repaid within the next twelve months and those expected to be repaid beyond the next year.

4.2.3 Borrowings

The table below shows information on borrowings specifically required by the Regulations.

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Projections 2026-27 $'000	2027-28 $'000	2028-29 $'000
Amount borrowed as at 30 June of the prior year	82,671	83,806	80,126	80,840	82,002
Amount proposed to be borrowed	10,000	6,000	11,500	13,400	10,000
Amount projected to be redeemed (repaid)	(8,865)	(9,680)	(10,786)	(12,238)	(13,704)
Amount of borrowings as at 30 June	**83,806**	**80,126**	**80,840**	**82,002**	**78,298**

Borrowings are generally utilised for the provision of major community assets that will provide community benefit over a number of years. This is considered sound practice and governments at all levels have regularly enacted this approach. The use of borrowings enables the cost of community assets to be spread inter-generationally and smooths the impact of the borrowings on the long-term financial structure for the Council.

4.2.4 Leases by category

As a result of the introduction of *AASB 16 Leases*, right-of-use assets and lease liabilities have been recognised as outlined in the table below.

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000
RIGHT-OF-USE ASSETS		
Property	4,043	5,072
Computers and telecommunications	719	915
Plant and Equipment	0	0
TOTAL RIGHT-OF-USE ASSETS	**4,762**	**5,987**
LEASE LIABILITIES		
Current lease liabilities		
Property	276	413
Computers and telecommunications	501	486
Plant and Equipment	1	0
Total current lease liabilities	**778**	**899**
Non-current lease liabilities		
Property	3,932	4,926
Computers and telecommunications	232	439
Plant and Equipment	0	0
Non-current lease liabilities	**4,164**	**5,365**
TOTAL LEASE LIABILITIES	**4,942**	**6,264**

4.3 Statement of Changes in Equity

4.3.1 Reserves

	Opening Balance $'000's	Transfer to Reserve $'000's	Transfer from Reserve $'000's	Closing Balance $'000's
Statutory Reserves				
Open Space	5,949	5,000	10,000	949
Total Statutory Reserves	**5,949**	**5,000**	**10,000**	**949**
Discretionary Reserves				
Aged Care Reserve	2,722	0	18	2,704
Defined Benefits Reserve	750	0	0	750
HACC Capital Grant	512	0	0	512
Library Reserve	1,505	0	0	1,505
Revegetation Net Gain	218	65	0	283
Scoresby Recreational Reserve	267	35	0	302
Social Housing Reserve	2,559	0	0	2,559
Unexpended Grants Reserve	4,631	4,678	4,631	4,678
Total Discretionary Reserves	**13,164**	**4,778**	**4,649**	**13,293**
Total Reserves	**19,113**	**9,778**	**14,649**	**14,242**

Statutory reserves must be applied for specified statutory purposes in accordance with various legislative and contractual requirements. Whilst these funds can earn interest revenues for Council, they are not available for other purposes.

Discretionary reserves are funds set aside by Council for a specific purpose but are not protected by statute.

The nature and purpose of the reserves are as follows:

Open space reserve

The Open Space Reserve is used to provide funding for future purchases and improvements of open space. Funding is provided from developer's contributions for open space which is initially recognised in the comprehensive income statement and then transferred to the reserve from accumulated surplus to facilitate separate tracking of the total funds received but not yet spent.

Aged care reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to set aside the proceeds from the divestment of the Amaroo Gardens Aged Care Facility by Council on 2 November 2011 for aged services and infrastructure within the Knox municipality.

Defined benefits reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to fund a defined benefits call should a call be made.

HACC capital grant reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to refurbish, upgrade and maintain minor capital within the Home and Community Care funded programs.

Library reserve

The purpose of this reserve is for major capital expenditure for acquiring, refurbishing or redeveloping library premises as standalone premises or as part of community hubs for Knox Library branches.

Revegetation net gain reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to ensure any loss of vegetation through development is re-established in a sustainable location.

Scoresby Recreation reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to invest the income derived from lease of this site into the Scoresby Recreation Reserve.

Social housing reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to provide funding for the planning, development, construction and/or purchase of social housing for the Knox Community.

Unexpended grants reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to quarantine early payment of Victoria Grants Commission General Purpose and Local Roads Federal Grant funding for use in the following year.

4.3.2 Equity

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
EQUITY				
Accumulated surplus	739,133	773,158	34,025	4.6%
Reserves	1,535,414	1,530,543	(4,871)	(0.3%)
TOTAL EQUITY	**2,274,547**	**2,303,701**	**29,154**	**1.3%**

Total equity always equals net assets and is made up of the following components:

- Asset revaluation reserve which represents the difference between the previously recorded value of assets and their current valuations.
- Other reserves that are funds that Council wishes to separately identify as being set aside to meet a specific purpose in the future and to which there is no existing liability. These amounts are transferred from the Accumulated Surplus of the Council to be separately disclosed.
- Accumulated surplus which is the value of all net assets less reserves that have accumulated over time. $29.154 million of the $34.025 million increase in accumulated surplus results directly from the surplus for the year. An amount of $4.871 million (net) is budgeted to be transferred from other reserves to accumulated surplus. This reflects the usage of investment cash reserves to partly fund the capital works program. This is a transfer between equity balances only and does not impact on the total balance of equity.

The net increase in equity or net assets of $29.154 million results directly from the 2025-26 financial year budgeted operating surplus.

4.4 Statement of Cash Flows

4.4.1 Net cash flows provided by/used in operating activities

Description	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Cash flow from operating activities				
Rates and charges	150,059	153,411	3,352	2.2%
User fees	13,214	13,576	362	2.7%
Statutory fees and fines	4,650	5,415	765	16.5%
Grants - operating	27,036	19,651	(7,385)	(27.3%)
Grants - capital	9,211	6,468	(2,743)	(29.8%)
Contributions - monetary	7,294	5,000	(2,294)	(31.5%)
Interest received	2,000	950	(1,050)	(52.5%)
Other receipts	1,625	853	(772)	(47.5%)
Net movement in trust deposits	64	66	2	3.1%
Employee costs	(79,407)	(76,884)	2,523	(3.2%)
Materials and services	(82,871)	(77,237)	5,634	(6.8%)
Contributions and donations	(6,049)	(6,138)	(89)	1.5%
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments	(12)	(31)	(19)	158.3%
Other payments	(708)	(765)	(57)	8.1%
Net cash provided by operating activities	**46,106**	**44,335**	**(1,771)**	**(3.8%)**

Operating activities refers to the cash generated or used in the normal service delivery functions of Council. Cash remaining after paying for the provision of services to the community may be available for investment in capital works, or repayment of debt.

The 2025-26 operating grants income is budgeted to decrease by $7.385 million on the 2024-25 forecast. This is largely due to a $3.768 million decrease for the Victoria Grants Commission funding in 2025-26 due to the timing of payments, together with a reduction in kindergarten grant income due to the change in service delivery model for Kindergarten from January 2025.

The 2025-26 budgeted capital grants cash receipts is budgeted to decrease by $2.743 million. Capital grants are not budgeted unless there is confirmation or a commitment that the funds will be received. Refer to section 4.5 ‘Capital works program’ for a more detailed analysis of Council’s capital works program for the 2024-25 financial year.

The 2024-25 forecast monetary contributions received includes $1.544 million for non-recurring capital project contributions.

Employee costs are budgeted to decrease by $2.523 million on the 2024-25 forecast. This decrease allows for the Enterprise Agreement (EA) increment, and the increase in the superannuation guarantee rate from 11.50% to 12.00%. A driver of the decreased budget to forecast is due to the change in service delivery model for Kindergartens from January 2025.

Materials and services are budgeted to decrease by $5.634 million. Included in materials and services is capital expenditure which is operational in nature. This expenditure is budgeted to decrease by $2.738 million on the current year forecast due to capital projects being undertaken (including capital works to be carried forward to 2025-26).

4.4.2 Net cash flows provided by/used in investing activities

Description	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Cash flow from investing activities				
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	11,283	11,256	(27)	(0.2%)
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(57,051)	(52,645)	4,406	(7.7%)
Payments for investments	0	0	0	0.0%
Proceeds from sale of investments	10,000	0	(10,000)	(100.0%)
Net cash used in investing activities	**(35,768)**	**(41,389)**	**(5,621)**	**15.7%**

Investing activities refers to cash generated or used in the enhancement or creation of infrastructure and other assets. These activities also include the acquisition and sale of other assets such as vehicles, property, plant and equipment.

The decrease in net cash outflows from investing activities is due to a $0.027 million decrease in proceeds from the sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment, together with the redemption of $10.000 million in term deposits that have an original maturity date greater than ninety days. This is partially offset by a $4.406 million decrease in payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment.

4.4.3 Net cash flows provided by/used in financing activities

Description	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Cash flow from financing activities				
Finance costs	(3,755)	(3,625)	130	(3.5%)
Proceeds from borrowings	10,000	6,000	(4,000)	(40.0%)
Repayment of borrowings	(8,865)	(9,680)	(815)	9.2%
Interest paid - lease liability	(343)	(419)	(76)	22.2%
Repayment of lease liabilities	(1,059)	(1,031)	28	(2.6%)
Net cash used in financing activities	**(4,022)**	**(8,755)**	**(4,733)**	**117.7%**

Financing activities refers to the cash generated or used in the financing of Council functions and include proceeds from and repayment of borrowings from financial institutions.

The 2025-26 budget includes new borrowings of $6.000 million. The new borrowings are budgeted to take place at the end of the calendar year. Refer to section 4.2.3 'Borrowings' for further information on Council borrowings.

4.5 Capital Works Program

This section presents a listing of the capital works projects that will be undertaken for the 2025-26 year, classified by expenditure type and funding source. Works are also disclosed as current budget or carried forward from prior year.

4.5.1 Summary

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Change $'000	Change %
Property	12,397	16,322	3,925	31.7%
Plant and equipment	9,001	7,500	(1,501)	(16.7%)
Infrastructure	43,591	34,023	(9,568)	(21.9%)
Total contributions	**64,989**	**57,845**	**(7,144)**	**(11.0%)**

		Asset Expenditure Types				Summary of Funding Sources			
Capital Works Area	Project Cost $'000	New $'000	Renewal $'000	Upgrade $'000	Expans'n $'000	Grants $'000	Contrib. $'000	Council Cash* $'000	Borrow-ings $'000
Property	16,322	0	5,515	10,777	30	7,037	0	5,544	3,740
Plant and equipment	7,500	120	6,126	1,254	0	0	0	5,551	0
Infrastructure	34,023	1,107	27,677	5,239	0	3,346	0	28,199	2,260
Total	**57,845**	**1,227**	**39,318**	**17,270**	**30**	**10,383**	**0**	**39,294**	**6,000**

* Council cash represents council rates, reserves and proceeds from the sale of fixed assets.

4.5.2 2025-26 Capital Budget

Capital Works Area	Project Cost $'000	Asset Expenditure Types: New $'000	Renewal $'000	Upgrade $'000	Expans'n $'000	Summary of Funding Sources: Grants $'000	Contrib. $'000	Council Cash* $'000	Borrow-ings $'000
Property									
Buildings	**6,524**	**0**	**4,709**	**1,785**	**30**	**0**	**0**	**4,739**	**1,785**
Replacements of components for all Council owned buildings based on Building Asset Management Systems	4,709	0	4,709	0	0				
Pavilion Upgrade (Design)	630	0	0	630	0				
Carrington Park Public Toilet	430	0	0	430	0				
HV Jones Community Hall - Bathroom Upgrade and New Accessible Toilet	220	0	0	220	0				
Solar panels in Community Facilities	100	0	0	100	0				
Ferntree Gully Community Centre Upgrades	80	0	0	80	0				
Scope and Concept Design of Future Pavilion Development	70	0	0	70	0				
Energy Retrofits in Community Buildings	60	0	0	60	0				
Indoor Leisure Sites Security Upgrades	60	0	0	60	0				
Knox Regional Netball Centre - Line Marking	60	0	0	60	0				
Boronia Radio Control Club - New Accessibility Ramp	30	0	0	30	0				
Early Years Hubs - Toilet Cubicle Doors	15	0	0	15	0				
Design of Future Projects at Scoresby Recreation Reserve	10	0	0	10	0				
Knox Regional Netball Centre - Air Handling (Design)	10	0	0	10	0				
Rosa Benedikt Community Centre - Backyard Revitalisation	10	0	0	10	0				
Wantirna Hub Long Day Care Expansion	30	0	0	0	30				
Total Property	**6,524**	**0**	**4,709**	**1,785**	**30**	**0**	**0**	**4,739**	**1,785**
Plant and Equipment									
Plant, machinery and equipment	**1,949**	**0**	**1,949**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Plant and machinery replacement program	1,949	0	1,949	0	0				
Computers and telecommunications	**3,589**	**0**	**2,340**	**1,249**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3,589**	**0**
Artworks	**210**	**120**	**85**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**210**	**0**
Community Led Public Art Projects	55	55	0	0	0				
Public Art Project	50	50	0	0	0				
Lupton Way Future Public Art Lighting	15	15	0	0	0				
Open Space Asset Artwork Renewal	85	0	85	0	0				
Laneway Activation Test Site	5	0	0	5	0				
Total Plant and Equipment	**5,748**	**120**	**4,374**	**1,254**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3,799**	**0**
Infrastructure									
Roads	**9,307**	**0**	**9,087**	**220**	**0**	**2,683**	**0**	**6,624**	**0**
Road Surface Renewal Program across multiple locations within Knox	5,110	0	5,110	0	0				
Templeton Rd, Wantirna	1,540	0	1,540	0	0				
Blackwood Park Road, Ferntree Gully	1,250	0	1,250	0	0				
Chandler Road, Boronia	440	0	440	0	0				
High Risk Road Failure Program	341	0	341	0	0				
Industrial Road Renewal Program across multiple locations within Knox	195	0	195	0	0				
Lewis Road, Wantirna South (Design)	100	0	100	0	0				
Cathies Lane, Wantirna South (Design)	40	0	40	0	0				
Shannon Avenue, Ferntree Gully (Design)	35	0	35	0	0				
Wallace Avenue, Bayswater (Design)	30	0	30	0	0				
Janine Street, Scoresby (Scoping)	2	0	2	0	0				
Keith Campbell Court, Scoresby (Scoping)	2	0	2	0	0				
Thaxted Parade, Wantirna (Scoping)	2	0	2	0	0				
Eildon Parade, Rowville - Local Area Traffic Management	154	0	0	154	0				
Barmah Drive East - On-Road Bicycle Lane	41	0	0	41	0				

Capital Works Area	Project Cost $'000	Asset Expenditure Types: New $'000	Renewal $'000	Upgrade $'000	Expans'n $'000	Summary of Funding Sources: Grants $'000	Contrib. $'000	Council Cash* $'000	Borrow-ings $'000
Murrindal Drive, Rowville - Local Area Traffic Management (Design)	15	0	0	15	0				
Fonteyn Drive - Pedestrian Refuge (Design)	10	0	0	10	0				
Bridges	**973**	**0**	**973**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**973**	**0**
Bridge Renewal Program across multiple locations within Knox	973	0	973	0	0				
Footpaths and cycleways	**5,070**	**772**	**4,042**	**256**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**4,070**	**1,000**
Liverpool Road (Roundabout to Retarding Basin - Sharedpath	204	204	0	0	0				
Pleasant Road, Clematis Avenue to The Glen Parade - Footpath	185	185	0	0	0				
Llewellyn Park Drive, East side, Somes Street to George Street - Footpath	118	118	0	0	0				
Park Ridge Reserve - Footpath	118	118	0	0	0				
Underwood Road/Gerald Street Reserve - Foothpath	43	43	0	0	0				
Fitzgerald Street - Foothpath Design	35	35	0	0	0				
Railway Trail (Upper Ferntree Gully CFA to Dandenong Tourist Road Intersection) - Sharedpath Design	35	35	0	0	0				
Railway Trail (Underwood Road to Alpine Road) - Sharedpath Scoping	10	10	0	0	0				
Mountain Highway, Wantirna, South side, Grammar Parade to Melbourne School of Theology - Footpath Scoping	10	10	0	0	0				
Veronica Street, Ferntree Gully - Footpath Design, South side between Underwood Rd and 20 Veronica St	15	15	0	0	0				
Footpaths Renewal Program across multiple locations within Knox	3,264	0	3,264	0	0				
Shared Path Renewal Program across multiple locations within Knox	779	0	779	0	0				
Macauley Place, Bayswater - Shared Path	256	0	0	256	0				
Drainage	**3,968**	**85**	**3,598**	**285**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3,968**	**0**
Liberty Avenue Reserve - Wetland/Harvesting System	50	50	0	0	0				
Peregrine Reserve - Wetland (Design)	35	35	0	0	0				
Drainage Renewal Program across multiple locations within Knox	3,398	0	3,398	0	0				
Water Sensitive Urban Design System Renewal Program across multiple locations within Knox	200	0	200	0	0				
Flood Mitigation Reactive Upgrade Works	200	0	0	200	0				
Stormwater Catchment Master Planning	50	0	0	50	0				
Kevin Avenue Ferntree Gully - Flood Investigation (Scoping)	35	0	0	35	0				
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	**8,333**	**0**	**6,379**	**1,954**	**0**	**663**	**0**	**6,670**	**1,000**
Bayswater Oval - Sportsfield Renewal	3,278	0	3,278	0	0				
Playground Renewal Program	1,317	0	1,317	0	0				
Knox Gardens Reserve - Cricket Net Renewal	484	0	484	0	0				
Significant Passive Open Space Sites Renewal	180	0	180	0	0				
Public Tennis / Netball / Basketball Court Renewal	150	0	150	0	0				
Cricket Run Up and Goal Square Renewal Works	100	0	100	0	0				
Parkland Asset Renewal	100	0	100	0	0				
Park Furniture Renewal	95	0	95	0	0				
Reserve Paths Renewal	95	0	95	0	0				
Oversowing of Sportsfields	90	0	90	0	0				
Roadside Plantings Renewal	85	0	85	0	0				

Capital Works Area	Project Cost $'000	Asset Expenditure Types: New $'000	Renewal $'000	Upgrade $'000	Expans'n $'000	Summary of Funding Sources: Grants $'000	Contrib. $'000	Council Cash* $'000	Borrow-ings $'000
Irrigation Infrastructure Renewal	80	0	80	0	0				
Knox Regional Netball Centre - Court renewal	80	0	80	0	0				
Sporting Oval Fencing Renewal	75	0	75	0	0				
Sportsfield Infrastructure Replacement Program	75	0	75	0	0				
Carrington Park, Knoxfield - Sportsfield Renewal Design	55	0	55	0	0				
Park Signage Renewal	20	0	20	0	0				
Lakesfield Reserve - Cricket Net Renewal (Design)	20	0	20	0	0				
Gilbert Park, Knoxfield - Masterplan Implementation (Skate & BMX Park Extension)	550	0	0	550	0				
Habitat Connectivity Paths at Lewis Park	339	0	0	339	0				
Rowville Recreation Reserve - Oval 1 Floodlighting Upgrade	250	0	0	250	0				
Eildon Park - Oval 1 Floodlighting Upgrade	250	0	0	250	0				
The Basin Triangle - Landscape Plan	150	0	0	150	0				
Carrington Park - Masterplan Implementation	150	0	0	150	0				
Kings Park Reserve - Masterplan Implementation	140	0	0	140	0				
Wantirna Reserve - Masterplan Implementation	125	0	0	125	0				
Off street car parks	**1,397**	**0**	**765**	**632**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1,397**	**0**
Program for asphalt resurfacing, patching, linemarking and kerb and channel renewal	765	0	765	0	0				
Wantirna Reserve - Carpark Upgrade Stage 1	381	0	0	381	0				
Knox City Tennis Club - Carpark Upgrade	215	0	0	215	0				
Mens Shed/Rowville Recreation Reserve - Carpark Upgrade (Design)	35	0	0	35	0				
Other infrastructure	**803**	**50**	**359**	**394**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**543**	**260**
Immerse Biennieal Winter Arts Program	40	40	0	0	0				
Albert Avenue - Speed limit LED Flashlights Design	10	10	0	0	0				
Street furniture renewal program	109	0	109	0	0				
Asbestos Removal Program	250	0	250	0	0				
Major Roads Streetlight Replacement	300	0	0	300	0				
Parking Management Plan Implementation	40	0	0	40	0				
Bayswater Placemaking Strategy	30	0	0	30	0				
Knox Park Directional Signage (Design)	24	0	0	24	0				
Total Infrastructure	**29,850**	**907**	**25,203**	**3,741**	**0**	**3,346**	**0**	**24,244**	**2,260**
Total Capital Works	**42,122**	**1,027**	**34,286**	**6,779**	**30**	**3,346**	**0**	**32,782**	**4,045**

* Council cash represents council rates, reserves and proceeds from the sale of fixed assets.

Knox City Council

4.5.3 Works carried forward from 2024-25 year to 2025-26

Capital Works Area	Project Cost $'000	Asset Expenditure Types: New $'000	Renewal $'000	Upgrade $'000	Expans'n $'000	Summary of Funding Sources: Grants $'000	Contrib. $'000	Council Cash* $'000	Borrow-ings $'000
Property									
Buildings	**9,798**	**0**	**806**	**8,992**	**0**	**7,037**	**0**	**806**	**1,955**
Replacements of components for all Council owned buildings based on Building Asset Management Systems	806	0	806	0	0				
Carrington Park - Pavilion Upgrade	1,000	0	0	1,000	0				
Tormore Reserve - Facility Redevelopment	4,861	0	0	4,861	0				
Wally Tew Reserve - Pavilion Upgrade	1,863	0	0	1,863	0				
Park Ridge Reserve - Pavilion Refurbishment	1,268	0	0	1,268	0				
Total Property	**9,798**	**0**	**806**	**8,992**	**0**	**7,037**	**0**	**806**	**1,955**
Computers and telecommunications	**1,752**	**0**	**1,752**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1,752**	**0**
Total Plant and Equipment	**1,752**	**0**	**1,752**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1,752**	**0**
Infrastructure									
Footpaths and cycleways	**666**	**200**	**466**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**666**	**0**
Green Spine Corridor - Shared Path, Chandler Road, Boronia	200	200	0	0	0				
Footpaths Renewal Program across multiple locations within Knox	466	0	466	0	0				
Drainage	**900**	**0**	**694**	**206**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**900**	**0**
Drainage Renewal Program across multiple locations within Knox	694	0	694	0	0				
Forest Road to Koolunga Reserve, Ferntree Gully	206	0	0	206	0				
Off street car parks	**219**	**0**	**219**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Program for asphalt resurfacing, patching, linemarking and kerb and channel renewal	219	0	219	0	0				
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	**2,389**	**0**	**1,096**	**1,293**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2,389**	**0**
Reserve/Court/Playground Renewal Programs	1,096	0	1,096	0	0				
Gilbert Park, Knoxfield - Masterplan Implementation	293	0	0	293	0				
Wantirna Reserve - Masterplan Implementation	1,000	0	0	1,000	0				
Total Infrastructure	**4,173**	**200**	**2,475**	**1,498**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3,954**	**0**
Total Carried Forward Capital Works 2024/25	**15,723**	**200**	**5,033**	**10,490**	**0**	**7,037**	**0**	**6,512**	**1,955**

* Council cash represents council rates, reserves and proceeds from the sale of fixed assets.

4.5.4 Works carried forward from 2024-25 year to 2026-27

Capital Works Area	Project Cost $'000	Asset Expenditure Types: New $'000	Renewal $'000	Upgrade $'000	Expans'n $'000	Summary of Funding Sources: Grants $'000	Contrib. $'000	Council Cash* $'000	Borrow-ings $'000
Property									
Buildings	**2,532**	**0**	**0**	**2,532**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2,532**	**0**
Carrington Park - Pavilion Upgrade	2,532	0	0	2,532	0				
Total Property	**2,532**	**0**	**0**	**2,532**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2,532**	**0**
Total Carried Forward Capital Works 2024/25	**2,532**	**0**	**0**	**2,532**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2,532**	**0**

* Council cash represents council rates, reserves and proceeds from the sale of fixed assets.

4.6 Summary of Planned Capital Works Expenditure

For the four years ended 30 June 2027, 2028 and 2029

2026/27	Total Cost	Asset Expenditure Types				Summary of Funding Sources			
		New	Renewal	Upgrade	Expans'n	Grants	Contrib.	Council Cash*	Borrow-ings
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Property									
Buildings	14,016	430	5,134	8,452	0	0	0	8,016	6,000
Total Property	**14,016**	**430**	**5,134**	**8,452**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**8,016**	**6,000**
Plant and Equipment									
Plant, machinery and equipment	2,455	0	2,455	0	0	0	0	2,455	0
Computers and telecommunications	2,969	0	2,219	750	0	0	0	2,969	0
Artworks	498	380	88	30	0	0	0	498	0
Total Plant and Equipment	**5,922**	**380**	**4,762**	**780**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**5,922**	**0**
Infrastructure									
Roads	9,673	0	9,156	517	0	2,918	0	5,755	1,000
Bridges	996	0	996	0	0	0	0	996	0
Footpaths and cycleways	5,980	1,730	4,251	0	0	0	0	4,480	1,500
Drainage	4,893	864	3,709	320	0	0	0	3,893	1,000
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	8,339	0	6,824	1,515	0	0	0	6,839	1,500
Off street car parks	1,270	0	788	482	0	0	0	770	500
Other infrastructure	628	155	392	81	0	0	0	628	0
Total Infrastructure	**31,779**	**2,749**	**26,115**	**2,915**	**0**	**2,918**	**0**	**23,361**	**5,500**
Total Capital Works Expenditure	**51,717**	**3,559**	**36,011**	**12,147**	**0**	**2,918**	**0**	**37,299**	**11,500**

2027/28	Total Cost	Asset Expenditure Types				Summary of Funding Sources			
		New	Renewal	Upgrade	Expans'n	Grants	Contrib.	Council Cash*	Borrow-ings
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Property									
Buildings	13,490	315	5,465	7,710	0	0	0	4,490	9,000
Total Property	**13,490**	**315**	**5,465**	**7,710**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**4,490**	**9,000**
Plant and Equipment									
Plant, machinery and equipment	2,132	0	2,132	0	0	0	0	2,132	0
Computers and telecommunications	4,470	0	3,220	1,250	0	0	0	4,470	0
Artworks	250	160	90	0	0	0	0	250	0
Total Plant and Equipment	**6,852**	**160**	**5,442**	**1,250**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**6,852**	**0**
Infrastructure									
Roads	10,202	0	9,642	560	0	3,006	0	5,796	1,400
Bridges	944	0	944	0	0	0	0	944	0
Footpaths and cycleways	5,615	1,215	4,400	0	0	0	0	4,615	1,000
Drainage	4,750	0	4,068	682	0	0	0	4,250	500
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	7,298	0	6,245	1,053	0	0	0	6,298	1,000
Off street car parks	1,487	0	812	675	0	0	0	987	500
Other infrastructure	454	40	414	0	0	0	0	454	0
Total Infrastructure	**30,750**	**1,255**	**26,525**	**2,970**	**0**	**3,006**	**0**	**23,344**	**4,400**
Total Capital Works Expenditure	**51,091**	**1,730**	**37,432**	**11,930**	**0**	**3,006**	**0**	**34,685**	**13,400**

2028/29	Total Cost	Asset Expenditure Types				Summary of Funding Sources			
		New	Renewal	Upgrade	Expans'n	Grants	Contrib.	Council Cash*	Borrow-ings
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Property									
Buildings	5,462	0	4,692	770	0	0	0	962	4,500
Total Property	**5,462**	**0**	**4,692**	**770**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**962**	**4,500**
Plant and Equipment									
Plant, machinery and equipment	2,139	75	2,064	0	0	0	0	2,139	0
Computers and telecommunications	2,350	0	850	1,500	0	0	0	2,350	0
Artworks	253	160	93	0	0	0	0	253	0
Total Plant and Equipment	**4,742**	**235**	**3,007**	**1,500**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**4,742**	**0**
Infrastructure									
Roads	9,946	0	9,360	586	0	3,021	0	3,925	3,000
Bridges	962	0	962	0	0	0	0	962	0
Footpaths and cycleways	5,289	692	4,597	0	0	0	0	4,789	500
Drainage	4,344	0	4,094	250	0	0	0	3,844	500
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	7,266	10	6,398	858	0	0	0	6,266	1,000
Off street car parks	1,648	0	1,238	410	0	0	0	1,148	500
Other infrastructure	478	40	438	0	0	0	0	478	0
Total Infrastructure	**29,933**	**742**	**27,087**	**2,104**	**0**	**3,021**	**0**	**21,412**	**5,500**
Total Capital Works Expenditure	**40,137**	**977**	**34,786**	**4,374**	**0**	**3,021**	**0**	**27,116**	**10,000**

* Council cash represents council rates, reserves and proceeds from the sale of fixed assets

5a. Targeted Performance Indicators

The following tables highlight Council's current and projected performance across a selection of targeted service and financial performance indicators. These indicators provide a useful analysis of Council's intentions and performance and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives.

The targeted performance indicators below are the prescribed performance measures contained in Schedule 4 of the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. Results against these indicators and targets will be reported in Council's Performance Statement included in the Annual Report.

Targeted performance indicators – Service

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual 2023-24	Forecast 2024-25	Target 2025-26	Target Projections 2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Trend + / o / -
Governance									
Consultation and engagement (Council decisions made and implemented with community input)	**Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement** Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the consultation and engagement efforts of Council	1	69	69	70	70	71	71	+
Roads									
Condition (sealed local roads are maintained at the adopted condition standard)	**Sealed local roads below the intervention level** Number of kms of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kms of sealed local roads	2	91.18%	91.00%	91.00%	91.00%	91.00%	91.00%	o
Statutory Planning									
Service standard (planning application processing and decisions are in accordance with legislative requirements)	**Planning applications decided within the relevant required time** Number of planning application decisions made within the relevant required time / Number of planning application decisions made	3	77.55%	76.00%	70.00%	70.00%	70.00%	70.00%	o
Waste Management									
Waste diversion (amount of waste diverted from landfill is maximised)	**Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill** Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins	4	72.87%	73.00%	72.00%	74.00%	76.00%	78.00%	+

Targeted performance indicators - Financial

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual 2023-24	Forecast 2024-25	Target 2025-26	Target Projections 2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Trend + / o / -
Liquidity									
Working capital (sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	**Current assets compared to current liabilities** Current Assets / Current Liabilities	5	167.33%	138.94%	134.10%	122.46%	117.63%	126.80%	-
Obligations									
Asset renewal (assets are renewed as planned)	**Asset renewal compared to depreciation** Asset Renewal and Upgrade Expenditure / Depreciation	6	165.68%	237.18%	223.41%	184.83%	185.49%	144.38%	-
Stability									
Rates concentration (revenue is generated from a range of sources)	**Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue** Rate Revenue / Adjusted Underlying Revenue	7	75.47%	71.64%	72.35%	76.16%	75.40%	75.32%	o
Efficiency									
Expenditure level (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	**Expenses per property assessment** Total Expenditure / No. of Assessments	8	$2,782	$2,890	$2,752	$2,842	$2,800	$2,828	+

Key to Forecast Trend:

+ Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator

5b. Financial Performances Indicators

The following table highlights Council's current and projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide a useful analysis of Council's financial position and performance and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives.

The financial performance indicators below are the prescribed financial performance indicators contained in Part 3 of Schedule 3 of the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. Results against these indicators will be reported in Council's Performance Statement included in the Annual Report.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual 2023-24	Forecast 2024-25	Budget 2025-26	Projections 2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Trend + / o / -
Operating Position **Adjusted underlying result** (an adjusted underlying surplus is generated in the ordinary course of business)	**Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)** Adjusted Underlying Surplus (Deficit) / Adjusted Underlying Revenue	9	0.28%	4.28%	9.15%	7.27%	7.87%	8.59%	+
Liquidity **Unrestricted cash** (sufficient cash that is free of restrictions is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	**Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities** Unrestricted Cash / Current Liabilities	10	45.73%	74.11%	75.72%	62.97%	60.60%	71.43%	+
Obligations **Loans and borrowings** (level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	**Loans and borrowings compared to rates** Interest Bearing Loans and Borrowings / Rate Revenue	11	56.42%	55.69%	52.09%	48.95%	50.13%	46.68%	+
Loans and borrowings (level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	**Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates** Interest and Principal Repayments / Rate Revenue	11	6.61%	8.39%	8.65%	8.73%	9.79%	10.44%	-
Indebtedness (level of long term liabilities is appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities)	**Non-current liabilities compared to own-source revenue** Non Current Liabilities / Own Source Revenue	12	49.91%	45.45%	41.03%	39.73%	39.22%	35.47%	+
Stability **Rates effort** (rating level is set based on the community's capacity to pay)	**Rates compared to property values** Rate Revenue / Property Values (CIV)	13	0.23%	0.23%	0.23%	0.25%	0.24%	0.24%	o
Efficiency **Revenue level** (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	**Average rate per property assessment** General Rates Revenue / No. of Property Assessments	14	$1,684	$1,754	$1,806	$1,848	$1,890	$1,933	+

5c. Financial Performances Indicators

The following table presents additional measures that are not prescribed measures in the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. These measures are used by the Department of Treasury and Finance to conduct credit assessments of councils under the Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV) loans framework. Subject to these financial covenants being satisfied over the prior three years to the budget year, the budget year, and subsequent three projected financial years, a borrowing limit will be determined under the framework.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual 2023-24	Forecast 2024-25	Budget 2025-26	Projections 2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Trend + / o / -
TCV loans framework indicators									
Interest bearing liabilities to own source revenue	Interest Bearing Liabilities / Own Source Revenue (excluding Open Space Contributions)	15	54.05%	56.72%	54.97%	52.35%	53.58%	50.92%	+
Interest cover ratio	EDITBA / Interest Expense	15	11.74	11.49	15.08	12.44	12.62	13.25	o

Key to Forecast Trend:

+ Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator

Notes on measures

5a.1 Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement

During 2024-25, Council's Community Engagement Policy was adopted following a review of the community's expectations. The forecast for 2024-25 is based on the 2023-24 Actual. Targets are based on the results of this measure anticipated to gradually improve as Council commences a capability development program aimed at enhancing its ability to meet the community's expectations.

5a.2 Sealed local roads below the intervention level

Forecast for 2024-25 and targets for 2025-26 onwards indicate a steady target of 91%. Council re-evaluated its current road performance measures in July 2024, using whole-of-network condition data captured in a 2023 through a road surface condition audit, which noted that the current performance is 91.2%. Council's objective over coming years is to ensure that the road network condition does not drop below the 91% level.

5a.3 Planning applications decided within the relevant required time

Forecast actual for 2024-25 is based on the 2024-25 half year data available. Targets for 2025-26 onwards have been aligned to our service standard target of 70% of planning permit applications determined within 60 statutory days, as determined in the draft Statutory Planning Service Plan. This target is set based on anticipated work levels, factoring in both the complexity and volume of resourcing required to deliver the service. Actual demand may vary from expectations, resulting in performance fluctuations as circumstances evolve from year to year.

5a.4 Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill

Forecast actual for 2024-25 is based on the 2024-25 half year data available (72.99%). The 2025-26 target is aligned to the Recycling Victoria (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning) interim target to divert 72% of waste from landfill by 2025. Targets for 2025-26 onwards are aligned to state targets and the current waste stream modelling, based on the assumption that frequency scheduling remains as current practice. These are also in line with Council's Waste and Resource Strategy.

5a.5 Working capital

Working capital (current assets / current liabilities) is the proportion of current liabilities represented by current assets. It is a general measure of the organisation's liquidity and its ability to meet its commitments as and when they fall due. The working capital percentage is anticipated to remain around 100% for the ten-year period. The decrease from 2023-24 is largely due to the carry-forward of capital works expenditure. These targets align to targets determined in our Long Term Financial Plan.

5a.6 Asset renewal

Asset renewal is calculated as asset renewal expenditure as a percentage of depreciation. This indicates the extent of Council's renewal of assets against its depreciation charge (an indication of the decline in value of its existing capital assets). A percentage greater than 100% indicates Council is maintaining its existing assets, while a percentage less than 100% means its assets are deteriorating faster than they are being renewed and future capital expenditure will be required to renew assets. Council's asset renewal indicator is greater than 100% through the ten year outlook. These targets align to targets determined in our Long Term Financial Plan.

5a.7 Rates concentration

Rates concentration is measured as rate revenue compared to the adjusted underlying revenue. Adjusted underlying revenue is defined as total income excluding non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure, non-monetary asset contributions, and contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than grants and non-monetary contributions. Rates concentration reflects the extent of reliance on rate revenues to fund all of Council's on-going services. The 2025-26 target shows an increase on the 2024-25 forecast followed by another increase the following year. These targets align to targets determined in our Long Term Financial Plan.

5a.8 Expenditure level

Expenditure level presents the average Council expenditure per property assessment. The 2025-26 target shows a decrease on the 2024-25 forecast followed by an increase the following year. These targets align to targets determined in our Long Term Financial Plan.

5b.9 Adjusted underlying result

Adjusted underlying result is the net surplus or deficit for the year (per Australian Accounting Standards) adjusted for non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure, non-monetary asset contributions, and contributions to fund capital expenditure other than grants and non-monetary asset contributions. It is an indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives. Improvement in financial performance is expected over the period. The 2025-26 budget shows a slight decrease from the 2024-25 forecast, followed by increases in the following three years.

5b.10 Unrestricted cash

Unrestricted cash means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash, including cash that will be used to fund capital expenditure from the previous financial year. Restricted cash means cash and cash equivalents, within the meaning of Accounting Standard *AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows*, that are not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted. The decline from the current year forecast demonstrates a reduction of cash and cash equivalents together with the utilisation of Interest-bearing loans and borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program.

5b.11 Debt compared to rates

Loans and borrowings means interest bearing loans and borrowings compared to rates and charges revenue. The balance of interest bearing loans and borrowings is shown as a percentage of rates revenue. Loans and borrowings also refers to interest and principal repayments compared to rate revenue. The ratio describes Council's cash flow debt repayment capacity through the inclusion of interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings as a percentage of rate revenue. The trend indicates a continued reliance on debt against annual rate revenue in 2025-26 due to borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program.

5b.12 Indebtedness

Indebtedness compares non-current liabilities to own source revenue. Own source revenue is defined as adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of Council (including government grants). Non-current liabilities will decrease in 2025-26, and continue to gradually decrease over the following three years, with the ratio decreasing accordingly.

5b.13 Rates effort

Rates effort, which is intended to examine the community's capacity to pay, presents rate revenue as a percentage of the capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality. The trend is relatively steady for rates effort.

5b.14 Revenue level

Revenue level presents the residential rate revenue per residential property assessment. The trend shows a small annual increase.

5c.15 Loan borrowing eligibility through the Government loans framework

The Victorian Government has approved the Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV) to become a direct lender to local councils. Victoria's strong credit rating means that the State can borrow and lend money at cheaper rates than are commercially available to councils. This new policy initiative enables Victorian councils to achieve interest cost savings by being able to access low-interest loans financed through TCV.

The following financial ratio criteria need to be satisfied to be eligible to borrow through TCV:

- Interest bearing loans and borrowings cannot exceed 60 percent of own source revenue
- The interest cover ratio cannot be less than 2:1

6. Financial Strategies

Long Term Financial Plan

The budget has been prepared for the four-year period ending 30 June 2029. The Budget is in turn set within the Long Term Financial Plan to assist Council to adopt a budget within a longer term financial framework. The Financial Plan provides a 10 year financially sustainable projection regarding how the actions of the Council Plan may be funded to achieve the Community Vision. The Financial Plan is to be adopted in June 2025 in line with the 2025-26 Budget. The Budget is supported by the following series of Financial Strategy Principles that guide the development of both the Annual Budget and the Financial Plan.

Financial Strategy Principles

Principles relating primarily to the operating budget:

Sustainable Budgeting Principle

Council will implement a sustainable budget and financial strategy that caters for short and long-term planning responsibilities.

Community expectations are a key driver of the strategy, as reflected in the Council Plan, and Council strives to adequately resource current and future need across the City. Council has limited financial and non-financial resources and faces wide-ranging and complex community needs.

Council is committed to delivering an annual operating surplus to provide funds for capital projects and infrastructure renewal, for both current and future generations. When identifying sources of revenue and determining expenditure needs, Council will ensure that these community needs can be adequately addressed in the future.

Rating Revenue Principle

Council comply with the Victorian Government's rate capping legislation which limits rate increased to an amount set by the relevant Minister.

A rating strategy included in the Revenue and Rating Plan that determines the allocation of rate contributions across the municipality will be considered by Council each term.

Council will comply with the rate capping legislation and will consider applying for a short term increase to the rate cap if deemed necessary during any budget or long term financial planning process.

Waste Management Principle

To not impact other services and capital renewal spending Council will fully recover the cost of waste services through a waste services charge.

Waste income is at full cost recovery and is not subject to the rate capping framework.

Intergovernmental Funding Principle

Council supports other levels of government to fully fund services delivered on their behalf. Council will maximise the level of grants and subsidies received from Commonwealth and State Governments to achieve a better share of government taxes for the Knox Community.

Funds received from other levels of government will normally be expected to meet the full direct and indirect costs of providing those services. Council opposes cost shifting from other levels of government and may not contribute funding or assets to services that are the responsibility of other levels of government. In circumstances where Council provides a subsidy to a service, a determination will be made ensuring the contribution does not outweigh the community benefit.

Where cost shifting from other levels of government is apparent, Council will communicate to its community the impacts of these cost impositions.

Operating Projects Expenditure Principle

Council will separately fund projects of a non-recurring operating nature in line with considering availability of revenue to fund existing services and infrastructure renewal.

Priority projects that are not started or completed within the budget year are subject to future budget and planning considerations. These projects will be reassessed against any revised Council priorities.

Amended Budget Principle

Council will amend the Budget for internal management reporting purposes to ensure prudent and transparent budgeting and financial planning.

Council will ensure a rigorous approach to budget management. The budget will be amended were necessary following finalisation of the annual accounts.

Amended budgets enable Council to review and approve variances to revenue and expenditure resulting primarily from external factors, ensuring accountability and optimal budget control for management reporting purposes. Amendments to the adopted budget will be considered under the following circumstances:

- Additional income has been received
- Reduction in income due to identified reasons
- Transactions required subsequent to finalisaton of end of year accounts
- Expenditure increase matching additional income
- Additional non discretionary expenses
- Deferred expenditure
- Sound accounting processes to meet audit requirements.

In the circumstance where additional cash surplus is identified (after taking into account cash requirements in future years), this surplus will firstly be considered for transfer into a defined

benefits reserve and secondly for opportunities to reduce planned borrowing.

New expenditure identified (if any) should be considered within the overall priority listing of works across Knox. This may include bringing forward foreshadowed works in a staged approach. Existing commitments of staff and project management resources will be considered to ensure deliverability prior to endorsement of additional expenditure.

The Annual Report will detail performance against the original Budget as adopted by Council as the Budget.

Principles relating primarily to management of Council assets:

Asset Management Principle

This measures the renewal and upgrade expenditure that Council incurs on its existing asset base compared to depreciation expense. This assesses whether Council's assets are being renewed or upgraded as planned and compares the rate of spending on existing assets through renewing, restoring, replacing or upgrading existing assets with depreciation expense.

Council will provide well-maintained community assets that are fit for their purpose and provide best possible community benefit. Council's budget and long-term strategy will commit, with specific budget provision, an appropriate level of expenditure to ensure ongoing asset maintenance and renewal.

Council will plan and appropriately resource the necessary work on infrastructure to ensure that all assets are maintained fit for purpose. Accurate asset date and condition assessments will be drawn upon to inform the annual budgeting and works programs.

Asset management involves anticipating and managing risk and asset failures. Council is committed to increasing expenditure on asset renewal in order to sustainably manage its community infrastructure. Appropriate expenditure is allocated to ensure that compliance and safety regulations are addressed for all assets.

The separate asset renewal component of total capital works expenditure will be based on needs identified in that will include amounts sufficient to fund renewal of our assets to agreed standards as established in the asset management plans, based on the replacement cost and remaining useful life of the asset in order to meet minimum community standards.

Council will maintain a capital sustainability index of greater than one-to-one until assets have reached standards defined in the asset management plans. The sustainability index is defined as the ratio of renewal expenditure on infrastructure assets compared to the annual depreciation expense incurred by these assets.

Council will seek the most effective community outcome from the application of asset renewal funds, which may not necessarily result in the replication of existing facilities but could involve the adaptive re-use of an asset. In such circumstances, asset renewal funds will complement new and upgrade funding as appropriate.

Capital Projects Budgeting Principle

Budgets to be phased according to actual build cycle leading to more appropriate accountability for expenditure and more accurate performance measures

Council will prioritise capital works expenditure based on the capital investment hierarchy as adopted by Council.

Council will budget capital expenditure in the financial year it is estimated to occur based on the methodology of scope, design, delivery.

Council Statutory (restricted) Reserves Principle

Council will maintain, cash backed reserves for statutory (restricted) reserves, allowing maximum cash availability to reduce borrowing requirements.

Council will endeavor to maintain a minimum cash balance equivalent to the identified statutory (restricted) reserves plus sufficient cash to achieve a working capital ratio of above 1.

Due to the nature of these funds, and potential for immediate use, the cash will not be considered as parts of Council's internal budgeting and management reporting processes.

Property Holding Principle

Council will manage, acquire and dispose of property in the best interest of the Knox community. Council recognises the importance of property holdings over the long term to community wellbeing.

Assets will only be considered for disposal where there is no clear Council or community need for that asset in the foreseeable future. All property considered for disposal will undergo a thorough evaluation based on Council's Sale of Land and Buildings Policy Principles, which consider both financial and community benefit factors. Open space will not be sold unless it results in a net community benefit and addresses Council's Policy requirements, which includes consideration of the open space network, impact to habitat, flora and fauna, and proposed future infrastructure. Any proceeds derived from property realisation will be firstly directed towards debt reduction and secondly towards new/upgrade capital work. They will not be used to fund operating expenditure. Council will not necessarily hold property that has no current or future identified purpose, or if that purpose can be met more effectively in other ways.

Existing holdings or strategic acquisitions must meet existing needs, newly identified needs or adopted strategies. To enhance community benefit opportunities for the alternative use of property (including asset realisation) will be investigated. Regular reviews of asset holdings will be conducted to identify opportunities for asset realisation. Asset management plans, asset usage, land use planning documents, strategic asset investment framework and community benefit will be consideration in such reviews.

Regular reviews of asset holdings will be conducted to identify opportunities for asset realisation. Asset management plans, asset usage, land use planning documents, strategic asset investment framework and community benefit will be consideration in such reviews.

Principles relating primarily to management of Council financial position:

Financial Principle

Council will fund all operating and capital expenditure in a prudent, ethical and responsible manner. Council will seek and accept external funding contributions to a project where the acceptance of the funding will not compromise Council's principles or objectives.

Council will seek to maximise all external funding opportunities and seek alternative revenue sources to reduce reliance upon rates, including transfers from other levels of government and other financing opportunities where appropriate, and having regard to the financial impacts and outcomes for the community. Following the decision to proceed with a project, external funding commitments will be formalised.

While an external funding opportunity should be part of the overall project, its consideration should remain only one factor in the decision-making process. Accordingly, care should be taken to not inappropriately commit Council to the acceptance of funding opportunities before the project is determined as suitable and of immediate priority. This is necessary to avoid the unreasonable distortion of Council's priorities due to the availability of external funding.

Cash Management Principle

Working capital ratio is used to assess financial performance. Low working capital ratio values, near one or lower, can indicate serious financial problems. The working capital ratio indicates Councils short-term assets to pay off its short-term debt.

Council will monitor its Working Capital Ratio (current assets/current liabilities) to ensure the maintenance of the required level of cash to meet operational requirements.

The target ratio should remain at or above 1.

Council will maximise the return on cash funds invested and ensure investment placements remain within ethical and legislative constraints. Outstanding debtors will be converted to cash by adopting commercial practices and benchmarks.

Loan Borrowing Principle

Councils ability to fund services and capital renewal expenditure from own source revenue is a key measure of sustainability.

Council will consider the use of loan funding as a viable and equitable mechanism of funding new/significantly upgraded major assets that provide a broad community benefit or funding capital projects that provide a financial return above annual loan funding costs.

Prior to undertaking any future borrowings, Council will model the implications of the proposed loan program on council's long-term financial position and determine the funding mechanism to meet annual debt servicing and redemption requirements, in line with the approved Loan Borrowing Policy.

To be eligible to access funds through the TCV loan framework, Council will remain within the stated financial ratios for the time period defined within the framework.

One of the key considerations for Council in the application of future loan borrowings is the annual operational and asset renewal needs can be met from annual funding sources. That is, Council will strive to not access funding from non-renewable sources such as loans, asset sales or reserves to meet its annual operational and renewal expenditure needs. With the exception of one off expenditure requirements such as a defined benefits call-up.

7. Schedule of Fees and Charges

This appendix presents the fees and charges which will be charged in respect to various goods and services during the financial year 2025-26. Note that this schedule only includes fees set by Council. There are other fees that are set by statute and charged by Council in addition to this listing. These are statutory fees and are made in accordance with legislative requirements. These fees are updated as of 1 July 2025 and will be reflected on Council's website.

Knox City Council

2025-26 Fees & Charges

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
CEO - Chief Financial Office					
REVENUE & PROPERTY SERVICES					
Land Information Certificates are a standard charge fixed by State Government (Statutory) legislation. Summons Costs recovered are fully recoverable from the outstanding rate debtors.					
Summons Costs Recovered (Legal Costs)	Scale of Costs	Scale of Costs	Scale of Costs	N/A	N/A
Land Information Certificates - Urgent Requests Additional Fee	Per Certificate	$45.00	$47.00	$2.00	4.44%
Reproduction of a Valuation and Rate Notice - Current rating year	Per Notice	$16.00	$17.00	$1.00	6.25%
Reproduction of a Valuation and Rate Notice - Up to 7 prior rating years	Per Notice	$21.00	$22.00	$1.00	4.76%
Reproduction of a Valuation and Rate Notice - Older than 7 prior rating years	Per Hour	$96.00	$100.00	$4.00	4.17%
Recovery of cost incurred to undertake a Field Call	Per Field Call	$96.00	$100.00	$4.00	4.17%
Recovery of Council's Agency's Professional Costs to prepare Field Call documentation	Per Field Call	$84.00	$88.00	$4.00	4.76%
Supplementary Valuation Fee (Water Authorities)	Per Property	$37.00	$39.00	$2.00	5.41%
PROPERTY RENTALS					
This is a nominal fee paid annually by community groups subject to a licence agreement for the use of the facility. Occupancy arrangements are undertaken in accordance with the 'Leasing and Licensing' Policy.					
Community Group Agreement Fee (Lease/Licence) - for current executed agreement	Per Annum	$249.00	$259.00	$10.00	4.02%
Community Group Agreement Fee (Lease/Licence) - for new agreement entered from 1st July 2024	Per Annum	$450.00	$468.00	$18.00	4.00%
Essential Safety Measures (for commercial properties)	Per Annum	$425.00	Based on property size	N/A	N/A

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Administration Fees for New Tenancy Application:					
Telecommunication - Rooftop and Building site	Per Application	$2,000.00	$2,080.00	$80.00	4.00%
Telecommunication - Macro base station sites (New application)	Per Application	$4,000.00	$4,160.00	$160.00	4.00%
Telecommunication - Macro base station sites (Upgrade application)	Per Application	$2,000.00	$2,080.00	$80.00	4.00%
Other Administration Fees:					
Commercial - Specific property request	Per Request	$1,000.00	$1,040.00	$40.00	4.00%
Adjoining Owner - Examples include use of road reserves, or land historically encroached on, now to be managed under agreement	Per Request	$500.00	$520.00	$20.00	4.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
City Liveability - City Planning and Building					
PLANNING SERVICES					
The Planning and Subdivision fees indicated below are for the processing and administration of development applications. Most of these fees are prescribed by State Regulations. Only those that are at the discretion on Council are indicated below.					
Secondary Consent & Extension of Time Requests					
Secondary Consent Requests	Per Request	$460.00	$600.00	$140.00	30.43%
Extension of Time Request - For all permits other than Multi Dwelling Permits for more than two dwellings or tree removal on single dwelling sites	Per Request	$315.00	$328.00	$13.00	4.13%
Extension of Time Request - For Tree Removal or Pruning (single dwelling sites only)	Per Request	$100.00	$104.00	$4.00	4.00%
Extension of Time Request - For Multi Dwelling Permits of more than two dwellings	Per Request	$800.00	$832.00	$32.00	4.00%
Bonds (Refundable)					
Works Bond	Per Request	150% of the estimated cost of works. Minimum bond amount - $7,500 for incomplete works bond and $3,500 for maintenance bond	150% of the estimated cost of works. Minimum bond amount - $8,000 for incomplete works bond and $4,000 for maintenance bond	N/A	N/A
Landscaping Bond	Per Request	$7,600.00	$8,100.00	$500.00	6.58%
Fee to process Bonds for uncompleted works bonds, landscaping bonds and maintenance bonds	Per Request	$460.00	$479.00	$19.00	4.13%
Fee to provide a quote for a Bond for uncompleted works bonds, landscaping bonds and maintenance bonds	Per Request	$140.00	$146.00	$6.00	4.29%
Application Advertising					
- Public Notice sign for displaying on site	Per Site	$73.00	$76.00	$3.00	4.11%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
- Erection and Management of Public Notices	Per Site	$260.00	$271.00	$11.00	4.23%
- Mail notices up to 10 inclusively	Flat Rate	$230.00	$240.00	$10.00	4.35%
- Each additional mail notices between 11 and 50 for mail notices up to 10 is to be added on plus each additional mail notice charge)	Per Additional Notice	$18.00	$19.00	$1.00	5.56%
- Mail notices between 51 and 100 inclusively	Flat Rate	$1,175.00	$1,222.00	$47.00	4.00%
- Mail notices between 101 and 200 inclusively	Flat Rate	$2,560.00	$2,663.00	$103.00	4.02%
- Mail notices greater than 200	Flat Rate	$3,225.00	$3,354.00	$129.00	4.00%
- Standard letter request for planning information	Flat Rate	$105.00	$150.00	$45.00	42.86%
Planning (Miscellaneous)					
Planning Application - tree removal (Single dwelling sites only - Development sites fee is as specified in Clause 21 of the Planning and Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016)	Per Application	$200.00	$208.00	$8.00	4.00%
Planning Application - tree pruning (Single dwelling sites only - Development sites fee is as specified in Clause 21 of the Planning and Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016)	Per Application	$100.00	$104.00	$4.00	4.00%
Planning File Recall (Residential). Fee covers copies of permits and endorsed plans for a maximum of two permits	Per Request	$230.00	$240.00	$10.00	4.35%
Planning File Recall (Industrial / Commercial). Fee covers copies of permits and endorsed plans for a maximum of two permits	Per Request	$460.00	$479.00	$19.00	4.13%
Planning File Recall (Residential/Industrial & Commercial) Additional Permits or Plans not included in initial request (i.e. more than two permits and endorsed plans)	Per document	$20.00	$21.00	$1.00	5.00%
Refund Request	Per Request	Cost of Service	Cost of Service	N/A	N/A
Planning Historical Searches Residential (Provision of Permit Details where there are 5 or more planning permits that apply to the site)	Per Request	$95.00	$99.00	$4.00	4.21%
Planning Historical Searches Commercial (Provision of Permit Details where there are 5 or more planning permits that apply to the site)	Per Request	$300.00	$312.00	$12.00	4.00%
Net Gain Fee	Per Plant	$47.00	$49.00	$2.00	4.26%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Pre-Application Request	Per Request	$325.00	$400.00	$75.00	23.08%
Dishonoured Cheque Fee	Per Cheque	$44.00	$46.00	$2.00	4.55%
BUILDING SERVICES					
The Building Services fees provide for the assessment, administration and inspection works necessary for the issue of Building Permits and other miscellaneous site inspections. Most Building Surveying and Permit services are open to market competition (hence GST applies to these), and the fees should be varied on a commercial basis.					
Domestic Permits					
Single Dwellings #	Per Permit	Value/90 or minimum fee of $2,800.00	Value/90 or minimum fee of $2,900.00	N/A	N/A
Multi Dwelling applications (Class 1) #	Per Permit	Value/90 or minimum fee of $4,100.00	Value/90 or minimum fee of $4,200.00	N/A	N/A
Dwellings Additions (including Dependant Relative Units) #	Per Permit	Value/95 or minimum fee of $1,500.00	Value/95 or minimum fee of $1,600.00	N/A	N/A
Variation Permits / Renewals #	Per Permit	$360.00	$375.00	$15.00	4.17%
Signs, Aerials, Retaining Walls etc. #	Per Permit	$900.00	$936.00	$36.00	4.00%
Sheds, Carports, Garages, Verandas, decks, etc. #	Per Permit	$900.00	$936.00	$36.00	4.00%
Swimming Pools and Spas #	Per Permit	$1,300.00	$1,352.00	$52.00	4.00%
Demolitions #	Per Permit	$980.00	$1,020.00	$40.00	4.08%
Minor Variation to Report & Consent decisions #	Per Request	$115.00	$120.00	$5.00	4.35%
Industrial / Commercial Permits					
Minor works up to $15,000 #	Per Permit	$1,020.00	$1,061.00	$41.00	4.02%
Minor works $15,000 to $50,000 #	Per Permit	$2,800.00	$2,912.00	$112.00	4.00%
Fit out Permits	Per Permit	$2,800.00	$2,912.00	$112.00	4.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Classes 2 - 9 (up to $15,000) #	Per Permit	$1,020.00	$1,061.00	$41.00	4.02%
Classes 2 - 9 ($15,000 - $50,000) #	Per Permit	$2,800.00	$2,912.00	$112.00	4.00%
Classes 2 - 9 (above $50,000) #	Per Permit	(Cost/2,000 + square root of cost) * 8 or minimum fee of $3,650	(Cost/2,000 + square root of cost) * 8 or minimum fee of $3,650	N/A	N/A
# Fees may be varied by up to 20% by either the Manager City Planning or Co-ordinator Building Services.					
Building (Miscellaneous)					
Building over easements. Building over public space (other than where the public space will be occupied for 6 months or more and the cost of the project exceeds $5m), and other Council approvals. *	Per Request	$355.00	$370.00	$15.00	4.23%
Building Over public space - where public land is occupied for 6 months or more or the cost of the project is $5m or more	Per Week Occupied	$2 per square metre per day (minimum fee of $200 per week & maximum fee of $520 per week)	$2 per square metre per day (minimum fee of $200 per week & maximum fee of $520 per week)	N/A	N/A
Building Over public space (cost under $5 million) - where public land is occupied for 2-4 months	Per Week Occupied	$2 per square metre per day (minimum fee of $100 per week & maximum fee of $200 per week)	$2 per square metre per day (minimum fee of $100 per week & maximum fee of $200 per week)	N/A	N/A

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Building Over public space (cost under $5 million) - where public land is occupied for 4-6 months	Per Week Occupied	$2 per square metre per day (minimum fee of $120 per week & maximum fee of $400 per week)	$2 per square metre per day (minimum fee of $120 per week & maximum fee of $400 per week)	N/A	N/A
Council notification of Report and Consent applications	Per Request	$340.00	$354.00	$14.00	4.12%
Extension of Time Request for existing Building Permit - 12 Months *	Per Request	$220.00	$229.00	$9.00	4.09%
Sundry Additional Inspection (In Area) *	Per Inspection	$245.00	$255.00	$10.00	4.08%
Afterhours Building Inspection (excluding emergency inspections)	Per Inspection	$520.00	$541.00	$21.00	4.04%
Building File Recall Residential	Per Permit	$230.00	$240.00	$10.00	4.35%
Building File Recall Industrial/Commercial	Per Permit	$460.00	$479.00	$19.00	4.13%
Occupancy Permit - Public Entertainment (less than 5,000 patrons) *	Per Permit	$780.00	$812.00	$32.00	4.10%
Occupancy Permit - Public Entertainment (5,000 patrons or more) *	Per Permit	$1,560.00	$1,623.00	$63.00	4.04%
Occupancy Permit - Public Entertainment - 5 Year Permit (less than 5,000 patrons) *	Per Permit	$1,560.00	$1,623.00	$63.00	4.04%
Occupancy Permit - Public Entertainment - 5 Year Permit (5,000 patrons or more) *	Per Permit	$3,120.00	$3,245.00	$125.00	4.01%
Occupancy Permit - Public Entertainment - late lodgement (lodged within 2 weeks of event) less than 5,000 patrons	Per Permit	$1,040.00	$1,082.00	$42.00	4.04%
Occupancy Permit - Public Entertainment - late lodgement (lodged within 2 weeks of event) 5,000 patrons or more	Per Permit	$1,300.00	$1,352.00	$52.00	4.00%
Occupancy Permit - Public Entertainment - Amendment to 5 Year Permit - less than 5,000 patrons	Per Amendment	$575.00	$598.00	$23.00	4.00%
Occupancy Permit - Public Entertainment - Amendment to 5 Year Permit - 5,000 patrons or more	Per Amendment	$1,145.00	$1,191.00	$46.00	4.02%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Building Historical Searches Residential (Provision of Permit Details where there are 5 or more building permits that apply to the site)	Per Information	$95.00	$99.00	$4.00	4.21%
Building Historical Searches Commercial (Provision of Permit Details where there are 5 or more building permits that apply to the site)	Per Information	$300.00	$312.00	$12.00	4.00%
Essential Safety Measures determination - Type C Construction	Per Determination	$895.00	$931.00	$36.00	4.02%
Essential Safety Measures determination - Type A or Type B Construction	Per Determination	$1,790.00	$1,862.00	$72.00	4.02%
Performance Solution - Domestic	Per Solution	$470.00	$489.00	$19.00	4.04%
Performance Solution - Commercial / Industrial	Per Solution	$940.00	$978.00	$38.00	4.04%
Pre-Application Request (Building works on Council land) less than $100,000	Per Request	$470.00	$489.00	$19.00	4.04%
Pre-Application Request (Building works on Council land) $100,000 or more	Per Request	$900.00	$936.00	$36.00	4.00%
Swimming Pool or Spa Barrier Certificate of Compliance	Per Certificate	$270.00	$281.00	$11.00	4.07%
Refund Request	Per Request	Variable	Variable	N/A	N/A
Consulting Fee	Per hour	New Fee	$100.00	New Fee	New Fee
Dishonoured Cheque Fee	Flat Rate	$44.00	$46.00	$2.00	4.55%
** Non Statutory Fees may be varied by up to 20% by either the Manager City Planning or Co-ordinator Building Services.*					

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
City Liveability - City Futures					
Custom and/or Printed Maps					
Quoted prices available upon request					
Electronic Files and/or Printed Copies	Per Request	Variable	Variable	N/A	N/A
Electric Vehicle Charging					
Electric Vehicle Charging Station	per kWh	$0.20	$0.25	$0.05	$0.25
City Liveability - City Safety and Health					
TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT, ANIMAL CONTROL & LOCAL LAWS					
Fees relate to Council's Amenity Local Law, Domestic Animals Act and Road Rules Victoria. *Infringement fines are set in legislation. Permit application, Annual Renewal & Registration fees are at Council's discretion and have been calculated based on cost recovery.* *For ease of use, administration fees have been rounded.*					
Permit Application Fees					
Application Fee (to be applied unless a separate application fee is specified below)	On Application	$180.00	$188.00	$8.00	4.44%
Permit Fees					
Additional Animal Permit/ Renewal Fee	Annual	$102.00	$107.00	$5.00	4.90%
Permit to keep a long or heavy vehicle on private land (in a residential area)	Annual	$247.00	$257.00	$10.00	4.05%
Temporary Accommodation/Camping (on public or private land) Permit/ Renewal)	Per Permit	$102.00	$107.00	$5.00	4.90%
Place a commercial waste bin on Council Land (Permit/ Renewal)	Annual	$52.00	$55.00	$3.00	5.77%
Fireworks Council Land and Roads	Per Permit	$102.00	$107.00	$5.00	4.90%
Shipping Container, Storage Container or Similar on Council Land	Per Week	New Fee	$200.00	New Fee	New Fee
Permit (other) - i.e. any other permit triggered by the Local Law (Permit/ Renewal)	Per Permit	$102.00	$107.00	$5.00	4.90%
Permit to display or sell goods or services on public land					
Permit fee for single day use	Charge	$102.00	$107.00	$5.00	4.90%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Initial Permit/ Renewal fee for period up to 12 months	Per Permit	$509.00	$530.00	$21.00	4.13%
Fitness Permit - Community Group / Not for profit (up to 10 sessions per week) - on public land not managed by Council's Leisure Services	6 Monthly	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Fitness Permit - Commercial (up to 10 sessions per week) - on public land not managed by Council's Leisure Services	6 Monthly	$1,734.00	$1,804.00	$70.00	4.04%
Permit to place tables and chairs on footpath (street furniture)					
Initial Permit/ Renewal Fee - Per seated person	Per Person	$45.00	$47.00	$2.00	4.44%
Initial Permit/ Renewal Fee - Each Table	Per Table	$37.00	$39.00	$2.00	5.41%
Roadside Trading Permit					
Permit for one day only	Per Location Application	$251.00	$262.00	$11.00	4.38%
Permit for 2-7 days	Per Location Application	$494.00	$514.00	$20.00	4.05%
Permit for up to one month	Per Location Application	$1,384.00	$1,440.00	$56.00	4.05%
Roadside trading fees do not apply to community groups undertaking special event fundraising such as the sale of Christmas trees just prior to Christmas.					
Municipal-Wide Trading Permit (including shared bicycle/scooter operators or other business models)					
Application Fee	On Application	$670.00	$697.00	$27.00	4.03%
Permit for up to one month	Per Application	$1,888.00	$1,964.00	$76.00	4.03%
Permit to place a clothing recycling bin on public land					
Initial Permit/ Renewal Fee - directly operated by fundraising organisation under the Fundraising Act 1998	Per Bin	$160.00	$167.00	$7.00	4.38%
Initial Permit/ Renewal Fee - Other	Per Bin	$666.00	$693.00	$27.00	4.05%
Place a Rubbish Skip bin on public land					

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Accredited provider Permit/ Renewal Fee (application fee does not apply)	Annual	$520.00	$541.00	$21.00	4.04%
Accredited provider - bin placement (application fee does not apply)	Per Bin	$52.00	$55.00	$3.00	5.77%
Non Accredited provider - one off bin placement (fee includes application cost)	Per Bin	$180.00	$188.00	$8.00	4.44%
Fundraising Permit					
Application Fee	On Application	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	N/A	N/A
Permit Fee	Per Permit	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Permit to place a sign on a road or Council Land					
Small "A" frame or other similar sign less than 600mm by 900mm in size (Permit/ Renewal Fee)	Annual	$99.00	$107.00	$8.00	8.08%
Medium sign up to 1800mm by 900mm in size (Permit/ Renewal Fee)	Annual	$166.00	$173.00	$7.00	4.22%
Large sign over 1800mm by 900mm in size (Permit/ Renewal Fee)	Annual	$238.00	$248.00	$10.00	4.20%
Temporary sign (i.e. community event board) - up to 6 weeks	Per Permit sign	$102.00	$106.00	$4.00	3.92%
Real Estate Open for Inspection/ Auction (i.e. a-frame) - Single Placement	Per Permit	$102.00	$106.00	$4.00	3.92%
Real Estate Open for Inspection/ Auction (i.e. a-frame) - Annual Permit/ Renewal	Per Office Location	$737.00	$767.00	$30.00	4.07%
Real Estate - Lease/ Sale Advertising Board (outside property) - up to 3 months	Per Permit	$102.00	$106.00	$4.00	3.92%
Burning Off Permits					
Application Fee outside the bushfire management overlay area	On Application	$80.00	$84.00	$4.00	5.00%
Application Fee inside the bushfire management overlay area	On Application	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	N/A	N/A
Permit to Burn	Per Permit	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Parking Permits (Domestic/Residential)					

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Application Fee	On Application	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	N/A	N/A
Single Dwelling (up to 2 permits for the dwelling) - Initial permit/renewal	Per Permit	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Up to 4 Units (up to 1 permit per unit) - Initial permit/renewal	Per Permit	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Maximum of one additional permit	Per Permit	$63.00	$66.00	$3.00	4.76%
Replacement (lost, stolen or changeover vehicle)	Per Permit	$34.00	$36.00	$2.00	5.88%
Parking Permits (Commercial)					
Application Fee	On Application	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	N/A	N/A
Service provided by Council on behalf of private business (Sec 90D Road Safety Act) permit/renewal - optional service provided at request by private business	Per Permit	$34.00	$36.00	$2.00	5.88%
Operated by Council initial permit/renewal (up to 4 permits)(Council land)	Per Permit	$34.00	$36.00	$2.00	5.88%
Operated by Council (Fifth and subsequent permits/renewal)	Per Permit	$63.00	$66.00	$3.00	4.76%
Replacement (lost, stolen or changeover vehicle)	Per Permit	$32.00	$36.00	$4.00	12.50%
Private Parking Area Agreements (Sec 90D Road Safety Act)					
Application Fee	Per Permit	$1,000.00	$1,040.00	$40.00	4.00%
Permit/ Renewal Fee	Per Permit	$388.00	$520.00	$132.00	34.02%
Animal Registration and Fees					
The fee structure for animal registration renewals includes Government fees associated with dog and cat animal registrations Domestic Animal Business. *Fees in this section have been rounded up or down consistent with Councils strategic approach to animal registrations within the Domestic Animal Management Plan. All Animal Registration Fees below, unless otherwise noted, are effective from 10 April in accordance with the Domestic Animal Act. Prior to 10 April, previous year fees apply.*					

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Category 1D - Dog that meets any one of the following: * Desexed; * over 10 years old; * registered and owner current member of an approved association; * kept for breeding at licensed premises; * kept for working stock; * undergone obedience training which complies with the regulations	Annual	$60.00	$63.00	$3.00	5.00%
Category 1DP - Pensioner Concession Rebate for Category 1D (Dog Desexed - also over 10 years old, current member of an approved association, kept for breeding at licensed premises, kept for working stock)	Annual	$30.00	$32.00	$2.00	6.67%
Category 2DH - Dog Unsterilized and Microchipped - Only applies to current registrations and not new registrations	Annual	$104.00	$108.00	$4.00	3.85%
Category DLP - Pensioner Concession Rebate for Category 2DH (Dog Unsterilized and Microchipped) - Only applies to current registrations and not new registrations	Annual	$39.00	$41.00	$2.00	5.13%
Category 1J - Dog or Cat meets 3 categories (i.e. desexed, microchipped, obedience trained, breeder etc.) (registered pre 10 April 2016)	Annual	$42.00	$44.00	$2.00	4.76%
Category 1JP - Pensioner Concession Rebate for Dog or Cat meets 3 categories (i.e. desexed, microchipped, obedience trained, breeder etc.) (registered pre 10 April 2016)	Annual	$21.00	$22.00	$1.00	4.76%
Category 2D - Dog Unsterilized	Annual	$232.00	$256.00	$24.00	10.34%
Category 2DP - Pensioner Concession Rebate for Dog Unsterilized	Annual	$116.00	$128.00	$12.00	10.34%
Category 2R Declared Menacing Dog, Restricted Breed Dog, Declared Dangerous Dog (no Pensioner Concession Rebate applies)	Annual	$393.00	$410.00	$17.00	4.33%
Category 1DF - Dog that is kept in foster care by a registered foster carer	Annual	$8.50	$8.80	$0.30	3.53%
Cat 1C - Cat that meets any one of the following: * desexed; * over 10 years old; * current member of an approved association; * kept for breeding at licensed premises	Annual	$54.00	$57.00	$3.00	5.56%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Category 1CP - Pensioner Concession Rebate for Cat 1C - Cat Desexed (also over 10 years old, current member of an approved association)	Annual	$27.00	$29.00	$2.00	7.41%
Category 2C - Cat Unsterilized (exempt under the Domestic Animal Act from requirement to be desexed)	Annual	$232.00	$256.00	$24.00	10.34%
Category 2CP - Pensioner Concession Rebate for Cat 2C - Cat unsterilized (exempt under the Domestic Animal Act from requirement to be desexed)	Annual	$116.00	$128.00	$12.00	10.34%
Category 1CF - Cat that is kept in foster care by a registered foster carer	Annual	$8.50	$8.80	$0.30	3.53%
Registration incentive (dog) - first year of registration is free with evidence that the dog is purchased from a registered animal pound/shelter (i.e. Vic Animal Aid, RSPCA, Lost Dogs Home) - within 30 days of purchase	First Registration Per Animal	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Registration incentive (cat) - first year of registration is free with evidence that the cat is purchased from a registered animal pound/shelter (i.e.. Vic Animal Aid, RSPCA, Lost Dogs Home) - within 30 days of purchase	First Registration Per Animal	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Unsterilized Puppy registration - discounted initial registration at the desexed registration rate for unsterilized puppies under 6 months of age	First Registration Per Animal	$60.00	$64.00	$4.00	6.67%
Pet registration promotional fee	First Registration Per Animal	New Fee	50% of regular fee	New Fee	New Fee
Pet registration renewal late fee	First Registration Per Animal	New Fee	$15.00	New Fee	New Fee
Accessing of Pet register information	Per Entry Inspected	$15.00	$16.00	$1.00	6.67%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Desexing refunds will only be provided for dogs desexed prior to 30th June and were registered as an 'Unsterilized Puppy' in the previous registration year (a copy of the desexing certificate must be supplied)		Refund amount is the difference between the full fee and the discounted fee	Refund amount is the difference between the full fee and the discounted fee	N/A	N/A
Refund of Animal Registration: Eligible if animal dies within 1 month of new registration, or 1 month from 10 April for registration renewals		Refund of the applicable registration fee	Refund of the applicable registration fee	N/A	N/A
50% pro-rata of Animal Registration fees apply on 10 October.		50% of the applicable registration fee	50% of the applicable registration fee	N/A	N/A
Domestic Animal Business Registration					
Domestic Animal Business Registration Application Fee	On Application	New Fee	$188.00	New Fee	New Fee
Animal Business Registration	Annual	$312.00	$370.00	$58.00	18.59%
Domestic Animal Business Additional Inspection	Per Inspection	New Fee	$150.00	New Fee	New Fee
Foster Carer Registration					
Foster Carer Registration	Annual	$66.00	$69.00	$3.00	4.55%
Pound Release Fees					
Release of domestic dog from pound (reclaim within 1-2 days) - unregistered	Per Animal	$315.00	$328.00	$13.00	4.13%
Release of domestic dog from pound (reclaim within 3-5 days) - unregistered	Per Animal	$345.00	$359.00	$14.00	4.06%
Release of domestic dog from pound (reclaim within 6-8 days) - unregistered	Per Animal	$385.00	$401.00	$16.00	4.16%
Release of domestic dog from pound (reclaim within 1-2 days) - registered	Per Animal	$230.00	$240.00	$10.00	4.35%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Release of domestic dog from pound (reclaim within 3-5 days) - registered	Per Animal	$260.00	$271.00	$11.00	4.23%
Release of domestic dog from pound (reclaim within 6-8 days) - registered	Per Animal	$300.00	$312.00	$12.00	4.00%
Release of domestic cat from pound (reclaim within 1-2 days) - unregistered	Per Animal	$180.00	$328.00	$148.00	82.22%
Release of domestic cat from pound (reclaim within 3-5 days) - unregistered	Per Animal	$200.00	$359.00	$159.00	79.50%
Release of domestic cat from pound (reclaim within 6-8 days) - unregistered	Per Animal	$220.00	$401.00	$181.00	82.27%
Release of domestic cat from pound (reclaim within 1-2 days) - registered	Per Animal	$135.00	$240.00	$105.00	77.78%
Release of domestic cat from pound (reclaim within 3-5 days) - registered	Per Animal	$155.00	$271.00	$116.00	74.84%
Release of domestic cat from pound (reclaim within 6-8 days) - registered	Per Animal	$175.00	$312.00	$137.00	78.29%
Per day sustenance fee (if held beyond the 8 days impounding fee period)	Per Animal Per Day	$43.00	$45.00	$2.00	4.65%
Livestock					
Impounding fees for large animal - horse, cow or similar	Per Animal	$439.00	$457.00	$18.00	4.10%
Impounding fees for sheep, goat, pig or similar sized animal	Per Animal	$294.00	$306.00	$12.00	4.08%
Posting formal notice	Per Notice	$26.00	$28.00	$2.00	7.69%
Advertisement in newspaper (animal to be sold at auction after statutory 14 day impound period)	Per Advert	$370.00	$385.00	$15.00	4.05%
Offences under the Amenity Local Laws					
Fines and penalties applied under legislation are not reported in this document.					
Other Fees					
Animal surrender	Per Animal	New Fee	$140.00	New Fee	New Fee
Declared dog additional inspection	Per Inspection	New Fee	$150.00	New Fee	New Fee
Cat trap deposit	Per Item	New Fee	$80.00	New Fee	New Fee
Archived records retrieval fee	Per Request	$37.00	$39.00	$2.00	5.41%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Works undertaken on private property					
Land management fee for works undertaken on private property (i.e. unsightly properties/fire hazard clearances or similar)	Charge	$220.00 + Actual cost of works	$229.00 + Actual cost of works	$9.00	4.09%
Release of Impounded goods					
Large Sign (greater than 1800mm x 900mm) i.e. real estate board	Per Sign	$306.00	$319.00	$13.00	4.25%
Medium sign (greater than 900mm or 600mm or less than 1800mm x 900mm) i.e. A-frame sign	Per Sign	$206.00	$215.00	$9.00	4.37%
Small sign (less than 900mm in height or 600mm in width) i.e. pointer board	Per Sign	$94.00	$98.00	$4.00	4.26%
Shopping trolley	Per Trolley	$148.00	$154.00	$6.00	4.05%
Skip bin / Bulk waste container / Shipping container / Clothing recycling bin / or other large item	Per Item	$748 + any additional cost to Council for impound and storage	$780 + any additional cost to Council for impound and storage	$32.00	4.28%
Other Items not mentioned above	Per Item	$225.00	$234.00	$9.00	4.00%
Impounded Vehicle Release					
Impounded Vehicle Administration fee	Per Vehicle	$344.00	$358.00	$14.00	4.07%
Towing fee for standard vehicle (car, trailer, caravan or similar)	Per Vehicle	$358.00	$373.00	$15.00	4.19%
Difficult recovery of vehicle	Per Vehicle	$204.00 + the actual cost	$204.00 + the actual cost	N/A	N/A
Towing fee for Oversized and Non-standard vehicle (including truck, bus, large trailer, etc.)	Per Vehicle	$204.00 + the actual cost	$204.00 + the actual cost	N/A	N/A
Vehicle storage	Per Vehicle	Actual costs	Actual costs	N/A	N/A

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
HEALTH SERVICES					
Public Health & Wellbeing Act Registration Fee					
Medium Risk - Beauty Therapy (non skin penetration)	Per Annum	$293.00	$305.00	$12.00	4.10%
High Risk - High Risk Treatments (e.g. tattooing & skin penetration)	Per Annum	$366.00	$370.00	$4.00	1.09%
One-off registration for Low Risk Hairdressing business/ premise (unchanged proprietor)	One-off registration	$320.00	$330.00	$10.00	3.13%
Aquatic Facilities Category 1 (high usage e.g. Leisure Works/Learn to Swim programmes)	Per Annum	$360.00	$375.00	$15.00	4.17%
Aquatic Facilities Category 1 (low usage)	Per Annum	$245.00	$255.00	$10.00	4.08%
Hotels and Motels					
Up to 100 Guest Capacity	Per Annum	$850.00	$885.00	$35.00	4.12%
101 or more Guest Capacity	Per Annum	$1,400.00	$1,455.00	$55.00	3.93%
Rooming Houses and Student Accommodation					
Up to 12 residents	Per Annum	$850.00	$885.00	$35.00	4.12%
More than 12 residents	Per Annum	$1,400.00	$1,455.00	$55.00	3.93%
Food Act Registration Fees -Includes Food Act Legislative amendments. Registration Fees include registration and first follow up inspection.					
Class 1A Hospitals	Per Annum	$940.00	$980.00	$40.00	4.26%
Class 1A Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	$315.00	$328.00	$13.00	4.13%
Class 1B Aged Care Facilities, Child Care Centres, Meals on Wheels, Catering for Class 1 Premises, Supported Residential Services (SRS)	Per Annum	$730.00	$760.00	$30.00	4.11%
Class 1B Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	$240.00	$250.00	$10.00	4.17%
Class 2A Large Supermarkets - 3 plus departments	Per Annum	$2,410.00	$2,505.00	$95.00	3.94%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Class 2A Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	$350.00	$364.00	$14.00	4.00%
Class 2B Minimarts handling unpackaged potentially hazardous foods, Bakery (handling potentially hazardous foods), Food Manufacturer Small (less than 15 employees), Restaurant, Take Away Food Premises, Caterers, Mobile Food Premises& Temporary Premises, Delicatessen, Juice Bar & Bubble Tea, Bottling high risk drinks (e.g. kombucha), Businesses dehydrating food (atmospheric changing), Canteens selling high risk foods.	Per Annum	$745.00	$775.00	$30.00	4.03%
Class 2B Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	$265.00	$275.00	$10.00	3.77%
Class 2CG Class 2 Community Group registration	Per Annum	$190.00	$198.00	$8.00	4.21%
Class 2CG Class 2 Community Group registration - 3-month registration	Per Application	$105.00	$110.00	$5.00	4.76%
Class 2 Commercial business - 3-month registration	Per Application	$175.00	$195.00	$20.00	11.43%
Class 2 Food vending machines	Per Vending Machine	$100.00	$104.00	$4.00	4.00%
Class 2HB Home Businesses	Per Annum	$530.00	$550.00	$20.00	3.77%
Class 2HB Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	$158.00	$165.00	$7.00	4.43%
Class 2ES Supermarkets - 3 plus departments. That hold non standard FSP	Per Annum	$2,550.00	$2,650.00	$100.00	3.92%
Class 2ES Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	$350.00	$364.00	$14.00	4.00%
Class 2FVS Mobile Food Vans (not fixed in place) - for the first 10 vans	Per Annum	$489.00	$510.00	$21.00	4.29%
Class 2FVS Mobile Food Vans - for 11th van onwards (50% Class 2FV fee)	Per Annum	$244.50	$255.00	$10.50	4.29%
Class 2FVS Mobile Food Vans Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	New Fee	$132.00	New Fee	New Fee
Class 2E Premises that hold non standard FSP's and are subject to independent audit	Per Annum	$745.00	$775.00	$30.00	4.03%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Class 2E Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	$265.00	$276.00	$11.00	4.15%
Class 2M Large High Risk Food Manufacturer with 15 or more employees. Chocolate manufacturing, high risk bakery products, fermented beverage processing (kombucha), canned food processing, high risk condiments, extended shelf life food, fruit and vegetable processing, dehydrated or atmospheric change foods	Per Annum	$1,645.00	$1,710.00	$65.00	3.95%
Class 2M Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	New Fee	$428.00	New Fee	New Fee
Class 3S Large Supermarkets that sell potentially hazardous pre-packed foods. e.g. ALDI	Per Annum	$1,500.00	$1,560.00	$60.00	4.00%
Class 3S Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	$252.00	$263.00	$11.00	4.37%
Class 3 Home based businesses selling low risk foods, Bakery (handling bread, muffins, shelf stable cakes and cheese and bacon rolls) Bar, Convenience stores and kiosks (handling pre-packaged potentially hazardous foods), Fruit and Vegetable Premises, ice cream (retailing only), honey packaging, cafes handling coffee and low risk foods only, Low risk manufacturers and warehouses with less than 15 employees (Confectionary Packaging), Distributor, Importer, Warehouse, Winery Food Vehicles, Pre-Packaged Food Premises (High Risk)	Per Annum	$420.00	$435.00	$15.00	3.57%
Class 3 Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	$160.00	$167.00	$7.00	4.38%
Class 3A Home based food business requiring an FFS. Accommodation Getaways handling simple foods (cook and serve bacon and eggs, continental breakfasts)Home based food businesses making chutneys, jams and relishes	Per Annum	$489.00	$510.00	$21.00	4.29%
Class 3FV Mobile Food Vans (not fixed in place) - up to 10 vans (fee per van)	Per Annum	$385.00	$400.00	$15.00	3.90%
Class 3FV Mobile Food Vans - for 11th van onwards (50% Class 3FV fee)	Per Annum	$192.50	$200.00	$7.50	3.90%
Class 3FV Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	New Fee	$160.00	New Fee	New Fee

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Class 3M Large low risk manufacturing with 15 or more employees - Low risk beverage processing, alcohol processing, low risk bakery product processing, low risk condiments, confectionary where no allergen claims are made	Per Annum	$1,316.00	$1,370.00	$54.00	4.10%
Class 3M Additional inspection fee	Per Annum	$350.00	$364.00	$14.00	4.00%
Class 3CG Class 3 Community Group - 3-month registration	Per Application	$105.00	$110.00	$5.00	4.76%
Class 3CG Class 3 Community Group events - annual registration	Per Annum	$190.00	$198.00	$8.00	4.21%
Class 3 Commercial business - 3-month registration	Per Application	$175.00	$150.00	($25.00)	(14.29%)
Class 3 Food vending machines	Per Vending Machine	$100.00	$104.00	$4.00	4.00%
Class 3 Club - Seasonal Sporting Club	Per Annum	$210.00	$219.00	$9.00	4.29%
Class 3 Club Additional Inspection Fee	Per Inspection	$155.00	$162.00	$7.00	4.52%
Late Payment Fee for Food Registration Renewals	Per Annum	25% of Registration fee	25% of Registration fee	N/A	N/A
Other Fees					
Transfer of Health or Food Act registrations	Per Request	50% of Current Year registration fees	50% of Current Year registration fees	N/A	N/A
15 Month Registration - For applications submitted Oct, Nov and Dec	Per Request	New Fee	25% current registration fee + the full next years registration fee.	New Fee	New Fee

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Property inquiry/ inspection of business on request (10 Working Day Turnaround)	Per Request	$290.00	$300.00	$10.00	3.45%
Property inquiry/ inspection of business on request (4 Working Day turnaround)	Per Request	$395.00	$410.00	$15.00	3.80%
Second and subsequent property inquiry/ inspection of business on request	Per Request	$130.00	$135.00	$5.00	3.85%
Pro Rata Refund of Registration Fees	Per Request	$56.00	$59.00	$3.00	5.36%
Fast tracked registration Fee (Under 5 Working Days)	Per Request	New Fee	$160.00	New Fee	New Fee
Establishment Fee - Food Act Premises	Per Request	$395.00	$410.00	$15.00	3.80%
Establishment Fee - Businesses Registrable under Public Health and Wellbeing Act	Per Request	$185.00	$193.00	$8.00	4.32%
Establishment Fee - Food Act Home Based Businesses and Mobile businesses	Per Request	$185.00	$193.00	$8.00	4.32%
Food laboratory sampling of second sample (failed)	Per Sample	Actual costs + $190 reinspection fee	Actual costs + $190 reinspection fee	N/A	N/A
Lodgement fee for new registration application	Per Request	$80.00	$80.00	$0.00	0.00%
Archived records retrieval fee	Per Request	$38.00	$40.00	$2.00	5.26%
Vaccines Provided at Public Sessions					
Boostrix (Adult Diphtheria, Tetanus & Pertussis)	Per Injection	$55.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
Chicken Pox	Per Injection	$73.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Flu - Quad Valent	Per Injection	$35.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
Hepatitis A (Adult)	Per Injection	$74.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
Hepatitis B (Adult)	Per Injection	$45.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
Twinrix (Hepatitis A & B) Adult	Per Injection	$118.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
Nimerix (Meningococcal ACWY)	Per Injection	$96.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
Administration of Unsubsidised Vaccine Supplied by Government Health Departments	Per Injection	$23.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
MMR	Per Injection	$70.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
BEXSERO (Meningococcal B)	Per Injection	$130.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Service Provided at Clients Business					
Corporate Businesses Service - Two Nurses minimum charge	Per First Hour for 2 Nurses	$446.00	$200.00	($246.00)	(55.16%)
Corporate Businesses Service - Additional Hours	Per Nurse Per Hour	$166.00	$150.00	($16.00)	(9.64%)
Boostrix (Adult Diphtheria, Tetanus & Pertussis)	Per Injection	$64.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
Hepatitis A (Adult)	Per Injection	$74.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
Hepatitis B (Adult)	Per Injection	$45.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
Twinrix (Hepatitis A & B) Adult	Per Injection	$118.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
Flu - Quad Valent	Per Injection	$35.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A
MMR	Per Injection	$70.00	Actual vaccine costs + administration fee	N/A	N/A

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Service provided to Clients					
Immunisation record charge	Per Client	$7.00	$8.00	$1.00	14.29%
Administration Charge - Under 18 and School Students (Non funded vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$15.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Under 18 and School Students (Funded vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$0.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Influenza Council Session (Funded Vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$20.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Influenza Council Sessions (Non funded vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$0.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Corporate (Funded vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$15.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Corporate (Non funded vaccine)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$20.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Adult funded vaccine (non-influenza)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$20.00	New Fee	New Fee
Administration Charge - Adult non-funded vaccine (non-influenza)	Per Vaccine	New Fee	$20.00	New Fee	New Fee
Overseas immunisation catch up schedule charge	Per Client	$22.00	$23.00	$1.00	4.55%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Connected Communities - Early Years					
KINDERGARTEN SERVICES					
CHILD CARE					
Long Day Care					
Per Day (all centres)	Per Day	$165.35	$172.60	$7.25	4.38%
Confirmation Bond (all centres) - based on number of days requested per week	Per Day Per Child	$75.00	$75.00	$0.00	0.00%
INTEGRATED EARLY YEARS OPERATIONS					
Connected Communities - Community Access and Support					
HOME & COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES					
Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) client fees are based on Community Health Income Ranges/Centrelink Income Test for pensioners. *Clients are not disadvantaged by inability to pay, fee waivering is approved as assessed as appropriate by Service Provider Coordinator.* *The income ranges per annum, effective July 2019 are as follows:* *Individual Low fee < $39,089 Medium fee $39,089 - $86,208 High fee > $ 86,208* *Couple Low fee < $59,802 Medium fee $59,802 - $115,245 High fee > $115,245* **Family (1 Child) Low fee < $66,009 Medium fee $66,009 - $118,546 High fee > $118,546* **plus $6,206 per additional child*					
HOME MAINTENANCE					
Clients pay for the cost of materials plus the hourly rate.					
Low:					
S - Single (Income Range less than $39,089 pa) C - Couple (Income Range less than $59,802 pa)	Per Hour	$19.00	$19.80	$0.80	4.21%
Medium:					
S - Single (Income range $39,089 - $86,208 pa) C - Couple (Income range $59,802 - $115,245 pa)	Per Hour	$24.40	$25.50	$1.10	4.51%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
High:					
S - Single (Income range more than $86,208 pa) C - Couple (Income range more than $115,245 pa)	Per Hour	$75.00	$75.00	$0.00	0.00%
Undisclosed income or compensation	Per Hour (& as per receipt for materials)	$113.50	$118.00	$4.50	3.96%
Service Cancellation - less than 24 hours notice prior to service provision	Per Booking	100% of service booking	100% of service booking	N/A	N/A
HOME MODIFICATIONS					
Clients pay for the cost of materials plus the hourly rate.					
Low:					
S - Single (Income Range less than $39,089 pa) C - Couple (Income Range less than $59,802 pa)	Per Hour	$19.00	$19.80	$0.80	4.21%
Medium:					
S - Single (Income range $39,089 - $86,208 pa) C - Couple (Income range $59,802 - $115,245 pa)	Per Hour	$24.40	$25.50	$1.10	4.51%
High:					
S - Single (Income range more than $86,208 pa) C - Couple (Income range more than $115,245 pa)	Per Hour	$75.00	$78.00	$3.00	4.00%
Undisclosed income or compensation	Per Hour (& as per receipt for materials)	$113.50	$118.00	$4.50	3.96%
Service Cancellation - less than 24 hours notice prior to service provision	Per Booking	100% of service booking	100% of service booking	N/A	N/A

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
FOOD SERVICES					
Centre based & home delivered meals					
Three (3) Course Meal Financial Hardship or Vulnerable Person as assessed by Short Term Support Team	Per Meal	$5.00	$5.50	$0.50	10.00%
Three (3) Course Meal Low Income/ Medium Income	Per Meal	$12.00	$12.00	$0.00	0.00%
Three (3) Course Meal High Income	Per Meal	$20.20	$21.50	$1.30	6.44%
Two (2) Course Meal (Entrée and Main, or Main and Dessert) Financial Hardship or Vulnerable Person as assessed by Short Term Support Team	Per Meal	$4.00	$4.50	$0.50	12.50%
Two (2) Course Meal (Entrée and Main, or Main and Dessert) Low Income/Medium Income	Per Meal	$9.60	$10.00	$0.40	4.17%
Two (2) Course Meal (Entree and Main, or Main and Dessert) High Income	Per Meal	$16.20	$17.00	$0.80	4.94%
Service Cancellation - less than 24 hours notice prior to service provision	Per Booking	100% of service booking	100% of service booking	N/A	N/A
ALLIED HEALTH - OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY					
Low Income	Per Consultation	$13.50	$14.00	$0.50	3.70%
Medium Income	Per Consultation	$20.25	$21.00	$0.75	3.70%
High Income	Per Consultation	$133.00	$138.00	$5.00	3.76%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
COMMUNITY TRANSPORT					
Regular bus route passenger	Return Trip	$7.50	$8.00	$0.50	6.67%
Regular bus route passenger	One Way Trip	$3.75	$4.00	$0.25	6.67%
Community Outing	Per Outing	$10.50	$12.00	$1.50	14.29%
Outing Service Cancellation - less than 24 hours notice prior to service provision	Per Booking	100% of service booking	100% of service booking	N/A	N/A
Casual Senior Community Group Usage, Emergency Services and Internal Charges					
Weekday (business hours) per use - maximum 8 hours Small Bus (12-16 seats)	Per Use	$150.00	$160.00	$10.00	6.67%
Weekday (business hours) per use - maximum 8 hours - Medium Bus (22-25 seats)	Per Use	$190.00	$200.00	$10.00	5.26%
Weekday (business hours) per use - maximum 8 hours - Large Bus (33-37 seats)	Per Use	$365.00	$365.00	$0.00	0.00%
Weekday business hours booking fee	Per Booking	New Fee	$88.50	New Fee	New Fee
Outside business hours and weekend per use - Small Bus (12-16 seats)	Per Hour	$85.00	$85.00	$0.00	0.00%
Outside business hours and weekend per use - Medium Bus (22-25 seats)	Per Hour	$90.00	$90.00	$0.00	0.00%
Outside business hours and weekend per use - Large Bus (33-37 seats)	Per Hour	$100.00	$100.00	$0.00	0.00%
Outside business hours booking fee	Per Booking	$85.00	$88.50	$3.50	4.12%
Weekday business hours - Small Bus (12-16 seats)) - internal use	Per Booking	New Fee	$200.00	New Fee	New Fee
Weekday business hours - Large Bus (33-37 seats) - internal use	Per Booking	$365.00	$365.00	$0.00	0.00%
Outside business hours and weekend use - Small Bus (12-16 seats)) - internal use per booking	Per hour	New Fee	$89.00	New Fee	New Fee
Outside business hours and weekend use - Large Bus (33-37 seats) - internal use per booking	Per hour	$100.00	$100.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
SENIOR'S EVENTS					
Events / Workshops - Seniors Festival Events etc.	Per Event	Up to $15	Up to $20	N/A	N/A
YOUTH EVENTS					
Events / Workshops	Per Ticket	Up to $15	Up to $15	N/A	N/A
Accredited training/skills development workshops	Per Ticket	New Fee	Up to 50% of supplier fee	New Fee	New Fee
Connected Communities - Active and Creative Communities					
RECREATIONAL RESERVES					
Recreation and Sporting Grounds / Tennis and Netball Courts / Turf Wickets / Parks and Reserves					
Tennis Courts					
Court Fees	Per Court Per Annum	$148.00	$148.00	$0.00	0.00%
Tennis Pavilions					
Batterham Park	Per Annum	$1,141.00	$1,141.00	$0.00	0.00%
Reta Matthews Reserve (Boronia)	Per Annum	$1,098.00	$1,098.00	$0.00	0.00%
Eildon Park	Per Annum	$1,214.00	$1,214.00	$0.00	0.00%
Glenfern Park (Ferntree Gully)	Per Annum	$1,080.00	$1,080.00	$0.00	0.00%
Guy Turner Reserve (Guy Turner)	Per Annum	$773.00	$773.00	$0.00	0.00%
Coleman Road Reserve (Knox City)	Per Annum	$2,241.00	$2,241.00	$0.00	0.00%
Knox Gardens Reserve (Knox Gardens)	Per Annum	$1,476.00	$1,476.00	$0.00	0.00%
Carrington Park (Knoxfield)	Per Annum	$900.00	$900.00	$0.00	0.00%
Miller Park	Per Annum	$1,141.00	$1,141.00	$0.00	0.00%
Seebeck Reserve (Rowville)	Per Annum	$1,147.00	$1,147.00	$0.00	0.00%
Exner Reserve (Scoresby)	Per Annum	$1,316.00	$1,316.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Templeton Reserve (Templeton)	Per Annum	$1,893.00	$1,893.00	$0.00	0.00%
Wantirna Reserve (Wantirna)	Per Annum	$1,198.00	$1,198.00	$0.00	0.00%
Windermere Reserve	Per Annum	$1,230.00	$1,230.00	$0.00	0.00%
Cricket					
Junior / Vets / Women's / All Abilities Teams	Per Team Per Season	$101.00	$101.00	$0.00	0.00%
Senior Teams	Per Team Per Season	$640.00	$640.00	$0.00	0.00%
Winter Senior Teams	Per Team Per Season	$428.00	$428.00	$0.00	0.00%
Football					
Junior / Vets / Women's / All Abilities Teams	Per Team Per Season	$395.00	$395.00	$0.00	0.00%
Senior Teams (includes U 19 and Reserves)	Per Team Per Season	$2,836.00	$2,836.00	$0.00	0.00%
Soccer					
Junior / Vets / Women's / All Abilities Teams	Per Team Per Season	$251.00	$251.00	$0.00	0.00%
Senior Teams	Per Team Per Season	$1,713.00	$1,713.00	$0.00	0.00%
Baseball					
Junior / Vets / Women's / All Abilities Teams	Per Team Per Season	$69.00	$69.00	$0.00	0.00%
Senior Teams	Per Team Per Season	$490.00	$490.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Netball / Court					
Training	Per Court Per Annum	$104.00	$104.00	$0.00	0.00%
Facility Lease and License Agreements					
Fitness Permit - Community Group / Not for profit (up to 10 sessions per week)	6 months	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Fitness Permit - Commercial (up to 10 sessions per week)	6 months	$1,734.00	$1,734.00	$0.00	0.00%
Fitness Permit - Short Term Usage	Per Day	New Fee	$289.00	New Fee	New Fee
Eastern Football Netball League - use of Tormore Reserve for the Senior Football Finals series	Per Annum	$3,856.00	$3,856.00	$0.00	0.00%
Eastern Football Netball League - use of Marie Wallace Bayswater Oval for the Senior Football Finals series	Per Annum	$3,856.00	$3,856.00	$0.00	0.00%
Preparation of Turf Wickets					
Tormore Reserve (1 oval)	Per Season	$10,158.00	$10,158.00	$0.00	0.00%
Marie Wallace - Bayswater Oval & Bayswater Park (2 ovals)	Per Season	$13,539.00	$13,539.00	$0.00	0.00%
Reserves / Ovals	Per Point Per Oval Per Season	$267.00	$267.00	$0.00	0.00%
Charges are seasonal and are based on Council's rating of 1 to 18 points per oval, at a fixed rate per point.					
Casual Users - Sporting Reserves					
Knox Schools and School Sports Associations	No Charge	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Knox Community / Non Profit Usage	No Charge	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Non Knox Schools / Non Knox Community Usage	Per Day	$118.00	$118.00	$0.00	0.00%
Commercial Usage (Corporate and Business Activities / Purposes)	Per Day	$458.00	$458.00	$0.00	0.00%
Pavilions – Rental					
Batterham Reserve No. 1	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Batterham Reserve No. 2	Per annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Bayswater Oval	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Bayswater Park	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Benedikt Park	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Carrington Park	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Chandler Park	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Colchester Park	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Dobson Park	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Egan Lee Reserve	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Eildon Park	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Exner Reserve (Scoresby)	Per annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Fairpark Reserve	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Gilbert Park	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Guy Turner	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
HV Jones Reserve	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Kings Park Athletics	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Kings Park No. 1	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Kings Park B / Ball No. 1	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Knox Gardens Reserve No. 1	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Knox Gardens Reserve No. 2	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Knox Park Soccer	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Lakesfield Reserve	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Lewis Park	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Liberty Avenue Reserve	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Miller Park	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Milpera Reserve	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Park Ridge Reserve	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Pickett Reserve	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Rowville Recreation Reserve No. 1	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Rowville Recreation Reserve No. 2	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Sasses Avenue Reserve	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Schultz Reserve	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Stud Park	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Talaskia Reserve	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Templeton Reserve	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Tormore Reserve	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Walker Wantirna South Reserve	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Wally Tew Reserve No. 1 (Ferntree Gully)	Per Annum	$1,352.00	$1,352.00	$0.00	0.00%
Wally Tew Reserve No. 2	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Wantirna Reserve	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Windermere Reserve	Per Annum	$680.00	$680.00	$0.00	0.00%
Netball Pavilions					
HV Jones Reserve Netball Pavilion	Per Annum	$194.00	$194.00	$0.00	0.00%
Fair Park Netball (part of the multipurpose Centre)	Per Annum	$194.00	$194.00	$0.00	0.00%
Walker Reserve Netball Pavilion	Per Annum	$194.00	$194.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
FESTIVALS & EVENTS					
All Council run events					
Stall Holders (Commercial and Other)					
Commercial Food - Large	Per Day	$530.00	$650.00	$120.00	22.64%
Commercial Food - Medium	Per Day	$400.00	$500.00	$100.00	25.00%
Commercial Food - Small	Per Day	$275.00	$350.00	$75.00	27.27%
Market Site - Large	Per Day	$345.00	$360.00	$15.00	4.35%
Market Site - Medium	Per Day	$260.00	$270.00	$10.00	3.85%
Market Site - Small	Per Day	$175.00	$175.00	$0.00	0.00%
Stall Holders (Community)					
Community - Site only BYO Equipment	Per Day	$0.00	$0.00	N/A	N/A
Site Package - Small 3x3m (includes marquee 1x table, 2x chairs)	Per Day	$100.00	$200.00	$100.00	100.00%
Community Stallholder Public Liability Insurance Cover	Per Day	$39.00	$40.00	$1.00	2.56%
Commercial Filming					
Filming Permit - Commercial/High Impact	Per Permit	$270.00	$270.00	$0.00	0.00%
Community Event Kit (Trailer)					
Small Community Event Kit and Trailer. (Giant outdoor games, basic event items & safety gear)	Per event	$350.00	$265.00	($85.00)	(24.29%)
Large Community Event Kit. (Any selection of event infrastructure items - marquees, staging, tables, chairs, umbrellas, fencing & safety gear, etc.)	Per event	$550.00	$370.00	($180.00)	(32.73%)
FERNTREE GULLY COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE					
Not for Profit / Community Group Hire Rates:					
Regular Hire Groups (minimum 3 per term)	Per Hour	$42.00	$42.00	$0.00	0.00%
Casual Hire / Room (includes art room and kitchen)	Per Hour	$48.00	$48.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Whole of venue (includes kitchen, excludes pottery room)	Per Hour	$84.00	$84.00	$0.00	0.00%
Function Clean Up Fee (applied to bookings 3 hours or more, involving food/drink/arts.	Per Hour or Part Thereof	$229.00	$229.00	$0.00	0.00%
Commercial Hire Rates					
Regular Hire / Room - minimum 3 per term (includes kitchen)	Per Hour	$60.00	$60.00	$0.00	0.00%
Casual Hire / Room (includes kitchen)	Per Hour	$68.00	$68.00	$0.00	0.00%
Whole of venue (includes kitchen, excludes Pottery Room)	Per Hour	$136.00	$136.00	$0.00	0.00%
Function clean Up Fee	Per Hour or Part There of	$229.00	$229.00	$0.00	0.00%
Bonds (refundable) - Refer to the end of the Community Services Facilities section.					
Activities					
Pottery Classes Fees - Adult	Per 3 Hour Class	$30.00	$30.00	$0.00	0.00%
Arts/Cultural Class Fees - Adult	Per 2 Hour Class	$23.00	$23.00	$0.00	0.00%
Pottery Firing Fees (Students Only)	Per Firing	$8.00	$8.00	$0.00	0.00%
Pottery Firing Fees (Non-Students)	Per Firing	$11.00	$11.00	$0.00	0.00%
Pottery Classes Fees - Children	Per 1.5 Hour Class	$20.00	$20.00	$0.00	0.00%
Arts/Cultural Class Fees - Children	Per 1.5 Hour Class	$20.00	$20.00	$0.00	0.00%
Pottery Birthday Party - 1.5 hours (for 10 children, includes tutor & materials)	Per 1.5 hour party	$206.00	$206.00	$0.00	0.00%
PLACEMAKERS					
Regular Hire / Room, minimum 3 per term (includes art OR meeting room & kitchenette)	Per Hour	$42.00	$42.00	$0.00	0.00%
Casual Hire / Room (includes art OR meeting room & kitchenette)	Per Hour	$48.00	$48.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Whole of venue (includes art room, meeting room and kitchenette)	Per Hour	$84.00	$84.00	$0.00	0.00%
Function Clean Up Fee	Per Hour or Part Thereof	$229.00	$229.00	$0.00	0.00%
ROWVILLE COMMUNITY CENTRE					
Hire Type					
Multi - purpose Hall - Outside Staffed Hours (min 3 Hours)	Per 2 Courts Per Hour	$160.00	$139.00	($21.00)	(13.13%)
Multi - purpose Hall -Peak (All other times outside of Off Peak Hours)*	Per Hour	$48.00	$48.00	$0.00	0.00%
Multi purpose Hall - Off Peak (9am - 4pm Monday - Friday)*	Per Hour	New Fee	$41.00	New Fee	New Fee
Multi - purpose Hall - Authorised User (Unstaffed)	Per Hour	New Fee	$41.00	New Fee	New Fee
Meetings Room (One Room)*	Per Hour	$22.50	$23.00	$0.50	2.22%
Meetings Room (2 Adjoining Rooms)*	Per Hour	$36.00	$36.00	$0.00	0.00%
Meetings / Regular Hire - Interview Room 1	Per Hour	$16.00	$16.00	$0.00	0.00%
Meetings / Regular Hire - Interview Room 2	Per Hour	$26.00	$24.00	($2.00)	(7.69%)
Tennis Pavilion - Regular Hirer*	Per Hour	$37.00	$38.00	$1.00	2.70%
Tennis Pavilion - Casual Hirer*	Per Hour	New Fee	$45.60	New Fee	New Fee
RCC Community Kitchen	Per Hour	$35.00	$35.00	$0.00	0.00%
RCC Community Kitchen - Food Relief	Per session	New Fee	$18.50	New Fee	New Fee
Badminton/ Pickleball Court Hire *	Per Hour	$22.00	$22.00	$0.00	0.00%
Outdoor Court Hire	Per Hour	$20.00	$15.00	($5.00)	(25.00%)
KNOX REGIONAL NETBALL CENTRE (KRNC)					
Stadium Charges					
Court Hire Peak (All other times outside of Off Peak Hrs)	Per Court Per Hour	$56.00	$58.00	$2.00	3.57%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Court Hire Off Peak (9am to 5pm Mon - Friday)	Per Court Per Hour	$40.00	$41.00	$1.00	2.50%
Court Hire - Authorised User (unstaffed)	Per court per hour	New Fee	$41.00	New Fee	New Fee
Badminton/ Pickleball Court Hire	Per Court Per Hour	New Fee	$22.00	New Fee	New Fee
Court Hire - Outside Staffed Hours (min 3 Hours)	Per 2 Courts Per Hour	New Fee	$139.00	New Fee	New Fee
Room Hire					
Meeting Room - 50 People*	Per Hour	New Fee	$36.00	New Fee	New Fee
Meeting Room - 10 People	Per Hour	New Fee	$16.50	New Fee	New Fee
MDNA Administration Office	Per Annum	$1,476.00	$1,476.00	$0.00	0.00%
Outdoor Courts					
Court Hire	Per Court Per Hour	$26.00	$15.00	($11.00)	(42.31%)
Court Hire - Tournaments - based on 7 courts	Per 7+ Courts Per Hour	$594.00	$84.00	($510.00)	(85.86%)
KRNC Competitions					
Competitions (KRNC)	Per Team Per Game	$80.00	$80.00	$0.00	0.00%
Team Registration KCC Competition	Per Team Per Season	$80.00	$80.00	$0.00	0.00%
CARRINGTON PARK LEISURE AND MULTIPURPOSE FACILITY					
LEISURE CENTRE					
Activity Room	Per Hour	$25.00	$25.00	$0.00	0.00%
Gym	Per Hour	$25.00	$25.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Meeting Room - Regular Hirer	Per Hour	$14.00	$14.00	$0.00	0.00%
Meeting Room - Casual Hirer (min 2 hours)*	Per Hour	New Fee	$24.00	New Fee	New Fee
Office	Per Hour	$14.00	$16.50	$2.50	17.86%
MULTIPURPOSE CENTRE					
Activity Space 1 - Regular Hirer*	Per Hour	New Fee	$35.00	New Fee	New Fee
Activity Space 1 - Casual Hirer (min 2 hours)*	Per Hour	New Fee	$50.00	New Fee	New Fee
Activity Space 1 - Casual Hirer (Saturday/Sunday)*	Per Hour	New Fee	$75.00	New Fee	New Fee
Activity Space (One Room)*	Per Hour	New Fee	$24.00	New Fee	New Fee
Activity Space (Two Adjoining Rooms)*	Per Hour	New Fee	$30.00	New Fee	New Fee
Woodwork Room*	Per Hour	New Fee	$24.00	New Fee	New Fee
AIMEE SEEBECK HALL					
Hall - Day rate (before 5pm)	Per Hour	$38.00	$39.50	$1.50	3.95%
Hall - Casual Hirer (min 2 hours)*	Per Hour	New Fee	$47.40	New Fee	New Fee
Community Support rate	Per Session	New Fee	$18.50	New Fee	New Fee
Indoor Leisure Centres - Activities					
The Indoor Leisure Centre co-ordinates a range of leisure activities across all Centres. The determination of fees associated with these programs considers direct and indirect costs and fees charged by competitors.					
Basketball/Netball Court Hire - Single Casual Entry "Drop In"	Per Person	$5.00	$5.00	$0.00	0.00%
Community Round Robins (Pickle Ball, Table Tennis, Badminton etc.)	Per Person	$15.00	$15.50	$0.50	3.33%
Yoga/Pilates	Per Session	$17.00	$17.00	$0.00	0.00%
Term Fee Yoga/Pilates (Ten week Term)	Per Term	$153.00	$160.00	$7.00	4.58%
Group Fitness Class	Per Session	$13.00	$13.00	$0.00	0.00%
Term Fee Group Fitness Class (Ten week term)	Per Term	$117.00	$122.00	$5.00	4.27%
Senior Exercise Class	Per Session	$9.00	$9.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Term Fee Senior Exercise Class (Ten week term)	Per Term	$81.00	$85.00	$4.00	4.94%
Senior Sports - Session (per 2 hours)	Per Session	$7.00	$7.00	$0.00	0.00%
Under 55yrs Sports - Session (per 2 hours)	Per Session	$9.00	$9.50	$0.50	5.56%
Facilitated Program/Activity (per 2 hours)	Per Session	New Fee	$17.00	New Fee	New Fee
Indoor Leisure Centres - Venue Hire					
** Senior groups are eligible to received a 10% discount on hire charges specified above.*					
Charity Groups are eligible to receive a 20% discount on facility hire for activities that deliver a service for public benefit.					
Clean Up Fee	Per Hour or Part Thereof	$232.00	$232.00	$0.00	0.00%
Holding fee (regular hirers) for cancellation of booking within 48hours	Per Regular Booking	50% total daily booking fee	50% total daily booking fee	N/A	N/A
Knox City Council Staff (min 3 hours)	Per Hour	$87.00	$87.00	$0.00	0.00%
KNOX COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE					
Not for Profit / Community Group Rates:					
Supper / Meeting Room (up to 6 hours)	Per Hour	$46.00	$46.00	$0.00	0.00%
Supper / Meeting Room (6 hours plus)	Per Hour	$42.00	$42.00	$0.00	0.00%
Theatre - No Biobox (house lights only). E.g.. rehearsals, meetings, seminars etc.	Per Hour	$46.00	$46.00	$0.00	0.00%
Theatre - Bump in/rehearsal - minimum 4 hour booking. (Includes biobox , compulsory venue technician, kitchen, green room. Excludes Supper/Meeting Room)	Per Hour	$121.00	$121.00	$0.00	0.00%
Entire Facility - Bump In/rehearsal - minimum 4 hour booking (Includes Theatre bump in/rehearsal plus use of supper/meeting room)	Per Hour	$160.00	$160.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Theatre - Production - Minimum 4 hour booking (Includes a bio box and compulsory venue technician, kitchen, green room and audience access to foyer. Excludes Supper/Meeting Room)	Per Hour	$145.00	$145.00	$0.00	0.00%
Entire Facility - Production - Min 4 hour booking (Exclusive access to all areas. Includes bio box and one compulsory technician.)	Per Hour	$180.00	$180.00	$0.00	0.00%
Commercial Hire Rates					
Supper / Meeting Room (up to 6 hours)	Per Hour	$71.00	$71.00	$0.00	0.00%
Supper / Meeting Room (6 hours plus or regular hirers)	Per Hour	$63.00	$63.00	$0.00	0.00%
Theatre - No Biobox (house lights only). E.g.. rehearsals, meetings, seminars etc.	Per Hour	$76.00	$79.00	$3.00	3.95%
Theatre - Bump in/rehearsal - minimum 4 hour booking (Includes biobox, compulsory venue technician, kitchen, green room. Excludes Supper/Meeting Room)	Per Hour	$152.00	$152.00	$0.00	0.00%
Entire Facility - Bump In/rehearsal -minimum 4 hour booking (Includes Theatre bump in/rehearsal plus use of supper/meeting room)	Per Hour	$219.00	$219.00	$0.00	0.00%
Theatre - Production - Minimum 4 hour booking (Includes biobox, compulsory venue technician, kitchen, green room and audience access to foyer. Excludes Supper/Meeting Room)	Per Hour	$235.00	$235.00	$0.00	0.00%
Entire Facility - Production - Min 4 hour booking (Exclusive access to all areas. Includes bio box and one compulsory technician.)	Per Hour	$291.00	$291.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
COMMUNITY SERVICES FACILITIES					
Internal Hire Charge (all Centres if available)	Per Hour	50% of community hire rates	50% off hire rates	N/A	N/A
Community Services Facilities - Bonds (Refundable) This is a fee paid to managers of Council Community Facilities by casual hirers as security against damage and/or cleaning as a result of use of the facility. For more information about the applicable level of bond, please refer to Council's Casual Hire of Community Facilities Policy.					
Level 3 Security Bond	Per Function	$1,322.00	$1,322.00	$0.00	0.00%
Level 2 Security Bond	Per Function	$789.00	$789.00	$0.00	0.00%
Level 1 Security Bond	Per Function	$406.00	$406.00	$0.00	0.00%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Customer and Performance - Governance and Risk					
OFFICE ACCOMMODATION					
The Civic Centre meeting rooms are available for business and community functions at a competitive fee. The fee includes specific number of venue support officer(s) and building costs to ensure cost recovery is achieved. Additional costs will be applied if additional venue support officer(s) is required to support a function. Discounts and concessions apply under the policy for community and charitable organisations. Amounts have been rounded up to the nearest dollar as a practical fee for quoting and administering room bookings.					
Non Profit / Charitable					
Meeting Rooms 1 or 2 (includes one venue support officer)					
Monday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm	Per Hour	$76.00	$80.00	$4.00	5.26%
Monday to Friday After 5.00pm for a minimum 3 Hours	Per Hour	$127.00	$133.00	$6.00	4.72%
Saturday or Sunday for a minimum 3 Hours	Per Hour	$166.00	$173.00	$7.00	4.22%
Commercial					
Meeting Rooms 1 or 2 (includes two venue support officers)					
Monday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm	Per Day	$779.00	$811.00	$32.00	4.11%
- Half Day Rate - 3 Hours or Less	Half Day	$397.00	$413.00	$16.00	4.03%
Monday to Friday After 5.00pm	Per Day	$1,385.00	$1,441.00	$56.00	4.04%
- Half Day Rate - 3 Hours or Less	Half Day	$693.00	$721.00	$28.00	4.04%
Saturday or Sunday	Per Day	$1,844.00	$1,918.00	$74.00	4.01%
- Half Day Rate - 3 Hours or Less	Half Day	$928.00	$966.00	$38.00	4.09%
Non Profit / Charitable					
Meeting Rooms 3 or 4 (includes one venue support officer)					
Monday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm	Per Hour	$111.00	$116.00	$5.00	4.50%
Monday to Friday After 5.00pm for a minimum 3 Hours	Per Hour	$166.00	$173.00	$7.00	4.22%
Saturday or Sunday for a minimum 3 Hours	Per Hour	$225.00	$234.00	$9.00	4.00%
Commercial					

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Meeting Rooms 3 or 4 (includes two venue support officers)					
Monday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm	Per Day	$1,226.00	$1,276.00	$50.00	4.08%
- Half Day Rate - 3 Hours or Less	Half Day	$617.00	$642.00	$25.00	4.05%
Monday to Friday After 5.00pm	Per Day	$1,844.00	$1,918.00	$74.00	4.01%
- Half Day Rate - 3 Hours or Less	Half Day	$923.00	$960.00	$37.00	4.01%
Saturday or Sunday	Per Day	$2,443.00	$2,541.00	$98.00	4.01%
- Half Day Rate - 3 Hours or Less	Half Day	$1,227.00	$1,277.00	$50.00	4.07%
Non Profit / Charitable					
Meeting Rooms - Full Function Area (includes two venue support officers)					
Monday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm	Per Hour	$220.00	$229.00	$9.00	4.09%
Monday to Friday After 5.00pm for a minimum 3 Hours	Per Hour	$323.00	$336.00	$13.00	4.02%
Saturday or Sunday for a minimum 3 Hours	Per Hour	$386.00	$402.00	$16.00	4.15%
Commercial					
Meeting Rooms – Full Function Area (includes two venue support officers)					
Monday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm	Per Day	$2,442.00	$2,540.00	$98.00	4.01%
- Half Day Rate - 3 Hours or Less	Half Day	$1,226.00	$1,276.00	$50.00	4.08%
Monday to Friday After 5.00pm	Per Day	$3,700.00	$3,848.00	$148.00	4.00%
- Half Day Rate - 3 Hours or Less	Half Day	$1,851.00	$1,926.00	$75.00	4.05%
Saturday or Sunday	Per Day	$4,299.00	$4,471.00	$172.00	4.00%
- Half Day Rate - 3 Hours or Less	Half Day	$2,151.00	$2,238.00	$87.00	4.04%
Additional Staff					
Monday to Friday	Per Hour Per Staff	New Fee	$52.00	New Fee	New Fee
Saturday - Minimum 3 hours	Per Hour Per Staff	New Fee	$78.00	New Fee	New Fee

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Saturday - Additional hours after the first 3 hours	Per Hour Per Staff	New Fee	$104.00	New Fee	New Fee
Sunday and Public Holiday - Minimum 3 hours	Per Hour Per Staff	New Fee	$104.00	New Fee	New Fee
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI)					
The Freedom of Information Act 1982 sets an application fee at two fee units under the Monetary Units Act 2004. For detailed and complex requests additional charges can be made based on a fee for service basis.					
F.O.I. Request Charges	Per Application Per Request	Charge based on Service	Charge based on Service	N/A	N/A
Infrastructure - Engineering Services and Operations					
CHARGEABLE WORKS					
Chargeable works are levied to provide reinstatement of damage to Council's assets, i.e. Road, nature strip openings and special works requests from residents. This work is charged on a total cost recovery plus a 50% administration charge.					
Chargeable Works (Total direct costs + 50%)	Per Job	1.5 x (total direct cost)	1.5 x (total direct cost)	N/A	N/A
Road Opening Inspections:					
Nature strip opening	Per Opening	$300.00	$325.00	$25.00	8.33%
Connection to Council Drain or Kerbing	Per Opening	$300.00	$325.00	$25.00	8.33%
Road Opening	Per Opening	$300.00	$325.00	$25.00	8.33%
Concrete Crossing	Per Opening	$300.00	$325.00	$25.00	8.33%
General Concrete Works	Per Opening	$300.00	$325.00	$25.00	8.33%
Weekend Supervision up to 3 hours	Per Hour	$195.00	$200.00	$5.00	2.56%
Weekend Supervision greater than 3 hours	Per Hour	$220.00	$230.00	$10.00	4.55%
Asset Protection Fees	Per Permit	$325.00	$350.00	$25.00	7.69%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Information Request	Per Request	$41.00	$43.00	$2.00	4.88%
COUNCIL RESERVES					
Chargeable works are levied to provide reinstatement of damage to Council's assets, i.e. Road, nature strip openings and special works requests from residents. This work is charged on a total cost recovery plus a 50% administration charge.					
Bonds (refundable)					
All access permits	Per Application	$1,745.00	$1,815.00	$70.00	4.01%
Temporary on - site storage material bonds	Per Application	$873.00	$910.00	$37.00	4.24%

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Infrastructure - Green Spaces and Environment					
REFUSE DISPOSAL					
GARBAGE, WASTE & RECYCLE COLLECTION					
Residential:					
Residential Waste Charge - Standard Services (80L waste, 240L Recycle, 240L FOGO, Hard Waste, Bundled Green Waste)	Per Service	$428.20	$415.15	($13.05)	(3.05%)
Residential Waste Charge - Reduced Services (80L waste, 240L Recycle, Hard Waste, Bundled Green Waste)	Per Service	$285.90	$265.60	($20.30)	(7.10%)
Residential Waste Charge - Additional bin exempt (80L+120L waste, 240L Recycle, 240L FOGO, Hard Waste, Bundled Green Waste)	Per Service	$428.20	$415.15	($13.05)	(3.05%)
Additional Food and Organics Bin 240 litre (previously green waste only)	Per Bin	$142.30	$149.55	$7.25	5.09%
Garbage Bin upgrade surcharge 120 litre	Per Bin	$53.10	$48.50	($4.60)	(8.66%)
Additional Recycle Bin 240 litre	Per Bin	$72.65	$62.00	($10.65)	(14.66%)
Additional Garbage Bin 120 litre	Per Bin	$137.50	$107.30	($30.20)	(21.96%)
Industrial / Commercial 240 litre bin:					
Garbage weekly service, includes recycle weekly	Per Service	$669.15	$717.05	$47.90	7.16%
Garbage 5 weekday service, includes recycle weekly	Per Service	$2,457.55	$2,763.70	$306.15	12.46%
Garbage weekly service, waste only	Per Service	$465.25	$519.05	$53.80	11.56%
Garbage 5 weekday service, waste only	Per Service	$2,253.65	$2,565.70	$312.05	13.85%
Additional 240 litre Recycle Bin	Per Bin	$203.90	$197.95	($5.95)	(2.92%)
Dorset Square Service:					
Office based premises	Annual	$522.40	$515.60	($6.80)	(1.30%)
Retail based premises	Annual	$1,348.60	$1,341.75	($6.85)	(0.51%)
Food based premises less than 200 square metres floor area	Annual	$3,834.15	$3,827.30	($6.85)	(0.18%)
Food based premises greater than 200 square metres floor area	Annual	$8,801.70	$8,794.85	($6.85)	(0.08%)

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	Adopted 2024-25 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Proposed 2025-26 Fee GST Incl. (where applicable)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) $	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %
Non- Rateable Properties 240 litre bin with 240 litre recycle:					
Garbage fortnightly service, includes recycle fortnightly	Per Service	$495.05	$370.25	($124.80)	(25.21%)
Garbage 5 weekday service, includes recycle fortnightly	Per Service	$2,325.80	$2,473.45	$147.65	6.35%
Additional 240 litre Recycle Bin	Per Bin	$72.65	$62.00	($10.65)	(14.66%)
Non- Rateable Properties 120 litre bin waste with 240 litre bin recycle:					
Garbage fortnightly service, includes recycle fortnightly	Per Service	$389.00	$252.15	($136.85)	(35.18%)
Additional 240 litre Recycle Bin	Per Bin	$72.65	$62.00	($10.65)	(14.66%)
MISCELLANEOUS WASTE CHARGES					
Hard Waste services					
Additional Hard Waste Service	Per Booked Service	$125.00	$130.00	$5.00	4.00%
OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT					
Tree Removal					
Removal of tree due to installation of new crossover	Per Request	Amenity value + Removal costs + Tree planting costs + 2 years maintenance	Amenity value + Removal costs + Tree planting costs + 2 years maintenance	N/A	N/A
Infrastructure - Strategic Infrastructure					
Integrated Stormwater Services					
Stormwater Information Report	Per Report	$ 231.40	$ 240.65	$9.26	4.00%
Flood Information Report	Per Report	New Fee	$ 240.65	New Fee	New Fee

2025-26 DECLARATION OF RATES, CHARGES AND REBATES

With respect to the 2025-26 financial and rating year and in accordance with Sections 158 and 169 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, Knox City Council declares:

1. That an amount of $153,373,551 is intended to be raised by General Rates and Service Rates Charges, calculated as follows:

a. General Rates	$127,210,473
b. Residential Garbage Charge	$25,344,492
c. Optional Garbage Charges	$4,411,766

2. General Rates will be raised by the application of differential rates.

3. Council considers that differential rates will contribute to the equitable and efficient delivery of Council functions that:

    a. The respective objectives of each differential rate be those as specified in the schedule to this declaration;
    b. The respective types or classes of land which are subject to each differential rate be those as defined in the schedule to this declaration;
    c. The respective uses and levels of each differential rate in relation to those respective types or classes of land be those as described in the schedule to this declaration; and
    d. The relevant use of, geographical locations of, planning scheme zonings of and types of buildings on the respective types or classes of land be those as identified in the schedule to this declaration.

4. That the General Rates will be raised by the application of the differential rates to the Capital Improved Value of each rateable land.

5. That seven (7) differential rating categories be declared for the rateable land have the characteristics specified below, which will form the criteria for the differential rate so declared:

    a. **Vacant Land (refer Schedule A)**
    Any Land on which there is no building.

    b. **Derelict Land (refer Schedule A)**
    Any land that contains a building that is ordinarily adapted for occupation which is abandoned, unoccupied and in a very poor condition resulting from both disuse and neglect.

    c. **Retirement Village Land (refer Schedule A)**
    Any Land which is used primarily for the purposes of a retirement village.

    d. **Commercial Land (refer Schedule A)**
    Any Land which is used primarily for commercial purposes.

    e. **Industrial Land (refer Schedule A)**

Any Land which is used primarily for industrial purposes.

f. **Recreation Land (refer Schedule A)**
Any Land as defined as Cultural and Recreational Land in accordance with the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963.*

g. **Residential Land (refer Schedule A)**
Any Land which is not Vacant Land, Derelict Land, Retirement Village Land, Commercial Land, Industrial Land or Recreation Land.

6. The rates to apply to the differential categories declared are as follows:

Differential Category	Cents in the Dollar of Capital Improved Value
Vacant Land	0.37851
Derelict Land	0.45421
Retirement Village Land	0.11355
Commercial Land	0.37851
Industrial Land	0.40122
Residential Land	0.15140
Recreational Land	0.15140

7. No municipal charge to be declared.

8. Declare an annual service charge, to be known as the Residential Garbage Charge, in the sum of $415.15 in respect of each separate parcel of Rateable Residential Land.

9. Declare an annual service charge, to be known as the Residential Garbage Charge, in the sum of $415.15 in respect of each separate parcel of Rateable Residential Land, including an additional 120 litre bin for the collection of domestic waste where there are extra medical waste needs, or two or more children in disposable nappies.

10. Declare an annual service charge, to be known as the Residential Garbage Charge, in the sum of $265.60 in respect of each separate parcel of Rateable Residential Land where it is shown that a food organics and garden organics bin is not required.

11. Declare an annual service charge for the collection and disposal of refuse in the sum of, and based on the criteria, as follows:

    a. Any land within Council's municipal district which is used primarily for residential purposes:
        i. $48.50 per service for each land, where the service is for the optional 120 litre bin used for the collection of domestic waste.
        ii. $149.55 for each additional 240 litre bin supplied in respect of the land for the collection of food and organic waste.
        iii. $107.30 for each additional 120 litre bin supplied in respect of the land for the collection of domestic waste.
        iv. $62.00 for each additional 240 litre recycling bin supplied in respect of the land.

v. $130.00 for each additional hard waste service in respect of the land.

b. Any land within Council's municipal district which is used primarily for commercial or industrial purposes:
   i. $717.05 per service for each land, where the service is requested by the owner of the land (or the agent of the owner) and is for the collection and disposal of the contents of a bin at the frequency of once per week (waste and recycle).
   ii. $2,763.70 per service for each land, where the service is requested by the owner of the land (or the agent of the owner) and is for the collection and disposal of a bin at the frequency of five (5) times per week (waste and weekly recycle).
   iii. $519.05 per service for each land, where the service is requested by the owner of the land (or the agent of the owner) and is for the collection and disposal of the contents of a bin at the frequency of once per week – waste only.
   iv. $2,565.70 per service for each land, where the service is requested by the owner of the land (or the agent of the owner) and is for the collection and disposal of a bin at the frequency of five (5) times per week – waste only.
   v. $197.95 for each additional 240 litre recycling bin supplied in respect of the land.
   vi. $515.60 per annum for each office based premise, where the access to a waste removal service is requested by the owner of the land (or the agent of the owner) at Dorset Square, Boronia.
   vii. $1,341.75 per annum for each retail based premise, where the access to a waste removal service is requested by the owner of the land (or agent of the owner) at Dorset Square, Boronia.
   viii. $3,827.30 per annum for each food based premise less than 200 square metres, where the access to a waste removal service is requested by the owner (or agent of the owner) at Dorset Square, Boronia.
   ix. $8,794.85 per annum for each food based premise greater than 200 square metres, where the access to a waste removal service is requested by the owner (or agent of the owner) at Dorset Square, Boronia.

c. Any land within Council's municipal district which is not rateable land:
   i. $370.25 per service for each land, where the service is requested by the owner of the land (or the agent of the owner) and is for the collection and disposal of the contents of a 240 litre bin at the frequency of once per fortnight (waste and recycle).
   ii. $2,473.45 per service for each land, where the service is requested by the owner of the land (or the agent of the owner) and is for the collection and disposal of the contents of a 240 litre bin at the frequency of five (5) times per week (waste and weekly recycle).

iii. $252.15 per service for each land, where the service is requested by the owner of the land (or the agent of the owner) and is for the collection and disposal of the contents of a 120 litre bin at the frequency of once per fortnight (waste and recycle).
iv. $62.00 for each additional 240 litre recycling bin supplied in respect of the land.
v. $130.00 for each additional hard waste service in respect of the land.

12. Declare a rebate to each owner of rateable land who is an eligible recipient within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004*. The rebate in respect of each rateable land so owned is a maximum of $100.00. This rebate is beneficial to the community as a whole in that it eases the rates burden of vulnerable ratepayers.

13. Declare a rebate, to be known as the Cultural and Recreational Community Land Rebate (refer Schedule A), to each owner of rateable Recreation Land. The rebate in respect of each rateable land so owned is a maximum of 35% of the general rates payable. This rebate is beneficial to the community as a whole as these organisations support cultural and social wellbeing of residents.

14. Declare a rebate, to be known as the Community Benefit Land Rebate (refer Schedule A) to each owner of eligible Community Benefit Land. The rebate in respect of each rateable land so owned is a maximum of 75% of the general rates payable. This rebate is beneficial to the community as a whole as it enhances the quality and health of habitat for threatened species.

15. Declare a rebate, to be known as the Opportunity Shop Rebate to each rateable property that meets the criteria set out in the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029. The rebate in respect of each rateable property is up to 100% of the general rates payable. This rebate is beneficial to the community as a whole as these organisations provide support to the most vulnerable and therefore contribute to the social wellbeing of the community.

16. Subject to Sections 171, 171A, 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, Council will require a person to pay interest on any rates and charges which:

    a. That person is liable to pay; and
    b. Have not been paid by the date specified for their payment.

17. Interest is charged on all overdue rates in accordance with Section 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. The maximum interest rate is applied under Section 2 of the *Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983*. A lesser interest rate may be applicable when Ministerial Guidelines require this.

18. The dates for payments of rates and charges being as follows:

    a. Payment in Full in a lump sum on or before 15 February 2026; or

    b. Payment made by four (4) instalments, with instalments due as follows:
        i. 1st Instalment 30 September 2025
        ii. 2nd Instalment 30 November 2025

iii. 3rd Instalment 28 February 2026
iv. 4th Instalment 31 May 2026; or

c. Payment made by nine (9) instalments, with instalments due as follows:
i. 1st Instalment 30 September 2025
ii. 2nd Instalment 31 October 2025
iii. 3rd Instalment 30 November 2025
iv. 4th Instalment 31 December 2025
v. 5th Instalment 31 January 2026
vi. 6th Instalment 28 February 2026
vii. 7th Instalment 31 March 2026
viii. 8th Instalment 30 April 2026
ix. 9th Instalment 31 May 2026

SCHEDULE A

Vacant Land

Definition/Characteristics:

Any land on which there is no building.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Encouragement of development/and or improvement of land; and
2. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
3. Provision of community services; and
4. Provision of general support services; and
5. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Derelict Land

Definition/Characteristics:

Any land that contains a building that is ordinarily adapted for occupation which is abandoned, unoccupied and in a very poor condition resulting from both disuse and neglect.

Land may become classified as derelict after previously being designated as Residential land, Vacant land, Retirement Village land, Industrial land, Commercial land, or Cultural and Recreational land.

An owner or occupier of land must not cause or allow that land to be kept in a manner which is or is likely to constitute a danger to health or property.

An owner or occupier of land must not cause or allow that land to be kept in a manner which is unsightly or detrimental to the general amenity of the neighborhood in which it is located.

An owner or occupier of land must not cause or allow that land to be used in a manner so as to be detrimental to the amenity of the immediate area.

Dilapidated buildings

An owner or occupier of land:

a) must not allow a building located on that private land to:

    i. become dilapidated; or

    ii. become dilapidated further; and

b) must not fail to maintain any building on that private land in a state of good repair.

The owner or occupier of land on which there is a vacant dilapidated building must take all reasonable steps to secure the land from authorised access.

For the purposes of sub-clause (a), a building is dilapidated if it is in a state of disrepair or has deteriorated or fallen into a state of partial ruin as a result of age, neglect, poor maintenance or misuse.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Promote the property be maintained in a manner that does not constitute a danger to health or property or is detrimental to the general amenity of the neighborhood or immediate area; and
2. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
3. Provision of community services; and
4. Provision of general support services; and

5. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Retirement Village Land

Definitions/Characteristics:

Any land which is used primarily for the purposes of a retirement village.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Recognition of expenditures made by Council on behalf of the retirement village sector.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:

All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Commercial Land

Definitions/Characteristics:

Commercial Land is any land that does not have the characteristics of Residential, Retirement Village, Industrial, Vacant, Derelict or Cultural and Recreational Land and which is used, designed or adapted to be used primarily for the sale of goods or services or other commercial purposes.

The commercial businesses benefit from ongoing investment by Council in services and infrastructure. Council also notes the tax deductibility of Council rates for commercial properties which is not available to the residential sector, and the income generating capability of commercial based properties.

The Commercial differential rate is applied to recognise the additional demands placed on public infrastructure due to commerce attracting non-residents to the area, the higher demands of commercial properties on the natural environment.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Enhancement of the economic viability of the commercial and industrial sector through targeted programs and projects; and
6. Encouragement of employment opportunities; and
7. Promotion of economic development; and
8. Analysis, maintenance and construction of public drainage infrastructure; and
9. Infrastructure investment and promotional activity is complementary to the achievement of industrial and commercial objectives.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:

All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Industrial Land

Definitions/Characteristics:

Industrial Land is any land that does not have the characteristics of Residential, Retirement Village, Commercial, Vacant, Derelict or Cultural and Recreational Land and which is used, designed or adapted to be used primarily for the sale of goods or services or other industrial purposes.

The industrial businesses benefit from ongoing investment by Council in services and infrastructure. Council also notes the tax deductibility of Council rates for industrial properties which is not available to the residential sector, and the income generating capability of commercial based properties.

The Industrial differential rate is applied to recognise the additional demands placed on public infrastructure due to commerce attracting non-residents to the area, the higher demands of commercial properties on the natural environment.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Enhancement of the economic viability of the commercial and industrial sector through targeted programs and projects; and
6. Encouragement of employment opportunities; and
7. Promotion of economic development; and
8. Analysis, maintenance and construction of public drainage infrastructure; and
9. Infrastructure investment and promotional activity is complementary to the achievement of industrial and commercial objectives.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:

All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Recreational Land

Definitions/Characteristics:

Any land upon which sporting, recreational or cultural activities are conducted, including buildings which may be ancillary to such activities, in accordance with the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963*.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Recognition of expenditures made by Council in cultural and recreational sporting programs and infrastructure.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Residential Land

Definitions/Characteristics:

Any land which is not Vacant Land or Derelict Land, Retirement Village Land, Industrial Land, Commercial Land, or Cultural and Recreational Land.

Objective:

To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations.

Types and Classes:

Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:

The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:

Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:

Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:

The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:

All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Revenue and Rating Plan

2025–2029



knox

Knox City Council

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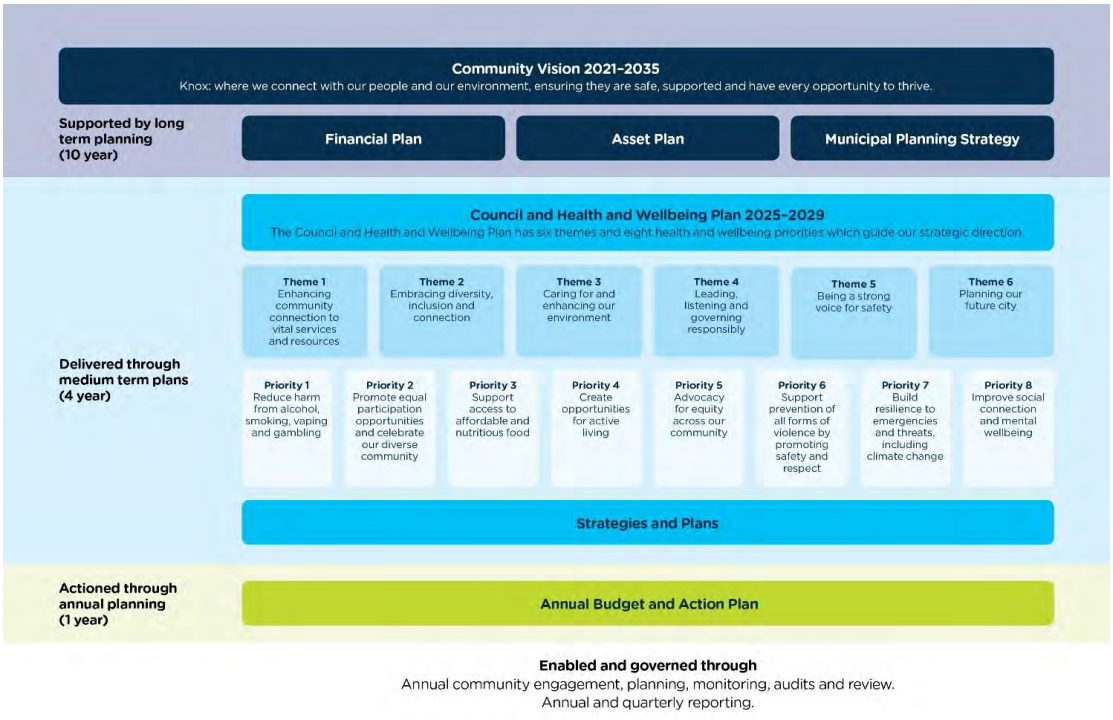
1. Purpose

The Revenue and Rating Plan establishes a revenue raising framework within which Council proposes to work. This plan determines the most appropriate and affordable revenue and rating approach for Knox City Council, which will adequately finance the vision and objectives outlined in the Council Plan.

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires each Council to prepare a Revenue and Rating Plan to cover a minimum period of four years, following each Council election.

This plan is an important part of Council's integrated planning framework, all of which is created to help Council achieve its community vision: "*Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive"*.

Strategies outlined in this plan align with the key directions contained in the Council Health and Wellbeing Plan and will feed into our budgeting and financial planning documents, as well as other strategic planning documents under our Council's strategic planning and reporting framework.



This plan explains how Council calculates the revenue needed to fund its activities, and how the funding burden will be apportioned between ratepayers and other users of Council facilities and services.

In particular, this plan will set out decisions that Council has made in relation to rating options available to it under the *Local Government Act 1989* and *Local Government Act 2020* to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of rates across property owners. It also sets out principles that are used in decision making for other revenue sources such as fees and charges. It is also important to note that this plan does not set revenue targets.

2. Introduction

In line with the Council Plan and Community Vision, Council provides a wide variety of services and facilities to our local community. In doing this, Council must collect revenue to cover the cost of providing these services and facilities.

Council's revenue sources include:

- Rates and Charges
- Waste charges
- Grants from other levels of Government
- Statutory Fees and Fines
- User Fees
- Cash and non-cash contributions from other parties (ie developers, community groups)
- Interest from investments
- Sale of Assets

Rates are the most significant revenue source for Council and make up 74% of total annual revenue, with 11% of income from grants, 9% raised through user fees and statutory fees and fines and 6% from contributions and other income.

In determining its revenue requirements, Council identifies what each source of revenue is, how much will be raised in each class, and the policy rationale/assumptions for each. Council considers:

- How revenue will be generated through rates on properties
- Fixed service charges that might be applied on services such as waste or recycling
- Fees and charges for services and programs including cost recovery policies and user charges
- Recurrent and non-recurrent operational and capital grants from other levels of Government
- Developer contributions and other revenue
- Revenue generated from the use or allocation of Council assets (including the application of discounts and waivers)

The introduction of rate capping under the Victorian Government's Fair Go Rates System (FGRS) has brought a renewed focus to Council's long-term financial sustainability. The FGRS continues to restrict Council's ability to raise rate revenue above the rate cap unless application is made to the Essential Services Commission for a variation. Providing appropriate service delivery levels and investing in community assets remain key priorities for Council.

Council revenue can also be adversely affected by changes to funding from other levels of government. Some grants are tied to the delivery of Council services, whilst many are tied directly to the delivery of new community assets, such as roads or sports pavilions. It is important for Council to be clear about what grants it intends to apply for, and the obligations that grants create in the delivery of services or infrastructure.

Each revenue source is discussed in more detail within the relevant section of this plan.

3. Community Engagement

Council's approach to community and stakeholder engagement is guided by the community engagement principles set out under Section 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and includes:

- A community engagement process must have a clearly defined objective and scope.
- Participants in community engagement must have access to objective, relevant and timely information to inform their participation.
- Participants in community engagement must be diverse and representative of the persons and groups affected by the matter that is the subject of the community engagement.
- Participants in community engagement are entitled to reasonable support to enable meaningful and informed engagement.
- Participants in community engagement are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will influence Council decision making.

4. Rates and Charges

Rates are property taxes that allow Council to raise revenue to fund essential public services to cater to their municipal population. Importantly, it is a taxation system that includes flexibility for Councils to utilise different tools in the rating structure to accommodate issues of equity and to ensure fairness in rating for all ratepayers.

Council has established a rating structure comprised of two key elements. These are:

- General Rates – Based on property values (using the Capital Improved Valuation methodology), which are indicative of perceived capacity to pay and form the central basis of rating under the *Local Government Act 1989*; and
- Service Charges – A 'user pays' component for Council services to reflect benefits provided by Council to ratepayers who benefit from a service.

Striking a proper balance between these elements improves equity in the distribution of the rate burden across residents.

Council makes a further distinction when applying general rates by applying rating differentials based on the purpose for which the property is used. That is, whether the property is used for residential, commercial / industrial, or if the land is vacant or property derelict. This distinction is based on the concept that different property categories should pay a fair and equitable contribution, taking into account the benefits those properties derive from the local community.

The Knox City Council rating structure comprises seven differential rates:

- Residential
- Retirement village
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Recreational
- Vacant land
- Derelict land

These rates are structured in accordance with the requirements of Section 161 'Differential Rates' of the *Local Government Act 1989*, and the Ministerial Guidelines for Differential Rating 2013.

The formula for calculating General Rates, excluding any additional charges, arrears or additional supplementary rates are as follows:

- Valuation (Capital Improved Value) x Rate in the Dollar (Differential Rate Type)

The rate in the dollar for each rating differential category is included in Council's annual budget.

Rates and charges are an important source of revenue, accounting for over 70% of operating revenue received by Council. The collection of rates is an important factor in funding Council services.

Planning for future rate increases is therefore an essential component of the long-term financial planning process and plays a significant role in funding both additional service delivery and the increasing costs related to providing Council services.

Council is aware of the balance between rate revenue (as an important income source) and community sensitivity to rate increases. With the introduction of the State Government's Fair Go Rates System, all rate increases are capped to a rate declared by the Minister for Local Government, which is announced in December for the following financial year.

The advantages and disadvantages of the respective valuation basis are discussed further in this document. Whilst this document outlines Council's strategy regarding rates revenue, rates data will be contained in the Council's Annual Budget as required by the *Local Government Act 2020.*

This plan outlines the principles and strategic framework that Council will utilise in calculating and distributing the rating burden to property owners, however, the quantum of rate revenue and rating differential amounts will be determined in the annual Knox City Council budget.

Equity must be a key consideration in the Revenue and Rating Strategy, and this strategy has been carefully prepared with that in mind.

4.1 Rating Legislation

Following the introduction of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council operates under provisions in the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The legislative framework set out in the *Local Government Act 1989* determines Council's ability to develop a rating system. The framework provides flexibility for Council to tailor a system that suits its needs.

Local Government Act 2020

Section 94 states that Council must adopt a budget by 30 June each year (or at another time fixed by the Minister) to include:

a) the total amount that the Council intends to raise by rates and charges.
b) a statement as to whether the rates will be raised by the application of a uniform rate or a differential rate.
c) a description of any fixed component of the rates, if applicable.

d) if the Council proposes to declare a uniform rate, the matters specified in section 160 of the *Local Government Act 1989.*

e) if the Council proposes to declare a differential rate for any land, the matters specified in section 161(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989.*

If applicable, the budget must also contain a statement –

a) that the Council intends to apply for a special order to increase the Council's average rate cap for the financial year or any other financial year; or
b) that the Council has made an application to the ESC for a special order and is waiting for the outcome of the application; or
c) that a special Order has been made in respect of the Council and specifying the average rate cap that applies for the financial year or any other financial year.

Local Government Act 1989

Section 155 Charges that may be Declared: A Council may declare the following rates and charges on rateable land:

- General rates under Section 158.
- Municipal charges under Section 159.
- Service rates and charges under Section 162.
- Special rates and charges under Section 163.

The recommended strategy in relation to these rates are discussed in the relevant sections within this document.

Fair Go Rates System

The Victorian Government established the Fair Go Rates system (FGRS) in 2015 to govern the amount Victorian Councils can increase rates in a year without seeking additional approval. Each year the Minister for Local Government sets the average rate cap for the following rating year based on the forecast change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The annual cap, which applies to Council's average rate and charges, cannot be increased without the permission of the Essential Services Commission.

The FGRS has challenged long-term financial sustainability across local government, and it continues to restrict Council's ability to raise revenue to maintain service delivery levels and invest in community assets.

The CPI does not accurately reflect increases in costs faced by Councils as they have a significantly different expenditure composition compared to households. Key Council expenditures required to provide Council services and deliver infrastructure projects have been increasing faster than the CPI.

Any applications to the Essential Services Commission to apply for a rate cap variation will be considered by Council during the planning and adoption processes of Council's Annual Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan.

4.2 Rating Principles

When developing a rating strategy Council considers the following good practice taxation principles:

Wealth Tax: The "wealth tax" principle implies that the rates paid are dependent upon the value of a ratepayer's real property and have no correlation to the individual ratepayer's consumption of services or the perceived benefits derived by individual ratepayers from the expenditures funded from rates.

Equity: *Horizontal equity* – ratepayers in similar situations should pay similar amounts of rates (ensured mainly by accurate property valuations, undertaken in a consistent manner, their classification into homogenous property classes and the right of appeal against valuation). *Vertical equity* – those who are better off should pay more rates than those worse off (the rationale applies for the use of progressive and proportional income taxation. It implies a "relativity" dimension to the fairness of the tax burden).

Efficiency: Economic efficiency is measured by the extent to which production and consumption decisions by people are affected by rates.

Simplicity: How easily a rates system can be understood by ratepayers and the practicality and ease of administration.

Benefit: The extent to which there is a nexus between consumption/benefit and the rate burden.

Capacity to Pay: The capacity of ratepayers or groups of ratepayers to pay rates.

Diversity: The capacity of ratepayers within a group to pay rates.
The rating challenge for Council therefore is to determine the appropriate balancing of competing considerations.

When developing rates and charges revenue, the following good practice principles will apply:

- to be reviewed annually;
- not change dramatically from one year to next; and
- be sufficient to fund current expenditure commitments and deliverables outlined in the Council Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

Exemptions from Rating:
Section 154 of the *Local Government Act 1989* declares that all land is rateable with several exceptions. This includes land held or used for public or municipal purposes, land used exclusively for charitable, education or religious purposes, and certain clubs or memorials under the *Veterans Act 2005*, Returned Services League and related associations as defined.

The *Cultural and Recreational Land Act 1963* (CRLA) requires Council to set an applicable Charge 'in lieu of Rates' for 'recreational lands'. Benefits of cultural and recreational land include social interaction, sporting programs, cultural promotion, provision of premises, employment opportunities and community development/meeting places. Council considers the services utilised by each property occupier and the benefit their land provides to the community and may levy a 'charge in lieu of rates' that provides a 35% discount to the equivalent municipal rates they would otherwise pay.

4.3 General Rates

In line with section 158 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, by 30 June Council must declare the amount which the Council intends to raise by general rates for the coming year and specify whether the general rates will be raised by application of a uniform rate or differential rate.

General Rates are calculated as: *Property Valuation x Rate in the Dollar* (Differential or Uniform Rate).

These two components of the general rate charge are discussed in the following sections.

Property valuations

Legislation

Under Section 157 the *Local Government Act 1989*, Council has three options as to the valuation base it elects to use. They are:

- Capital Improved Value (CIV) – Value of land and improvements upon the land.
- Site Value (SV) – Value of land only.
- Net Annual Value (NAV) – Rental valuation based on CIV.

The *Valuation of Land Act 1960* is the principal legislation in determining property valuations and states the Victorian Valuer-General must conduct property valuations on an annual basis. The value of land is always derived by the principal of assessing land for its highest and best use at the relevant time of valuation.

Regular reviews of property values are conducted by the Victorian Valuer-General during the year to ensure consistency and equity for rating purposes. These supplementary valuations are carried out for a variety of reasons including rezoning, subdivisions, amalgamations, renovations, new constructions, extensions, occupancy changes and corrections. Council is advised on a regular basis of valuation and Australian Valuation Property Classification Code (AVPCC) changes and process rate adjustments accordingly.

Part 3 of the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* provides that a property owner may lodge an objection against the valuation of a property or the Australian Valuation Property Classification Code (AVPCC) within two months of the issue of the original or amended (supplementary) Rates and Valuation Charges Notice (Rates Notice), or within four months if the notice was not originally issued to the occupier of the land.

Determining the Valuation Base

Capital Improved Value (CIV)

Capital Improved Value is the most commonly used valuation base by local government, with over 90% of Victorian Councils applying this methodology. Based on the value of both land and all improvements on the land, this method is generally easily understood by ratepayers as it aligns to the market value of the property.

Under the CIV method Councils also have the ability to apply differential rates.

Section 161 of the *Local Government Act 1989* provides that a Council may raise any general rates by the application of a differential rate if:

a) It uses the capital improved value system of valuing land; and
b) It considers that a differential rate will contribute to the equitable and efficient carrying out of its functions.

Where a Council does not utilise CIV, it may only apply limited differential rates in relation to farm land, urban farm land or residential use land.

Advantages of using Capital Improved Value (CIV)

- CIV includes all property improvements and is often supported on the basis that it more closely reflects “capacity to pay”. The CIV rating method evaluated the full development value of the property and hence better meets the equity criteria than either the Site Value or NAV.
- With the increased frequency of valuations (previously two year intervals, now annual intervals) the market values are more predictable and has reduced the level of objections resulting from valuations.
- The concept of the market value of property is more easily understood with CIV rather than NAV or SV.

- Most Councils in Victoria have now adopted CIV which makes it easier to compare relative movements in rates and valuations across Councils.

- The use of CIV allows Council to apply differential rates which greatly adds to Council's ability to equitably distribute the rating burden based on ability to afford Council rates. CIV allows Council to apply higher rating differentials to the commercial and industrial sector that offset residential rates.
- The Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund is calculated on the CIV and continued use of this reinforces the principle of calculating rates based on CIV.

Disadvantages of using CIV

- The main disadvantage with CIV is that rates are based on the total value of the property, which may not accurately reflect the property owner's income level, such as pensioners and low-income earners.

Site Value (SV)

There are currently no Victorian Councils that use this valuation calculation base. With valuations based simply on the valuation of land and with only very limited ability to apply differential rates, the implementation of Site Value in a Knox City Council context would cause a shift in rate burden from the industrial/commercial sectors onto the residential sector and would hinder Council's objective of a fair and equitable rating system.

In many ways, it is difficult to see an equity argument being served by the implementation of site valuation in the Knox City Council.

Advantages of Site Value

- There is a perception that under site value, a uniform rate would promote development of land, particularly commercial and industrial developments. However, there is little evidence to prove that this is the case.
- Scope for possible concessions for urban farm-land and residential use land.

Disadvantages of using Site Value

- There would be further rating movements away from modern townhouse style developments on relatively small land parcels to older established homes on quarter acre residential blocks.
- Under SV, there will be a significant shift from the industrial/commercial sector onto the residential sector of Council. The percentage increases in many cases would be in the extreme range.
- Site Value (SV) can be a significant burden for property owners with large land areas. Some of these owners may have smaller or older dwellings compared to those with smaller land areas but more developed properties, yet they may end up paying higher rates.A typical example is flats, units, or townhouses which will all pay low rates compared to traditional housing styles.
- The use of SV can place pressure on Council to give concessions to categories of landowners on whom the rating burden is seen to fall disproportionately (e.g. Farm land and residential use properties). Large landowners, such as farmers for example, are disadvantaged by the use of site value.
- SV will reduce Council's rating flexibility and options to deal with any rating inequities due to the removal of the ability to levy differential rates.
- The community may have greater difficulty in understanding the SV valuation on their rate notices, as indicated by many inquiries from ratepayers on this issue handled by Council's customer service and property revenue staff each year.
- The Fire Services Property Levy is calculated on the CIV and use of different valuations could also cause confusion as this levy is shown on the Rates Notice.
- SV may not necessarily reflect the income level/capacity to pay of the property owner.

Net Annual Value (NAV)

NAV, in concept, represents the annual rental value of a property. However, in practice, NAV is loosely linked to Capital Improved Value for residential and farm properties. Valuers derive the NAV directly as 5 per cent of CIV.

In contrast to the treatment of residential and farm properties, NAV for commercial and industrial properties are assessed with regard to actual market rental. This differing treatment of commercial versus residential and farm properties has led to some suggestions that all properties should be valued on a rental basis.

Overall, the use of NAV is not largely supported. For residential and farm ratepayers, actual rental values pose some problems. The artificial rental estimate used may not represent actual market value, and means the base is the same as CIV but is harder to understand.

Policy

Knox City Council applies Capital Improved Value (CIV) to all properties within the municipality. This basis of valuation considers the total market value of land plus buildings and other improvements. It also allows for differential rating to be applied where it is believed to improve the equitable distribution of rates.

Capital Improved Value is the most used valuation base by local government with over 90% of Victorian Councils applying this methodology. Based on the value of both land and all improvements on the land, it is generally easily understood by ratepayers as it equates to the market value of the property.

Rate in the Dollar

Legislation

Section 158 of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires Council to declare whether they intend to apply a differential or uniform rate in their general rate calculation.

Section 160 of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires Councils that elect to apply a Uniform Rate to specify the uniform rate percentage and calculate the rates charge by multiplying the value of the land by that percentage. Uniform rate allows differential rates in relation to farmland, urban farmland or residential use land.

Section 161 of the *Local Government Act 1989* allows Council to raise any general rates by the application of a differential rate if it uses the Capital Improved Value (CIV) system of valuing land. If the differential rate method is elected, Section 161 requires Council to specify the objectives of the differential rates and the characteristics of the land which the differential criteria apply. The highest differential rate in a municipal district must be no more than four times the lowest differential rate.

The *Ministerial Guidelines for Differential Rating 2013* provide guidelines which describe what types and classes of land may be considered for differentials and those that may not be appropriate for differential categories. Differential rating should be applied as equitably as is practical.

Policy

Council considers that the application of a differential rate will contribute to the equitable and efficient distribution of the costs associated with carrying out its functions.

The Knox City Council rating structure comprises seven differential rates. These are:

- Residential
- Retirement village
- Commercial

- Industrial
- Recreational
- Vacant land
- Derelict land

Further detail on each of these differential rates can be found in Appendix A of this document.
The general objectives of each of the differential rates are to ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council.

Most Victorian Local Government bodies apply a differential rate. A differential rate allows for a more balanced distribution of the rate burden between all classes of property. They allow consideration for ratepayer's ability to pay, the unique circumstances of some property types, the provision of specific property related services, development activity within the municipality, and any associated income tax benefits. Differential rates can be more complicated to understand and administer compared to applying a uniform rate to all property types.

Changing economic conditions, property valuations and other factors outside of Councils control may impact the equitable distribution of rates. To ensure the desired objectives of a differential rate continue to be achieved, Council reviews the differential rating definitions during the adoption of the Rating and Revenue Plan every four years, or periodically, as required.

4.4 Objections to Property Valuations

Legislation
Part 3 of the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* provides that a property owner may lodge an objection against the valuation of a property or the Australian Valuation Property Classification Code (AVPCC) within two months of the issue of the original or amended (supplementary) Rates and Valuation Charges Notice (Rates Notice), or within four months if the notice was not originally issued to the occupier of the land.

Policy
A property owner must lodge their objection to the valuation or the AVPCC in writing to the Knox City Council. Property owners may also object to the site valuations on receipt of their Land Tax Assessment. Property owners can appeal their land valuation within two months of receipt of their Council Rate Notice (via Council) or within two months of receipt of their Land Tax Assessment (via the State Revenue Office).

4.5 Municipal Charge

Legislation
Section 159 of the *Local Government Act 1989* permits Council to declare a municipal charge to cover some of the administrative costs of the Council. The total revenue from a municipal charge in a financial year must not exceed 20 per cent of the combined total of the Council's overall rate revenue.

The legislation is not definitive on what comprises administrative costs and does not require Council to specify what is covered by the charge. The application of a municipal charge represents a choice to raise a portion of the rates by a flat fee for all properties.

Policy
Knox City Council has not applied a Municipal Charge due to its regressive nature, as it would result in lower valued properties paying comparatively higher rates and charges.

4.6 Special Rates and Charges

Legislation
Section 163 of the *Local Government Act 1989* permits Council to declare a special rate or charge to recover the cost of works from property owners who will gain special benefit from that work.

The special rates and charges provisions are flexible and can be used to achieve a wide range of community objectives. The fundamental principle of a special rate or charge is proof that a "special benefit" applies to those being levied.

Policy
The application of special charge schemes will be considered as required by Council if required.

4.7 Service Rates and Charges

Legislation
Section 162 of the *Local Government Act 1989* provides Council with the opportunity to raise service rates and charges for any of the following services:

a. The provision of a water supply;
b. The collection and disposal of refuse;
c. The provision of sewage services;
d. Any other prescribed service.

The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* state that any declared Service Rates or Charges are described in the Council's Annual Budget and The *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015* requires details of declared Service Rate or Charge to be described on the rate notice.

Policy
Applying a waste service charge is a simple and efficient charge which ensures fairness, as those who benefit from from waste services are responsible to cover the costs of that service.

Council applies a compulsory Residential Garbage Service Charge for the collection and disposal of residential waste to all residential land properties eligible for a Council waste service. The Residential Garbage Charge provides for the collection and disposal of general waste, recyclables, food organics and green organics (FOGO), kerbside bundled green waste and kerbside hard rubbish.

For declared residential service areas, the service composition is an 80L general waste bin, a 240L recycling bin and a 240L green FOGO bin. In addition, kerbside bundled green waste and kerbside hard waste services are provided.

Residents may apply for an upgraded 120L general waste bin, a secondary 120L general waste bin, a secondary 240L recycling bin or a secondary 240L FOGO bin. These secondary bins all incur additional charges, except where a valid exemption applies.

Residents with two 120L general waste bins (a combined capacity of 240L) can apply to consolidate these into a single 240L bin.

Timely delivery of these bins is dependent on the property owner contacting Council and requesting a new and/or changed service.

Council retains the objective of setting the service charge for waste at a level that fully recovers the cost of the waste services. Waste services recovered in the waste charge are:

- Garbage collection service
- Kerbside recycling collection service
- Hard rubbish collection service
- Litter bin collection service
- Street cleaning service
- Landfill remediation
- Bundled green waste service
  Food organics and green organics (FOGO) waste collection service

When determining the annual financial year waste service charge, Council will set the charge/fee levels through its annual budget and will determine value/movement in these charges with reference to changes in the cost of service delivery.

Waste charges will be calculated on a full economic operating and capital replacement expenses cost recovery basis. This includes passing-on any cost increases resulting from State Government fees, legislation or levies associated with waste collection and disposal.

User fees and charges are in place for the provision of commercial waste disposal and collection, industrial waste disposal and collection, and secondary residential services above those covered by the Residential Garbage Service Charge.

4.8 Administration of Rates and Charges

Legislation
Section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989* allows ratepayers to pay a rate or charge in four instalments. Councils also have the option to allow a lump sum instalment. Instalment dates are set by the Minister by notice published in the Government Gazette.

Section 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989* allows Council to charge interest on all overdue rates. The interest rate applied is fixed under Section 2 of the *Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983*, which is determined by the Minister and published by notice in the Government Gazette.

Sections 230 and 231 of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires the buyer of property, or their agents (e.g. solicitors and or conveyancers), to notify Council by way of notice of acquisition of an interest in land.

Section 181 of the *Local Government Act 1989* allows Council to sell land to recover unpaid rates and charges.

Policy
Rates and charges can be paid in full or by instalments on or before the following dates:

Payments in full must be paid by 15 February.

In accordance with section 167(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* ratepayers have the option of paying rates and charges by way of four instalments. Payments are due on the prescribed dates below:

- 1st Instalment: 30 September
- 2nd Instalment: 30 November
- 3rd Instalment: 28 February
- 4th Instalment: 31 May

Knox City Council also offer payment by nine instalments, with due dates as follows:

- 1st Instalment: 30 September
- 2nd Instalment: 31 October
- 3rd Instalment: 30 November
- 4th Instalment: 31 December
- 5th Instalment: 31 January
- 6th Instalment: 28 February
- 7th Instalment: 31 March
- 8th Instalment: 30 April
- 9th Instalment: 31 May

Council offers a range of payment options including:

- in person at Council offices (cheques, money orders, EFTPOS, credit/debit cards and cash);
- online via Council's ratepayer portal, direct debit (available for in full, four and nine monthly instalment payments);
- BPAY;
- Telephone (credit card);
- Australia Post (over the counter); or
- by mail (cheques and money orders only).

Overdue Rates

Council makes every effort to contact ratepayers at their notified address and it is the ratepayers' responsibility to properly advise Council of their contact details.

In the event that an account becomes overdue, Council will issue an overdue reminder notice which will include accrued penalty interest where a payment plan is not in place. If the account remains unpaid, Council may take legal action to recover the overdue amount. All fees and court costs incurred will be recoverable from the ratepayer.

If an amount payable by way of rates in respect to land has been in arrears for three years or more and the value of rates outstanding is greater than twenty percent of the property valuation, there is no payment plan in place and a Court order has been issued requiring payment in part of full, Council may take action to sell the property.

4.9 Rebates and Concessions

Legislation

Section 169 of the *Local Government Act 1989* provides that a Council may grant a rebate or concession in relation to any rate or charge to:

- Assist the proper development of the municipal district; or
- Preserve buildings or places in the municipal district which are of historical or environmental interest; or
- Restore or maintain buildings or places of historical, environmental, architectural or scientific importance in the municipal district; or
- Assist the proper development of part of the municipal district.

A Council resolution granting a rebate or concession must specify the benefit to the community resulting from the rebate or concession.

Policy
Council provides a number of rebates for eligible rate payers:

Pensioner Rebates
Holders of a Pensioner Concession Card or a Veterans Affairs Gold Card may claim a rebate on their sole or principal place of residence. Upon initial application, ongoing eligibility is maintained, unless rejected by Centrelink or the Department of Veteran Affairs during the annual verification procedure. Upon confirmation of an eligible pensioner concession status, the pensioner rebate is deducted from the rate account before payment is required by the ratepayer.

With regards to new applicants, after being granted a Pensioner Concession Card (PCC), pensioners can then apply for the rebate at any time throughout the rating year. Retrospective claims up to a maximum of one previous financial year can be approved by Council on verification of eligibility criteria, for periods prior to this claims may be approved by the relevant government department.

In addition to the State Government pensioner rebate, Council will declare and offer a further flat rebate for each eligible property (currently $100) which supplements the State rebate.

Community Land Rebates
Council will declare a Community Land Rebate to acknowledge the contribution to Knox for enhancement of biodiversity:

- Community Benefit Rebate – a maximum rebate of 75% of the general rates payable for all rateable properties that apply and are successful in recognition as Community Benefit Land.

Opportunity Shop Rebate
Council will declare and offer a 100% rebate on the general rates for opportunity shops that meet all the following criteria:

1. The Valuation and Rates notice is issued in the name of the Opportunity Shop and/or the Opportunity Shop demonstrates it is responsible for payment of the rates:
    a. The facility is being operated solely as an opportunity shop.
    b. The operators of the Opportunity Shop are registered as a charitable institution.
2. The operators of the Opportunity Shop provide details with their application that the majority of profits from the shop are redistributed to the benefit of the Knox Community.
3. The operator of the Opportunity Shop provides copies of their annual financial statements with their application.

4.10 Rate Deferrals and Waivers

Legislation
Section 170 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, states Council may defer the payment of any rate or charge payable if it considers the payment of the rate or charge would cause financial hardship to that person.

Section 171 of the *Local Government Act 1989* states a Council may waive whole or part of any rate or charge or interest for an eligible recipient or any other class of persons determined by the Council for the purpose of waiving rates or charges on the grounds of financial hardship.

Policy
Deferral of rates and charges are available to all ratepayers who satisfy the eligibility criteria and have proven financial difficulties. Where Council approves an application for deferral of rates or charges, interest will continue to be levied on the outstanding balance of rates and charges but at an interest rate fixed annually by Council. This deferred interest rate will typically be well under the penalty interest rate levied by Council on unpaid rates and charges.

It is acknowledged at the outset that various ratepayers may experience financial hardship for a whole range of issues and that meeting rate obligations constitutes just one element of many challenges that may be faced. The purpose of the Payment Assistance Policy is to provide options for ratepayers facing such situations to deal with the situation positively and reduce the strain imposed by financial hardship.

Ratepayers may elect to either negotiate a rate payment plan or apply for a rate deferral. Ratepayers seeking to apply for such provision will be required to apply for a payment plan or extension via the Council website.

Council does not generally waive rates and charges levied on a property. Council assesses each case on its merits when considering assistance.

4.11 Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund

The Victorian State Government legislates the collection of an annual charge for property owners to contribute towards the cost of the Victorian State Emergency Services, through the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF). The ESVF will include two components, a fixed charge, and a variable charge which is linked to the Capital Improved Value of the property. From 1 July 2026, a non-residential fixed charge will apply to all non-principal places of residence.

This charge was originally called the Fire Services Property Levy and was legislated by the *Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012*. On 1 July 2025 this levy is being replaced by the ESVF. This fund will help support a wider range of emergency services including but not limited to VICSES, Triple Zero Victoria, Emergency Management Victoria, as well as the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Fire Rescue Victoria.

Active volunteers with VICSES and CFA may receive an exemption from the ESVF for their primary place of residence. Pensioner Concession Card and Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card holders are entitled to a $50 concession on their ESVF liability for their principal place of residence.

Policy
ESVF charge will be collected by Council and passed through to the State Government. This charge is not included in the rate cap and increases in the charge are at the discretion of the State Government.

Council will continue to abide by the legislation set by the Victorian State Government and any updates to the calculation or application of this charge will be applied as required.

5. Other Revenue Items

5.1 User Fees and Charges

The provision of infrastructure and services form a key part of Council's role in supporting the local community. If a service provides a direct benefit or service to a specific group or groups in the community, a fee or charge may be raised for the use of that service. The nature of how a fee and charge is priced depends on whether it is related to the provision of a statutory (legislated) or discretionary service.

Council's financial resources are limited. The majority of Council's revenue comes from rates. Although a relatively small proportion; fees and charges are an important source of income and increasingly so in a rate-capped environment.

Section 106 of *The Local Government Act 2020* provides the following key service performance principles in relation to fee and charge setting which must be met:

- Services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community.
- Services should be accessible to the members of the municipal community for whom the services are intended.
- Quality and costs standards for services set by the Council should provide good value to the municipal community.

Knox City Council provides a wide range of services, for which users pay a fee or charge which covers at least part of the cost of supply. The level of some fees and charges are statutorily set, however many are at the discretion of Council. Legislation provides for local governments to levy fees and charges. Examples include:

- Childcare fees
- Waste Management fees
- Asset Protection fee
- Leases, recreational reserve and facility hire fees.

In collecting a fee for these services, Council considers a range of principles. These include service cost and quality standards, value-for-money, community expectations and values. Council balances the affordability and accessibility of infrastructure and services with its financial capacity and long-term financial sustainability.

Sound financial management of community service delivery requires fees and charges to reflect the cost of providing a service of a particular quality, moderated by considerations of affordability, accessibility and equity, as well as community expectations and values.

Councils must also comply with the government's Competitive Neutrality Policy for significant business activities they provide and adjust their service prices to neutralise any competitive advantages when competing with the private sector.

In providing services to the community, Council must determine the extent of cost recovery for particular services consistent with the level of both individual and collective benefit that the services provide and in line with the community's expectations.

Services are provided on the basis of one of the following pricing methods:

a. Market Price
b. Full Cost Recovery Price
c. Subsidised Price

Market pricing (A)
This includes services that provide discretionary activities not mandated by legislation or agency agreements. These activities may provide revenue support and complement other social policy actions.

It should be noted that if a market price is lower than Council's full cost price, then the market price would represent Council subsidising that service. If this situation exists, and there are other suppliers existing in the market at the same price, this may mean that Council is not the most efficient supplier in the marketplace. In this situation, Council will consider whether there is a community service obligation and whether Council should be providing this service at all.

Council is required to price services that compete in the open market on a 'level playing field' basis and to make any decision to depart from a commercial basis for pricing of services transparent. Any Council service that competes in the open market may be subject to competitive neutrality requirements if it is a significant business activity as determined by market share or sales volume.

Full cost recovery price (B)

Full cost recovery price aims to recover all direct and overhead costs incurred by Council. This pricing should be used in particular where a service provided by Council benefits individual customers specifically, rather than the community as a whole. In principle, fees and charges should be set at a level that recovers the full cost of providing the services unless there is an overriding policy or imperative in favour of subsidisation.

Subsidised Pricing (C)

Subsidised pricing is where Council subsidises a service by not passing the full cost of that service onto the customer. Subsidies may range from full subsidies (i.e. Council provides the service free of charge) to partial subsidies, where Council provides the service to the user with a discount. The subsidy can be funded from Council's rate revenue or other sources such as Commonwealth and state funding programs. Full Council subsidy pricing and partial cost pricing should always be based on knowledge of the full cost of providing a service.

Council will develop a table of fees and charges as part of its annual budget each year. Proposed pricing changes will be included in this table and will be communicated to stakeholders before the budget is adopted, giving them the chance to review and provide valuable feedback before the fees are locked in.

5.2 Statutory Fees and Charges

Council collects statutory fees and fines under the direction of legislation or other government directives. The rates used for statutory fees and fines are advised by the State government department responsible for the corresponding services or legislation, and Councils have limited discretion in applying these fees.
Examples of statutory fees and fines include:

- Planning and subdivision fees
- Building and Inspection fees
- Infringements and fines
- Land Information Certificate fees.

Penalty and fee units are used in Victoria's Acts and Regulations to describe the amount of a fine or a fee. Any change to the value of a penalty or fee unit will occur on 1 July each year.

Where fees are set by State Government statute, these fees are fixed and result in a growing cost to the general ratepayer to provide services as the level of cost recovery is diminished over time.

5.3 Grants

Grant revenue represents income usually received from other levels of government. Some grants are singular and attached to the delivery of specific projects, whilst others can be of a recurrent nature most likely relating to services provided and may or may not be linked to the delivery of projects.

Council will pro-actively advocate to other levels of government for grant funding support to deliver important infrastructure and service outcomes for the community. Council may use its own funds to leverage higher grant funding and maximise external funding opportunities.

When preparing its budget and financial plan, Council considers its project proposal pipeline, advocacy priorities, upcoming grant program opportunities, and co-funding options to determine what grants to apply for. Council will only apply for and accept external funding if it is consistent with the Community Vision, able to be delivered within the required timeline and does not lead to the distortion of financial sustainability or Council Plan priorities.

Grant assumptions are then clearly detailed in Council's budget document. No project that is reliant on grant funding will proceed until a signed funding agreement is in place.

5.4 Contributions

Contributions represent funds received by Council, usually from non-government sources, and are usually linked to projects.

Contributions can be made to Council in the form of either cash payments or asset hand-overs.

Examples of contributions include:

- Monies collected from developers under planning and development agreements;
- Monies collected under developer contribution plans and infrastructure contribution plans;
- Contributions from user groups towards the upgrade of facilities;
- Assets handed over to Council from developers at the completion of a subdivision, such as roads, drainage, and streetlights.

Contributions should always be linked to a planning or funding agreement. Council will not undertake any work on a contribution-funded project until a signed agreement outlining the contribution details is in place.

Contributions linked to developments can be received well before any Council expenditure occurs.

5.5 Interest on Investments

Council receives interest on funds managed as part of its investment portfolio, where funds are held in advance of expenditure, or for special purposes. Interest is added to Council's general revenue unless legislation requires it to be held and expended for a specific purpose.

The investment portfolio is managed per Council's Investment Policy, which seeks to invest public funds in a manner which will provide the highest investment return with the maximum security of invested capital while meeting the daily cash flow demands of Council.

5.6 Sale of Assets

Council may consider the sale of Council owned assets if the sale is in line with the objectives set in the Council Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan. These strategic decisions will be considered in line with annual and long-term planning processes, or as required, and will be accompanied with a business case outlining the benefits and impacts to community and Council.
The sale of a Council owned asset will be approved by Council resolution.

5.7 Borrowings

Whilst not a source of income, borrowings can be an important cash management tool in appropriate circumstances. Loans can only be approved by Council resolution. Council will continue to review its existing loans and look for opportunities to reduce requirements in future years.

Appendix A

Council believes each differential rate will contribute to the equitable and efficient carrying out of Council functions. Details of the objectives of each differential rate, the classes of land which are subject to each differential rate and the uses of each differential rate are set out below.

Residential Land

Definitions/Characteristics:
Any land which is not Vacant Land or Derelict Land, Retirement Village Land, Industrial Land, Commercial Land, or Cultural and Recreational Land.

Objective:
To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake it's strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations.

Types and Classes:
Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:
The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:
Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:
Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:
The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:
All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Retirement Village Land

Definitions/Characteristics:
Any land which is used primarily for the purposes of a retirement village.

Objective:
To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Recognition of expenditures made by Council on behalf of the retirement village sector.

Types and Classes:
Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:
The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:
Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:
Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:
The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:
All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Commercial Land

Definitions/Characteristics:
Commercial Land is any land that does not have the characteristics of Residential, Retirement Village, Industrial, Vacant, Derelict or Cultural and Recreational Land and which is used, designed or adapted to be used primarily for the sale of goods or services or other commercial purposes.

The commercial businesses benefit from ongoing investment by Council in services and infrastructure. Council also notes the tax deductibility of Council rates for commercial properties which is not available to the residential sector, and the income generating capability of commercial based properties.

The Commercial differential rate is applied to recognise the additional demands placed on public infrastructure due to commerce attracting non-residents to the area, the higher demands of commercial properties on the natural environment.

Objective:
To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Enhancement of the economic viability of the commercial and industrial sector through targeted programs and projects; and
6. Encouragement and advocacy of employment opportunities; and
7. Promotion of economic development; and
8. Analysis, maintenance and construction of Council owned public drainage infrastructure; and
9. Infrastructure investment and promotional activity is complementary to the achievement of industrial and commercial objectives.

Types and Classes:
Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:
The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:
Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:
Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:
The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:
All buildings which are already constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Industrial Land

Definitions/Characteristics:
Industrial Land is any land that does not have the characteristics of Residential, Retirement Village, Commercial, Vacant, Derelict or Cultural and Recreational Land and which is used, designed or adapted to be used primarily for the sale of goods or services or other industrial purposes.

The industrial businesses benefit from ongoing investment by Council in services and infrastructure. Council also notes the tax deductibility of Council rates for industrial properties which is not available to the residential sector, and the income generating capability of commercial based properties.

The Industrial differential rate is applied to recognise the additional demands placed on public infrastructure due to commerce attracting non-residents to the area, the higher demands of commercial properties on the natural environment.

Objective:
To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Enhancement of the economic viability of the commercial and industrial sector through targeted programs and projects; and
6. Encouragement and advocacy of employment opportunities; and
7. Promotion of economic development; and
8. Analysis, maintenance and construction of public drainage infrastructure; and
9. Infrastructure investment and promotional activity is complementary to the achievement of industrial and commercial objectives.

Types and Classes:
Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:
The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:
Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:
Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:
The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Types of Buildings:
All buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Recreational Land

Definitions/Characteristics:
Any land upon which sporting, recreational or cultural activities are conducted, including buildings which may be ancillary to such activities, in accordance with the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963*.

Objective:
To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
2. Provision of community services; and
3. Provision of general support services; and
4. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations; and
5. Recognition of expenditures made by Council in cultural and recreational sporting programs and infrastructure.

Types and Classes:
Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:
The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:
Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:
Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Vacant Land

Definition/Characteristics
Any land on which there is no building.

Objective:
To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Encouragement of development/and or improvement of land; and
2. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
3. Provision of community services; and
4. Provision of general support services; and
5. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake it's strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations.

Types and Classes:
Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:
The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:
Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:
Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:
The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Derelict Land

Definition/Characteristics
Any land that contains a building that is ordinarily adapted for occupation which is abandoned, unoccupied and in a very poor condition resulting from both disuse and neglect.

Land may become classified as derelict after previously being designated as Residential land, Vacant land, Retirement Village land, Industrial land, Commercial land, or Cultural and Recreational land.

An owner or occupier of land must not cause or allow that land to be kept in a manner which is or is likely to constitute a danger to health or property.

An owner or occupier of land must not cause or allow that land to be kept in a manner which is unsightly or detrimental to the general amenity of the neighborhood in which it is located.

An owner or occupier of land must not cause or allow that land to be used in a manner so as to be detrimental to the amenity of the immediate area.

Dilapidated buildings
An owner or occupier of land:
(a) must not allow a building located on that private land to:
(i) become dilapidated; or
(ii) become dilapidated further; and
(b) must not fail to maintain any building on that private land in a state of good repair.

The owner or occupier of land on which there is a vacant dilapidated building must take all reasonable steps to secure the land from authorised access.

For the purposes of sub-clause (a), a building is dilapidated if it is in a state of disrepair or has deteriorated or fallen into a state of partial ruin as a result of age, neglect, poor maintenance or misuse.

Objective:
To ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including the:

1. Promote the property be maintained in a manner that does not constitute a danger to health or property or is detrimental to the general amenity of the neighborhood or immediate area.
2. Construction and maintenance of public infrastructure; and
3. Provision of community services; and
4. Provision of general support services; and
5. Requirement to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake it's strategic, statutory, and service provision obligations.

Types and Classes:
Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described in the definition/characteristics.

Use and Level of Differential Rate:
The differential rate will be used to fund some of those items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council.

The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

Geographic Location:
Wherever located within the municipal district.

Use of Land:
Any use permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Zoning:
The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Planning Scheme.

Financial Plan

2025-26 to 2034-35



knox

Knox City Council

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1. Executive Summary

Purpose of the Long Term Financial Plan

Knox City Council's Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) is the key financial planning document that is governed by a series of financial strategies and accompanying performance indicators that Council considers and adopts. It establishes the financial framework upon which sound financial decisions are made.

The LTFP covers a 10-year period from 2025-26 to 2034-35. The LTFP is a tool to assist in sound financial decision making and is not intended to be a document that specifically indicates what services/proposals or funds should be allocated to these services; rather it identifies Council's current and projected financial capacity to continue delivering services, maintaining facilities and renewing infrastructure, whilst living within our means.

This document outlines the key performance indicators, key assumptions and an overview of each key element of the Plan. Each year the 10-Year Financial is reviewed and updated to reflect the current circumstances of Council.

The Plan effectively takes the assumptions and budget parameters that have been applied to the 2025-26 budget (which covers a four-year period) and extends these out into years 5-10 to give a longer term view of Council's financial viability and outcomes.

Key Financial Challenges

Current challenges and expected future events likely to impacts the Financial Plan projections.

Rate Capping
The introduction of the State Government's rate cap in 2016–17 limited how councils raise revenue, the past several years this has been set below inflation. For Knox City Council, where rates account for over 72% of total revenue, this has had a compounding impact over time. The cap has not accounted for rising costs—particularly post-COVID—such as fuel and construction materials, which have increased well above standard inflation.

Interest Rates
Interest rates influence both the cost of new borrowings and the returns generated from cash investments.

A borrowing rate of 5.0% is currently used for planning purposes. However, the actual rate at the time funds are drawn will influence the cost of borrowing and impact future planning. As such, interest rate movements remain a key consideration in both short- and long-term planning.

Borrowings
As at 30 June 2025, Council is budgeting to hold $83.8 million in borrowings, with an additional $40.9 million in borrowings anticipated between 2025-26 and 2028-29. Borrowings have been undertaken since 2021/22 to support the delivery of major projects.

Council must comply with borrowing covenants, which limits the amount of debt that can be undertaken in the medium term. At the same time, careful consideration is required to balance the repayment of both existing and future borrowings.

Superannuation
Council has an ongoing obligation to fund any investment shortfalls in the Defined Benefits Scheme. The last call on Local Government was in the 2011/12 financial year when Council was required to pay $11.5M to top up its share of the Defined Benefits Scheme. The amount and timing of any liability is dependent on the global investment market. At present the actuarial ratios are at a level where additional calls from Local Government are not expected in the next 12 months.

Capital Grant Funding
Capital grant opportunities arise continually and budgeted in the year when the grant applications are successful for various capital projects.

Enterprise Agreement
Councils current Enterprise Agreement will expire on 30 June 2026. Assumptions have been used in the long-term financial plan on wage increases for 2026/27 onwards which align with the assumed rate cap of 2.5%.

Infrastructure
Council faces the dual challenge of renewing ageing infrastructure while investing in new assets such as roads, drainage, parks, community facilities, and footpaths in underserved areas. Funding is allocated through a prioritised capital works plan.

Natural disasters
The timing and impact of these events are unknown and unfortunately the regularity is increasing because of climate change. Whilst Council undertakes prevention measures, these events have a significant impact on the community, businesses, and the economy, as well as Council's human and financial resources.

Public infrastructure maintenance
Councils across Australia raise approximately 3% of the total taxation collected by all levels of government in Australia. In addition, councils are entrusted with the maintenance of more than 30% of all public assets, including roads, bridges, parks, footpaths, and public buildings. This means that a large proportion of Council's income must be allocated to the maintenance and replacement of these valuable public assets to ensure the quality of public infrastructure is maintained at satisfactory levels.

Sustaining Financial Stability
For Councils finances to remain sustainable and our services to remain affordable for the community, Council will need to continually assess the performance and future for current services to understand whether they are relevant and whether Council needs to continue to deliver them or whether there is a role for an alternative delivery model.

In summary, from a financial perspective Council has the same dilemma as most individuals - it has a limited budget yet many and competing demands on where to allocate its scarce resources.

2. Legislative Requirements

Knox's integrated strategic planning and reporting framework (pictured below) illustrates the medium and long term plans that guide and manage our city.

Council takes an integrated approach to planning and reporting, with the 10-year Community Vision directly informing short, medium and long-term planning.

"Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive".

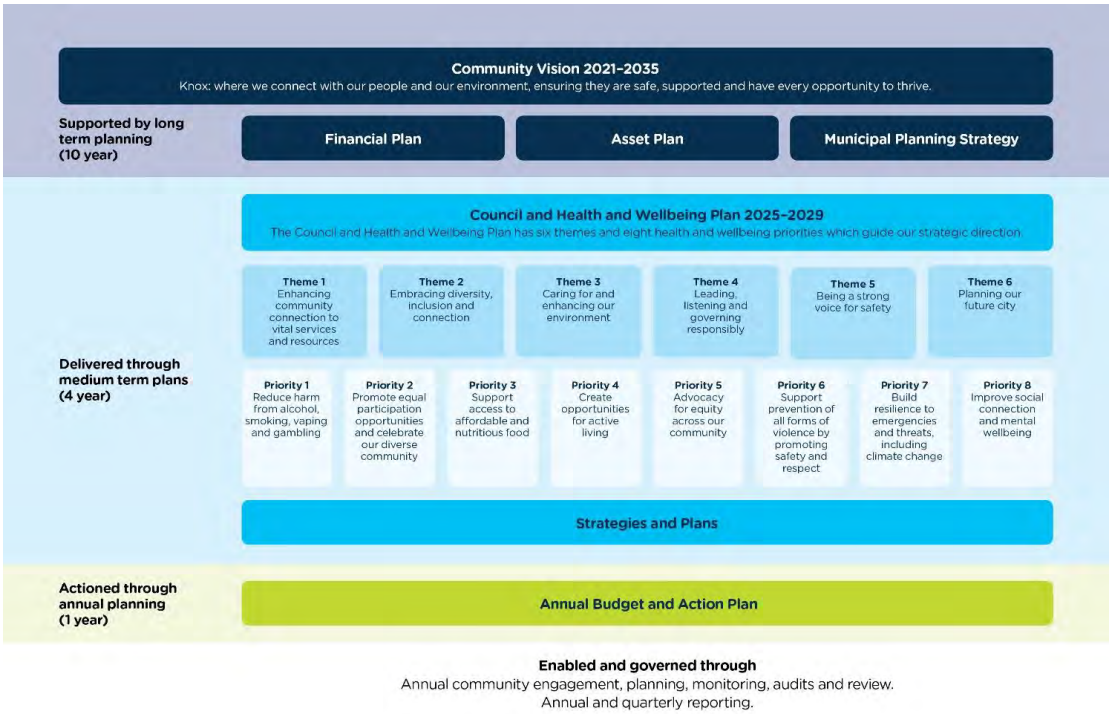
Knox's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework guides Council in identifying and delivering on community needs and aspirations over the long term (Community Vision), medium term (Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29) and short term (Annual Budget and Action Plan).

A number of other plans also guide our long-term and medium-term planning. They include plans about how we're going to manage our financial resources (the Financial Plan), manage and maintain our assets (the Asset Plan), plan for our future city (Municipal Planning Statement) and plan and prioritise our service delivery (strategies and plans).

The key themes, strategic objectives and health and wellbeing priorities of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan are also integrated across our other key Strategies and Plans. This approach provides a line of sight through every service in Council to achieve and report back on our community's vision and our wellbeing commitment.

To ensure that Council remains responsive to the community's evolving needs and priorities, each financial year actions are published in the Annual Budget. The development of the Annual Budget and Action Plan also includes setting an annual target for each performance measure of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan. In Council's Annual Report, we report back to the community on the actual result of each performance measure compared to the target, as well as on the achievement of the annual actions.

All parts of the integrated planning and reporting framework include opportunities for community and stakeholder input. This is important to ensure transparency and accountability. We monitor and regularly report back to the community on our progress through different mechanisms to ensure greater openness and understanding.



2.1 Strategic Planning Principles

The Financial Plan provides a 10 year financially sustainable projection regarding how the actions of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan may be funded to achieve the Community Vision. The Financial Plan is developed in the context of the following strategic planning principles:

a) Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.
b) Council's financial plan addresses the Community Vision by funding the aspirations of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan. The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan aspirations and actions are formulated in the context of the Community Vision.
c) The Financial Plan statements articulate the 10-year financial resources necessary to implement the goals and aspirations of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan to achieve the Community Vision.
d) Council's strategic planning principles identify and address the risks to effective implementation of the Financial Plan. The financial risks are included at section 2.6 below.
e) The Financial Plan provides for the strategic planning principles of progress, monitoring of progress and reviews to identify and adapt to changing circumstances.

2.2 Financial Management Principles

The Financial Plan demonstrates the following financial management principles:

2.2.1 Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions are managed in accordance with Council's financial policies and strategic plans.
2.2.2 Management of the following financial risks:
  a) the financial viability of the Council (refer to section 3.1 Financial Policy Statements).
  b) the management of current and future liabilities of the Council. The estimated 10 year liabilities are disclosed in section 4.2 Balance Sheet projections.
2.2.3 Financial policies and strategic plans are designed to provide financial stability and predictability to the community.
2.2.4 Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position.

2.3 Community Engagement

During the 2021-2025 planning process, nearly 4,500 community members shared their thoughts on shaping Knox's future. This engagement aimed to understand the community's aspirations and what community love about Knox.

In 2024, we revisited these insights through a detailed research and engagement program:

- The State of Knox Report 2024 enabled us to understand key demographics and changes in our community since 2020, including social, economic, and environmental conditions in Knox.
- Using over 100 previous engagement activities, we analysed the recurring themes and what matters most to you when it comes to your values, aspirations, and priorities.
- An equity impact assessment was undertaken to ensure the voices of our diverse community were incorporated through targeted and deliberative engagement. This enabled us to capture voices representative of our multicultural community, First Nations people, people with a disability, children and young people.
- We held many community engagement activities where more than 1,000 Knox community members shared insights, helping us to validate what we've learned, to identify current challenges and aspirations, and to shape priorities for the next four years.
- A representative Community Panel took part in deliberative engagement, helping us interpret the findings from the broader community, providing recommendations, and shaping the key elements of the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, including themes, strategic objectives and strategies, along with confirming Health and Wellbeing Priorities.
- Councillors and staff were also engaged to ensure that the plan reflects the role of Council.

Based on the information gathered through the engagement, six Themes and Strategic Objectives were established to provide the overarching strategic direction for Council.

Council and the community will work together, focusing on these Themes and Strategic Objectives over the next 10 years to achieve our vision:

- **Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources** - Our community can access important local services and resources through Council's delivery, advocacy, and partnerships
- **Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity** - Our diverse and connected community is strengthened by creating opportunities to actively participate, connect and learn.
- **Caring for and enhancing our environment** - Our environment is greener, healthier and sustainable through Council's environmental protection and enhancement, working in collaboration with our community.
- **Leading, listening and governing responsibly** - Our community feels empowered, heard, and has trust in Council through responsible governance, proactive communication and engagement, and transparent decision making
- **Being a strong voice for safety** - Our community feels safe, respected and supported in public spaces and at home through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships
- **Planning our future city** - Our neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure meet the needs of our changing community through effective planning, delivery and advocacy.

In addition to the community engagement activities undertaken above, in late 2023 we asked our community to share their thoughts on the services and assets they think Council should prioritise. This information will help Council make important decisions about finances and assets, balance current and future community need, and ensure we achieve our Community Vision by delivering on our plans.

2.4 Service Performance Principles

Council services are designed to be purposeful, targeted to community needs and value for money. In line with the service performance principles, Council's services are:

- **Equitable** - services are provided in an equitable manner and are responsive to the diverse needs of the Knox community. The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan and Annual Budget identifies the key services and projects to be delivered to the community. The Financial Plan provides the mechanism to demonstrate how the service aspirations within the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan may be funded;
- **Accessible** - services are accessible to the Knox community for whom the services are intended;
- **Good value** - quality and costs standards for services set by the Council provide good value to the Knox community. The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) is designed to communicate council's performance regarding the provision of quality and efficient services;
- **Continuously improved** – service delivery is continuously improved for the Knox community in response to performance monitoring. Feedback and complaints about service delivery is used to inform improvement initiatives, and complaints received are considered and responded to through a fair and effective process.

2.5 Asset Plan Integration

Integration to the Asset Plan is a key principle of Council's strategic financial planning principles. The purpose of this integration is designed to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery in terms of the plans and the effective management of Council's assets into the future.

The Asset Plan identifies the operational and strategic practices which will ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner. The Asset Plan, and associated asset management policies, provide council with a sound base to understand the risk associated with managing its assets for the community's benefit.

The Asset Plan is designed to inform the 10-year Financial Plan by identifying the amount of capital renewal, backlog and maintenance funding that is required over the life of each asset category. The level of funding will incorporate knowledge of asset condition, the risk assessment issues as well as the impact of reviewing and setting intervention and service levels for each asset class.

In addition to identifying the operational and strategic practices that ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner, the Asset Plan quantifies the asset portfolio and the financial implications of those practices. Together the Financial Plan and Asset Plan seek to balance projected investment requirements against projected budgets.

2.6 Revenue and Rating Plan Integration

Integration to the Revenue and Rating Plan is a key principle of the Council's strategic financial principles. The purpose of this integration is to ensure that Council's revenue is raised from the community in a manner that supports council's longer term financial plans and broader plans as set out in the Community Vision within the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The revenue raised by a local government is for delivering services and infrastructure to benefit those providing the revenue – the local community. The Revenue and Rating Plan is therefore linked to planned expenditure in the annual budget and strategic financial planning. They cannot be separated as any increase in spending by a council must be matched by revenue.

The Revenue and Rating Plan provides the framework for the setting of fees and charges, statutory charges, rates, and other Council income sources. It also makes assumptions regarding the levels of non-controlled revenues that the Council expects to generate over the four-year period, such as grants, subsidies, and contributions.

Additionally, it defines the amounts of rates to be generated either through a uniform rate, or from different ratepayer/property classes through municipal charges, differential rates, service rates and charges, and special rates and charges (where they have been adopted).

The Revenue and Rating Plan therefore defines what each source of revenue is, how income will be raised and the policy rationale/assumptions for each, to fund the Council's proposed expenditure detailed in their budget.

2.7 Financial Risk Management

Knox City Council uses a combination of measures and targets specific to Councils operating environment to assess risk whilst also utilising a Risk Management framework to document strategic and operational risks. Through the assessment of the internal and external environment that impacts the Council, Financial Sustainability has been assessed as a strategic risk. There are a number in controls in place to manage this risk.

Below is a summary of causes and controls around the City's financial sustainability strategic risk.

Strategic Risk: Unable to fund services and capital investment initiatives of the type / quality expected by the community.

Risk causes

- Change in fiscal policy (State or Federal grants)
- Economic downturn or recession leading to reduced rates collection and investment returns
- Inability to be resilient when faced with a disaster
- Inability to sufficiently fund the renewal of the asset base
- Inability to scale operational capability / reduce costs within funding envelope
- Lack of ongoing reviews/planning for service effectiveness, or introduction of transformational efficiencies
- Interest rate rises; labour costs are not controlled; further rate capping
- Increasing and mixed expectations from Community. There are conflicting demands; some seeking increased and diverse services, others seeking a return to more traditional services
- Poor financial and/ or resource management, poor project management, poor compliance.

Controls in place

- 10-year financial plan which focuses on maintaining good working capital; appropriate reserves and surplus positions.
- Annual budget process, which looks at the 4-year budget horizon.
- Monthly budget monitoring and forecasting of year end results, reported quarterly to Audit and Risk Committee and Council.
- Budget principles which provide the option for early repayment of debt if there is surplus cash compared to the annual budget position at year end.
- Advocacy and long-term relationships across government and Local Government sector
- Service planning to identify service levels and service opportunities for efficiencies.
- Service reviews where appropriate
- Strong focus on Asset Management and funding of renewals
- Relevant training and inductions for staff and Councillors
- Communicating with the community that we operate in a constrained environment.

3. Financial Plan Context

This section describes the context and external / internal environment and consideration in determining the 10-year financial projections and assumptions.

3.1 Financial Policy Statements

This section defines the policy statements, and associated measures, that demonstrates Council's financial sustainability to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and the Council Plan.

Policy Statement	Measure	Target	Forecast 2024-25	Budget 2025-26	Budget 2026-27	Budget 2027-28	Budget 2028-29	Budget 2029-30	Budget 2030-31	Budget 2031-32	Budget 2032-33	Budget 2033-34	Budget 2034-35
Consistent underlying surplus results	Adjusted underlying result greater than 2.50%	>2.50%	4.28%	9.15%	7.27%	7.87%	8.59%	10.88%	11.31%	12.29%	13.23%	14.90%	16.06%
Ensure Council maintains sufficient working capital to meet its debt obligations as they fall due	Current Assets / Current Liabilities greater than 1.00	>1.00	1.39	1.34	1.22	1.18	1.27	1.17	1.12	1.19	1.39	1.75	2.20
Allocate adequate funds towards renewal capital in order to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life	Asset Renewal and Upgrade Expenses / Depreciation above 1.00	>1.00	2.37	2.23	1.85	1.85	1.44	1.64	1.65	1.65	1.65	1.66	1.65
That Council applies loan funding to new capital and maintains total borrowings in line with rate and fee income and growth of the municipality	Total Interest Bearing Liabilities/Own Source Revenue (excluding Open Space) to remain below 60.00%	<60.00%	51.18%	46.63%	46.21%	46.50%	43.29%	33.92%	25.21%	17.40%	11.74%	7.68%	5.10%
Council can repay interest on outstanding interest bearing loans and borrowings	EBITDA / Interest Expense greater than 2.00	>2.00	11.49	15.08	12.44	12.62	13.25	16.36	20.66	28.51	41.53	65.22	101.35
Council could repay its borrowings commitment from the rate income	Interest and Principal Repayments on Interest Bearing Loans / Rate Revenue is less than 10.00%	<10.00%	9.32%	9.59%	9.62%	10.70%	11.35%	11.32%	10.94%	9.79%	7.12%	5.03%	3.47%
Council maintains sufficient unrestricted cash to ensure ongoing liquidity as well as to address unforeseen cash imposts if required	(Current Assets less Restricted Reserves) / Current Liabilities greater than 1.00	>1.00	1.27	1.32	1.21	1.16	1.25	1.15	1.10	1.18	1.37	1.74	2.18

3.2 Strategic Actions

Council has identified the following strategic actions that will support the community's aspirations identified in the delivery of the Council Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

- That council adopt the budgeted statement of financial performance (Comprehensive Income Statement) as an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That Council adopt the budgeted statement of financial position (Balance Sheet) as being an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That Council adopt the budgeted statement of cash flows as being an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That the working capital ratio be targeted to remain above a ratio of 1.0.
- That capital expenditure on asset renewal projects (and upgrades that have a significant renewal component) to exceed depreciation expense.
- That debt funding be applied to infrastructure where necessary.
- That Council consider the most appropriate fees and charges strategy so that adequate funds are recovered to offset operational expenses in annual and future budgets.

3.3 Assumptions to the Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information regarding the assumptions to the Comprehensive Income Statement for the 10 years from 2025-26 to 2034-35. The assumptions comprise the annual escalations / movement for each item of the Comprehensive Income Statement.

Escalation Factors % Movements	Budget 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
CPI	2.75%	3.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Growth in Properties (number)	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600
Rates and Charges	2.75%	3.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Supplementary Rates ($'000)	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Statutory Fees and Fines	2.75%	3.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
User Fees	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%
Grants - Operating (excluding VGC)	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Grants - Operating (VGC)	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Grants - Capital (excluding VGC)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Grants - Capital (VGC and Roads to Recovery)	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Contributions - Monetary	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Contributions - Non-Monetary ($'000)	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Other Income	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Employee Costs	3.16%	2.91%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Materials and Services	2.75%	3.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Utilities	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
Contributions and Donations	2.75%	3.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Other Expenses	2.75%	3.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%

3.3.1 Rates and Charges

Planning for future rate increases has been an important component of the Financial Plan process. The State Government has introduced the Fair Go Rates System which sets out the maximum amount councils may increase rates in a year. The Financial Plan assumes a rate increase of 3.00 percent in 2025-26. The rates in 2026-27 and beyond have been based on the Department of Treasury and Finance CPI projections of 2.50 percent in December 2024.

The Financial Plan assumes an additional 600 property assessments per annum, while supplementary rates are anticipated to be $0.500 million per annum. The average Rates per Assessment for 2025-26 is estimated at $1,806.

Waste management charges are levied on the basis of cost recovery. This is consistent with the position of the majority of councils given that waste charges are outside the Minister's Rate Cap.

More information can be found in Council's Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029.

3.3.2 User Fees

User fees relate mainly to the recovery of service delivery costs from Council's extensive and highly diversified range of services provided to the community. Examples of user fees include:

- Childcare fees
- Waste Management fees
- Leases, recreational reserve and facility hire fees

Council endeavours, as much as possible, to be a full cost recovery service provider.

3.3.3 Statutory Fees and Fines

Statutory fees are fees and fines levied in accordance with legislation. Examples of statutory fees and fines include:

- Planning and subdivision fees
- Building and Inspection fees
- Infringements and fines
- Land Information Certificate fees

Increases in the Financial Plan have been based on the projected CPI.

3.3.4 Grants

Council receives tied operating grant funding from State and Federal sources, with these operating grants budgeted to increase by 2 percent per annum.

Council receives untied Financial Assistance Grants via the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission. These grants are composed of an operating and capital component, and are anticipated to increase by 1 percent per annum. The Roads to Recovery grant is also anticipated to increase by 1 percent.

Council does not budget for capital grants for specific projects that have not been confirmed. However Council will pro-actively advocate to other levels of government for grant funding support to deliver important infrastructure and service outcomes for the community. Council may use its own funds to leverage higher grant funding and maximise external funding opportunities.

3.3.5 Contributions

Contributions represent funds received by council, usually from non-government sources, and are usually linked to projects. Contributions can be made to council in the form of either cash payments or asset hand-overs.

Examples of contributions include:

- Monies collected from developers under planning and development agreements;
- Monies collected for developer contributions;
- Contributions from user groups towards the upgrade of facilities;
- Assets handed over to council from developers at the completion of a subdivision, such as roads, drainage, and streetlights.

Developer contributions are statutory contributions and are transferred to a restricted reserve until utilised for a specific purpose through the capital works program or delivered as works in kind by developers. Income of this nature is unpredictable and is directly contingent on developer activities in the municipality.

3.3.6 Other Income

Revenue from other income mainly comprises investment income plus the recovery of income from a variety of sources and rental income received from the hire or lease of Council buildings.

3.3.7 Employee Costs

Increases for employee costs reflect the salary increase for all staff pursuant to Council's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.

3.3.8 Materials and Services

Material costs include items required for the maintenance and repairs of Council buildings, roads, drains and footpaths which are governed more by market forces based on availability rather than CPI. Other associated costs included under this category are utilities, waste management, materials for the supply of community meals, and consumable items for a range of services. Council also utilises external expertise on a range of matters, including legal services and audit. Discretionary material costs are budgeted to increase by CPI. Non-discretionary costs such as utility costs are budgeted to increase by 5 percent.

3.3.9 Contributions and Donations

Contributions and donations includes Council's annual contribution to the Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation. Council also offer a range of grants and funding to community members and organisations across a range of areas.

3.3.10 Depreciation and Amortisation

Depreciation estimates have been based on the projected life of Council's existing property, infrastructure, plant and equipment, together with the projected capital spending contained in this Financial Plan.

3.3.11 Borrowing Costs

Borrowing costs comprise the interest expense to service Council's loan portfolio that is described in Section 6.1 Borrowing Plan.

3.3.12 Other Expenses

Other expenses includes administration costs such as Councillor allowances, operating lease rentals and audit expenses.

4. Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information regarding the budgeted Financial Plan Statements for the 10 years from 2024-25 to 2033-34.

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Capital Works
- Statement of Human Resources

4.1 Comprehensive Income Statement

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
INCOME											
Rates and charges	150,482	153,826	165,163	163,587	167,716	173,924	180,323	186,920	193,722	200,735	207,965
User fees	13,310	13,677	13,931	14,475	15,065	15,798	16,357	17,044	17,860	18,607	19,285
Statutory fees and fines	4,691	5,458	5,551	5,746	5,887	6,034	6,185	6,340	6,499	6,661	6,828
Grants - operating	27,710	19,651	20,064	20,362	20,689	21,022	21,362	21,707	22,058	22,416	22,779
Grants - capital	6,670	10,383	2,918	3,006	3,021	3,052	3,083	3,114	3,145	3,176	3,207
Contributions - monetary	7,294	5,000	6,000	6,000	6,500	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Contributions - non-monetary	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Net loss (gain) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,242	10,506	1,417	1,917	1,917	3,617	1,417	417	417	417	417
Share of net profits (or loss) of associates and joint ventures	59	4	7	10	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Other income	3,625	1,803	1,824	1,850	1,874	2,163	2,077	2,047	2,136	2,413	2,877
TOTAL INCOME	**217,083**	**222,308**	**218,875**	**218,953**	**224,682**	**234,623**	**239,817**	**246,602**	**254,850**	**263,438**	**272,371**
EXPENSES											
Employee costs	79,965	77,377	78,669	79,923	81,641	83,682	85,774	87,918	90,116	92,369	94,678
Materials and services	82,715	77,100	82,940	79,593	80,843	82,319	83,703	85,111	87,550	88,019	89,518
Contributions and donations	6,049	6,138	6,188	6,343	6,501	6,664	6,831	7,002	7,177	7,357	7,541
Depreciation	25,025	25,329	26,055	26,611	27,123	27,555	28,129	28,728	29,349	29,998	30,769
Amortisation - intangible assets	903	903	903	903	903	903	903	903	903	903	903
Depreciation - right of use assets	1,185	1,176	1,205	1,216	1,246	1,261	1,308	1,309	1,339	1,351	1,386
Borrowing costs	3,767	3,599	3,611	3,747	3,772	3,395	2,734	2,049	1,446	983	674
Finance costs - leases	343	419	402	369	342	318	279	241	208	157	108
Allowance for impairment losses	408	317	321	329	337	345	354	363	372	381	391
Other expense	720	796	824	838	851	872	894	916	939	962	986
TOTAL EXPENSES	**201,080**	**193,154**	**201,118**	**199,872**	**203,559**	**207,314**	**210,909**	**214,540**	**219,399**	**222,480**	**226,954**
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	**16,003**	**29,154**	**17,757**	**19,081**	**21,123**	**27,309**	**28,908**	**32,062**	**35,451**	**40,958**	**45,417**
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE RESULT	**16,003**	**29,154**	**17,757**	**19,081**	**21,123**	**27,309**	**28,908**	**32,062**	**35,451**	**40,958**	**45,417**
LESS											
Grants - capital - non recurrent	3,474	7,700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contributions and donations - capital	1,544	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contributions - non-monetary	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
UNDERLYING SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	**8,985**	**19,454**	**15,757**	**17,081**	**19,123**	**25,309**	**26,908**	**30,062**	**33,451**	**38,958**	**43,417**

4.2 Balance Sheet

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
CURRENT ASSETS											
Cash and cash equivalents	42,932	37,123	33,004	33,384	40,391	36,428	32,899	32,771	39,466	54,376	75,928
Other financial assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trade and other receivables	21,339	21,898	23,368	23,336	23,976	24,643	25,329	26,035	26,762	27,510	28,279
Inventories	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Prepayments	1,374	1,408	1,444	1,480	1,517	1,555	1,594	1,634	1,675	1,717	1,760
Other assets	2,400	2,460	2,522	2,585	2,649	2,715	2,783	2,853	2,924	2,997	3,072
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	**68,058**	**62,902**	**60,351**	**60,798**	**68,546**	**65,354**	**62,618**	**63,306**	**70,840**	**86,613**	**109,052**
NON CURRENT ASSETS											
Investments in associates	2,806	2,810	2,817	2,827	2,840	2,853	2,866	2,879	2,892	2,905	2,918
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	2,326,906	2,354,569	2,376,601	2,397,381	2,408,024	2,424,774	2,441,990	2,459,677	2,477,839	2,496,476	2,515,497
Right-of-use assets	4,762	5,987	5,575	4,732	4,466	4,184	3,249	2,919	2,560	1,815	1,409
Intangible assets	2,419	2,419	2,419	2,419	2,419	2,419	2,419	2,419	2,419	2,419	2,419
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	**2,336,893**	**2,365,785**	**2,387,412**	**2,407,359**	**2,417,749**	**2,434,230**	**2,450,524**	**2,467,894**	**2,485,710**	**2,503,615**	**2,522,243**
TOTAL ASSETS	**2,404,951**	**2,428,687**	**2,447,763**	**2,468,157**	**2,486,295**	**2,499,584**	**2,513,142**	**2,531,200**	**2,556,550**	**2,590,228**	**2,631,295**
CURRENT LIABILITIES											
Trade and other payables	13,169	13,465	13,778	14,094	14,417	14,748	15,088	15,439	15,803	16,177	16,580
Trust funds and deposits	2,624	2,690	2,757	2,826	2,896	2,968	3,042	3,118	3,196	3,276	3,358
Contract and other liabilities	3,915	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Provisions	19,052	19,518	19,995	20,485	20,987	21,501	22,028	22,568	23,122	23,690	24,272
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	9,446	10,336	11,714	13,314	14,720	15,380	14,629	10,689	7,459	4,862	4,398
Lease liabilities	778	899	1,037	967	1,038	1,226	1,135	1,201	1,353	1,351	1,046
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	**48,984**	**46,908**	**49,281**	**51,686**	**54,058**	**55,823**	**55,922**	**53,015**	**50,933**	**49,356**	**49,654**
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES											
Provisions	2,896	2,923	2,951	2,980	3,010	3,040	3,071	3,103	3,136	3,169	3,203
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	74,360	69,790	69,126	68,688	63,578	48,198	33,569	22,880	15,421	10,559	6,162
Lease liabilities	4,164	5,365	4,947	4,264	3,987	3,552	2,701	2,261	1,668	794	509
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	**81,420**	**78,078**	**77,024**	**75,932**	**70,575**	**54,790**	**39,341**	**28,244**	**20,225**	**14,522**	**9,874**
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**130,404**	**124,986**	**126,305**	**127,618**	**124,633**	**110,613**	**95,263**	**81,259**	**71,158**	**63,878**	**59,528**
NET ASSETS	**2,274,547**	**2,303,701**	**2,321,458**	**2,340,539**	**2,361,662**	**2,388,971**	**2,417,879**	**2,449,941**	**2,485,392**	**2,526,350**	**2,571,767**
EQUITY											
Accumulated surplus	739,133	773,158	790,786	809,734	830,744	857,900	886,653	918,559	953,853	994,652	1,039,909
Reserves	1,535,414	1,530,543	1,530,672	1,530,805	1,530,918	1,531,071	1,531,226	1,531,382	1,531,539	1,531,698	1,531,858
TOTAL EQUITY	**2,274,547**	**2,303,701**	**2,321,458**	**2,340,539**	**2,361,662**	**2,388,971**	**2,417,879**	**2,449,941**	**2,485,392**	**2,526,350**	**2,571,767**

4.3 Statement of Changes in Equity

	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000	Other Reserves $'000
2025 FORECAST				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,258,544**	**723,126**	**1,516,301**	**19,117**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	16,003	16,003	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(10,729)	0	10,729
Transfer from other reserves	0	10,733	0	(10,733)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,274,547**	**739,133**	**1,516,301**	**19,113**
2026 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,274,547**	**739,133**	**1,516,301**	**19,113**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	29,154	29,154	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(9,778)	0	9,778
Transfer from other reserves	0	14,649	0	(14,649)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,303,701**	**773,158**	**1,516,301**	**14,242**
2027 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,303,701**	**773,158**	**1,516,301**	**14,242**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	17,757	17,757	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(10,825)	0	10,825
Transfer from other reserves	0	10,696	0	(10,696)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,321,458**	**790,786**	**1,516,301**	**14,371**
2028 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,321,458**	**790,786**	**1,516,301**	**14,371**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	19,081	19,081	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(10,875)	0	10,875
Transfer from other reserves	0	10,742	0	(10,742)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,340,539**	**809,734**	**1,516,301**	**14,504**
2029 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,340,539**	**809,734**	**1,516,301**	**14,504**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	21,123	21,123	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(11,403)	0	11,403
Transfer from other reserves	0	11,290	0	(11,290)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,361,662**	**830,744**	**1,516,301**	**14,617**
2030 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,361,662**	**830,744**	**1,516,301**	**14,617**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	27,309	27,309	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(11,952)	0	11,952
Transfer from other reserves	0	11,799	0	(11,799)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,388,971**	**857,900**	**1,516,301**	**14,770**

	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000	Other Reserves $'000
2031 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,388,971**	**857,900**	**1,516,301**	**14,770**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	28,908	28,908	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(12,002)	0	12,002
Transfer from other reserves	0	11,847	0	(11,847)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,417,879**	**886,653**	**1,516,301**	**14,925**
2032 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,417,879**	**886,653**	**1,516,301**	**14,925**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	32,062	32,062	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(12,052)	0	12,052
Transfer from other reserves	0	11,896	0	(11,896)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,449,941**	**918,559**	**1,516,301**	**15,081**
2033 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,449,941**	**918,559**	**1,516,301**	**15,081**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	35,451	35,451	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(12,102)	0	12,102
Transfer from other reserves	0	11,945	0	(11,945)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,485,392**	**953,853**	**1,516,301**	**15,238**
2034 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,485,392**	**953,853**	**1,516,301**	**15,238**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	40,958	40,958	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(12,153)	0	12,153
Transfer from other reserves	0	11,994	0	(11,994)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,526,350**	**994,652**	**1,516,301**	**15,397**
2035 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,526,350**	**994,652**	**1,516,301**	**15,397**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	45,417	45,417	0	0
Net asset revaluation gain / (loss)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(12,204)	0	12,204
Transfer from other reserves	0	12,044	0	(12,044)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	**2,571,767**	**1,039,909**	**1,516,301**	**15,557**

4.4 Statement of Cash Flows

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
	Inflows (Outflows)	**Inflows (Outflows)**	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES											
Rates and charges	150,059	153,411	163,842	163,773	167,236	173,437	179,823	186,408	193,197	200,197	207,414
User fees	13,214	13,576	13,827	14,367	14,954	15,672	16,226	16,908	17,719	18,460	19,132
Statutory fees and fines	4,650	5,415	5,506	5,700	5,839	5,980	6,129	6,282	6,438	6,598	6,763
Grants - operating	27,036	19,651	20,064	20,362	20,689	21,022	21,362	21,707	22,058	22,416	22,779
Grants - capital	9,211	6,468	2,918	3,006	3,021	3,052	3,083	3,114	3,145	3,176	3,207
Contributions - monetary	7,294	5,000	6,000	6,000	6,500	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Interest received	2,000	950	950	950	950	1,239	1,153	1,123	1,212	1,489	1,953
Other receipts	1,625	853	874	900	924	924	924	924	924	924	924
Net movement in trust deposits	64	66	67	69	71	72	74	76	78	80	82
Employee costs	(79,407)	(76,884)	(78,163)	(79,405)	(81,110)	(83,138)	(85,216)	(87,346)	(89,529)	(91,768)	(94,062)
Materials and services	(82,871)	(77,237)	(83,026)	(79,681)	(80,934)	(82,411)	(83,797)	(85,208)	(87,649)	(88,120)	(89,623)
Contributions and donations	(6,049)	(6,138)	(6,188)	(6,343)	(6,501)	(6,664)	(6,831)	(7,002)	(7,177)	(7,357)	(7,541)
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments	(12)	(31)	(32)	(39)	(29)	(35)	(9)	(33)	(24)	(37)	(24)
Other payments	(708)	(765)	(792)	(799)	(822)	(837)	(885)	(883)	(915)	(925)	(962)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	**46,106**	**44,335**	**45,847**	**48,860**	**50,788**	**55,313**	**59,036**	**63,070**	**66,477**	**72,133**	**77,042**
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES											
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	11,283	11,256	2,167	2,667	2,667	4,367	2,167	1,167	1,167	1,167	1,167
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(57,051)	(52,645)	(47,740)	(47,044)	(37,419)	(43,958)	(44,998)	(46,068)	(47,164)	(48,288)	(49,443)
Payments for investments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Proceeds from sale of investments	10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES	**(35,768)**	**(41,389)**	**(45,573)**	**(44,377)**	**(34,752)**	**(39,591)**	**(42,831)**	**(44,901)**	**(45,997)**	**(47,121)**	**(48,276)**

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
	Inflows (Outflows)	**Inflows (Outflows)**	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES											
Finance costs	(3,755)	(3,625)	(3,633)	(3,770)	(3,797)	(3,421)	(2,760)	(2,074)	(1,468)	(1,003)	(675)
Proceeds from borrowings	10,000	6,000	11,500	13,400	10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Repayment of borrowings	(8,865)	(9,680)	(10,785)	(12,238)	(13,705)	(14,720)	(15,380)	(14,629)	(10,689)	(7,459)	(4,862)
Interest paid - lease liability	(343)	(419)	(402)	(369)	(342)	(318)	(279)	(241)	(208)	(157)	(108)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(1,059)	(1,031)	(1,073)	(1,126)	(1,185)	(1,226)	(1,315)	(1,353)	(1,420)	(1,483)	(1,569)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) FINANCING ACTIVITIES	**(4,022)**	**(8,755)**	**(4,393)**	**(4,103)**	**(9,029)**	**(19,685)**	**(19,734)**	**(18,297)**	**(13,785)**	**(10,102)**	**(7,214)**
NET INCREASE / (DECREASE) IN CASH HELD	**6,316**	**(5,809)**	**(4,119)**	**380**	**7,007**	**(3,963)**	**(3,529)**	**(128)**	**6,695**	**14,910**	**21,552**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	36,616	42,932	37,123	33,004	33,384	40,391	36,428	32,899	32,771	39,466	54,376
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF YEAR	**42,932**	**37,123**	**33,004**	**33,384**	**40,391**	**36,428**	**32,899**	**32,771**	**39,466**	**54,376**	**75,928**

4.5 Statement of Capital Works

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
PROPERTY											
Land and Buildings	12,397	16,322	14,016	13,490	5,462	9,908	10,155	10,408	10,668	10,935	11,209
TOTAL PROPERTY	**12,397**	**16,322**	**14,016**	**13,490**	**5,462**	**9,908**	**10,155**	**10,408**	**10,668**	**10,935**	**11,209**
PLANT AND EQUIPMENT											
Plant, machinery and equipment	3,145	1,949	2,455	2,132	2,139	2,001	2,051	2,102	2,155	2,209	2,264
Office furniture and equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Computers and telecommunications	5,531	5,341	2,969	4,470	2,350	3,818	3,838	3,859	3,880	3,902	3,925
Artworks	325	210	498	250	253	304	311	318	326	335	344
TOTAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	**9,001**	**7,500**	**5,922**	**6,852**	**4,742**	**6,123**	**6,200**	**6,279**	**6,361**	**6,446**	**6,533**
INFRASTRUCTURE											
Roads	7,323	9,307	9,673	10,202	9,946	11,951	12,249	12,555	12,868	13,189	13,519
Bridges	993	973	996	944	962	992	1,017	1,042	1,068	1,095	1,122
Footpaths and cycleways	5,813	5,735	5,980	5,615	5,289	5,768	5,912	6,060	6,211	6,367	6,527
Drainage	6,893	4,868	4,893	4,750	4,344	4,668	4,785	4,904	5,026	5,151	5,280
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	15,595	10,721	8,339	7,298	7,266	5,991	6,143	6,300	6,460	6,621	6,787
Off street car parks	2,659	1,616	1,270	1,487	1,648	1,578	1,617	1,657	1,699	1,742	1,786
Other infrastructure	4,315	803	628	454	478	247	253	259	265	271	277
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	**43,591**	**34,023**	**31,779**	**30,750**	**29,933**	**31,195**	**31,976**	**32,777**	**33,597**	**34,436**	**35,298**
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE	**64,989**	**57,845**	**51,717**	**51,092**	**40,137**	**47,226**	**48,331**	**49,464**	**50,626**	**51,817**	**53,040**
REPRESENTED BY											
Asset renewal	40,114	39,318	36,011	37,432	34,786	38,271	39,229	40,212	41,217	42,247	43,305
Asset upgrade	19,240	17,270	12,147	11,930	4,374	6,989	7,089	7,190	7,295	7,402	7,512
Asset new	5,132	1,227	3,559	1,730	977	1,892	1,938	1,985	2,035	2,087	2,140
Asset expansion	503	30	0	0	0	74	75	77	79	81	83
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE	**64,989**	**57,845**	**51,717**	**51,092**	**40,137**	**47,226**	**48,331**	**49,464**	**50,626**	**51,817**	**53,040**

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
CAPITAL WORKS FUNDING SOURCE											
EXTERNAL											
Loan proceeds	10,000	6,000	11,500	13,400	10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grants - capital	6,670	10,383	2,918	3,006	3,021	3,052	3,083	3,114	3,145	3,176	3,207
Contributions - capital	1,544	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	**18,214**	**16,383**	**14,418**	**16,406**	**13,021**	**3,052**	**3,083**	**3,114**	**3,145**	**3,176**	**3,207**
INTERNAL											
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets	6,617	11,256	2,167	2,667	2,667	4,367	2,167	1,167	1,167	1,167	1,167
Movement in reserve funds	10,733	10,769	6,777	6,784	7,292	7,781	7,789	7,797	7,805	7,813	7,821
Rate funding	29,425	19,437	28,355	25,235	17,157	32,026	35,292	37,386	38,509	39,661	40,845
TOTAL INTERNAL FUNDING	**46,775**	**41,462**	**37,299**	**34,686**	**27,116**	**44,174**	**45,248**	**46,350**	**47,481**	**48,641**	**49,833**
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS FUNDING SOURCES	**64,989**	**57,845**	**51,717**	**51,092**	**40,137**	**47,226**	**48,331**	**49,464**	**50,626**	**51,817**	**53,040**
LESS OPERATING PROJECTS EXPENDITURE											
Operating Projects Expenditure	7,938	5,200	3,977	4,048	2,718	3,268	3,333	3,396	3,462	3,529	3,597
NET CAPITAL WORKS (CAPITALISED EXPENDITURE EXCLUDING OPERATING PROJECTS EXPENDITURE)	**57,051**	**52,645**	**47,740**	**47,044**	**37,419**	**43,958**	**44,998**	**46,068**	**47,164**	**48,288**	**49,443**

4.6 Statement of Human Resources

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000 FTE	Budget 2025-26 $'000 FTE	Budget 2026-27 $'000 FTE	Budget 2027-28 $'000 FTE	Budget 2028-29 $'000 FTE	Budget 2029-30 $'000 FTE	Budget 2030-31 $'000 FTE	Budget 2031-32 $'000 FTE	Budget 2032-33 $'000 FTE	Budget 2033-34 $'000 FTE	Budget 2034-35 $'000 FTE
STAFF EXPENDITURE											
Employee costs - operating	79,965	77,377	78,669	79,923	81,641	83,682	85,774	87,918	90,116	92,369	94,678
Employee costs - capital	7,412	6,691	6,442	6,360	6,454	6,615	6,781	6,950	7,124	7,302	7,485
TOTAL STAFF EXPENDITURE	**87,377**	**84,068**	**85,111**	**86,283**	**88,095**	**90,297**	**92,555**	**94,868**	**97,240**	**99,671**	**102,163**
STAFF NUMBERS											
Full time equivalent (FTE) employees	672.94	650.05	641.85	635.43	632.23	632.23	632.23	632.23	632.23	632.23	632.23
TOTAL STAFF NUMBERS	**672.94**	**650.05**	**641.85**	**635.43**	**632.23**	**632.23**	**632.23**	**632.23**	**632.23**	**632.23**	**632.23**

4.7 Planned Human Resource Expenditure

	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
CEO										
Permanent - Full Time	3,740	3,828	3,926	4,024	4,125	4,228	4,333	4,442	4,553	4,667
Female	2,939	3,008	3,085	3,162	3,241	3,322	3,405	3,490	3,578	3,667
Male	801	820	841	862	884	906	928	951	975	1,000
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	851	871	893	916	939	962	986	1,011	1,036	1,062
Female	851	871	893	916	939	962	986	1,011	1,036	1,062
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CEO	**4,591**	**4,699**	**4,819**	**4,940**	**5,064**	**5,190**	**5,320**	**5,453**	**5,589**	**5,729**
CITY LIVEABILITY										
Permanent - Full Time	12,611	12,743	13,063	13,390	13,725	14,068	14,420	14,780	15,150	15,528
Female	6,135	6,199	6,355	6,514	6,677	6,844	7,015	7,190	7,370	7,554
Male	6,476	6,544	6,708	6,876	7,048	7,224	7,405	7,590	7,780	7,974
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	3,344	3,379	3,464	3,550	3,639	3,730	3,823	3,919	4,016	4,117
Female	2,594	2,621	2,686	2,753	2,822	2,892	2,965	3,039	3,115	3,193
Male	732	740	759	778	797	817	838	859	880	902
Self-described gender	18	18	19	19	19	20	20	21	21	22
TOTAL CITY LIVEABILITY	**15,955**	**16,122**	**16,527**	**16,940**	**17,364**	**17,798**	**18,243**	**18,699**	**19,166**	**19,645**
CONNECTED COMMUNITIES										
Permanent - Full Time	13,368	13,674	13,912	14,258	14,614	14,980	15,354	15,738	16,132	16,535
Female	11,371	11,631	11,833	12,128	12,431	12,742	13,061	13,387	13,722	14,065
Male	1,997	2,043	2,079	2,130	2,183	2,238	2,294	2,351	2,410	2,470
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	8,317	8,508	8,655	8,870	9,092	9,319	9,552	9,791	10,036	10,286
Female	7,661	7,837	7,972	8,170	8,374	8,584	8,798	9,018	9,244	9,475
Male	656	671	683	700	718	735	754	773	792	812
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CONNECTED COMMUNITIES	**21,685**	**22,182**	**22,567**	**23,128**	**23,706**	**24,299**	**24,906**	**25,529**	**26,167**	**26,821**

	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
CUSTOMER PERFORMANCE										
Permanent - Full Time	12,859	12,949	13,214	13,375	13,709	14,052	14,403	14,763	15,133	15,511
Female	8,341	8,399	8,571	8,675	8,892	9,114	9,342	9,576	9,815	10,060
Male	4,518	4,550	4,643	4,700	4,818	4,938	5,061	5,188	5,318	5,451
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	2,744	2,764	2,822	2,854	2,925	2,998	3,073	3,150	3,229	3,310
Female	2,364	2,381	2,430	2,459	2,520	2,583	2,648	2,714	2,782	2,852
Male	380	383	392	395	405	415	425	436	447	458
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CUSTOMER PERFORMANCE	**15,603**	**15,713**	**16,036**	**16,229**	**16,635**	**17,051**	**17,477**	**17,914**	**18,362**	**18,821**
INFRASTRUCTURE										
Permanent - Full Time	16,772	17,136	17,118	17,481	17,918	18,366	18,825	19,296	19,778	20,273
Female	3,925	4,010	4,006	4,091	4,193	4,298	4,406	4,516	4,629	4,744
Male	12,847	13,126	13,112	13,390	13,725	14,068	14,420	14,780	15,150	15,528
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	223	227	227	232	238	244	250	256	262	269
Female	182	185	185	189	194	199	204	209	214	219
Male	41	42	42	43	44	45	46	47	49	50
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	**16,995**	**17,363**	**17,345**	**17,713**	**18,156**	**18,610**	**19,075**	**19,552**	**20,041**	**20,542**
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	2,548	2,590	2,629	2,691	2,758	2,827	2,897	2,970	3,045	3,121
Capitalised labour costs	6,691	6,442	6,360	6,454	6,615	6,781	6,950	7,124	7,302	7,485
TOTAL STAFF EXPENDITURE	**84,068**	**85,111**	**86,283**	**88,095**	**90,297**	**92,555**	**94,868**	**97,240**	**99,671**	**102,163**

	Budget 2025-26 FTE	Budget 2026-27 FTE	Budget 2027-28 FTE	Budget 2028-29 FTE	Budget 2029-30 FTE	Budget 2030-31 FTE	Budget 2031-32 FTE	Budget 2032-33 FTE	Budget 2033-34 FTE	Budget 2034-35 FTE
CEO										
Permanent - Full Time	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00
Female	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00
Male	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78
Female	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78	6.78
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CEO	**27.78**	**27.78**	**27.78**	**27.78**	**27.78**	**27.78**	**27.78**	**27.78**	**27.78**	**27.78**
CITY LIVEABILITY										
Permanent - Full Time	88.00	87.00	87.00	87.00	87.00	87.00	87.00	87.00	87.00	87.00
Female	43.00	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00
Male	45.00	45.00	45.00	45.00	45.00	45.00	45.00	45.00	45.00	45.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	34.50	33.30	33.30	33.30	33.30	33.30	33.30	33.30	33.30	33.30
Female	26.75	26.15	26.15	26.15	26.15	26.15	26.15	26.15	26.15	26.15
Male	7.56	6.96	6.96	6.96	6.96	6.96	6.96	6.96	6.96	6.96
Self-described gender	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19
TOTAL CITY LIVEABILITY	**122.50**	**120.30**	**120.30**	**120.30**	**120.30**	**120.30**	**120.30**	**120.30**	**120.30**	**120.30**
CONNECTED COMMUNITIES										
Permanent - Full Time	118.00	117.00	117.00	117.00	117.00	117.00	117.00	117.00	117.00	117.00
Female	100.00	99.00	99.00	99.00	99.00	99.00	99.00	99.00	99.00	99.00
Male	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	69.99	69.99	68.57	68.57	68.57	68.57	68.57	68.57	68.57	68.57
Female	64.47	64.47	63.05	63.05	63.05	63.05	63.05	63.05	63.05	63.05
Male	5.52	5.52	5.52	5.52	5.52	5.52	5.52	5.52	5.52	5.52
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CONNECTED COMMUNITIES	**187.99**	**186.99**	**185.57**	**185.57**	**185.57**	**185.57**	**185.57**	**185.57**	**185.57**	**185.57**

	Budget 2025-26 FTE	Budget 2026-27 FTE	Budget 2027-28 FTE	Budget 2028-29 FTE	Budget 2029-30 FTE	Budget 2030-31 FTE	Budget 2031-32 FTE	Budget 2032-33 FTE	Budget 2033-34 FTE	Budget 2034-35 FTE
CUSTOMER PERFORMANCE										
Permanent - Full Time	109.00	105.00	103.00	101.00	101.00	101.00	101.00	101.00	101.00	101.00
Female	71.00	68.00	67.00	67.00	67.00	67.00	67.00	67.00	67.00	67.00
Male	38.00	37.00	36.00	34.00	34.00	34.00	34.00	34.00	34.00	34.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	21.86	21.86	21.86	21.06	21.06	21.06	21.06	21.06	21.06	21.06
Female	18.83	18.83	18.83	18.03	18.03	18.03	18.03	18.03	18.03	18.03
Male	3.03	3.03	3.03	3.03	3.03	3.03	3.03	3.03	3.03	3.03
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CUSTOMER PERFORMANCE	**130.86**	**126.86**	**124.86**	**122.06**	**122.06**	**122.06**	**122.06**	**122.06**	**122.06**	**122.06**
INFRASTRUCTURE										
Permanent - Full Time	168.00	167.00	164.00	164.00	164.00	164.00	164.00	164.00	164.00	164.00
Female	39.00	39.00	36.00	36.00	36.00	36.00	36.00	36.00	36.00	36.00
Male	129.00	128.00	128.00	128.00	128.00	128.00	128.00	128.00	128.00	128.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	2.27	2.27	2.27	1.87	1.87	1.87	1.87	1.87	1.87	1.87
Female	1.85	1.85	1.85	1.45	1.45	1.45	1.45	1.45	1.45	1.45
Male	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	**170.27**	**169.27**	**166.27**	**165.87**	**165.87**	**165.87**	**165.87**	**165.87**	**165.87**	**165.87**
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	10.65	10.65	10.65	10.65	10.65	10.65	10.65	10.65	10.65	10.65
TOTAL STAFF NUMBERS	**650.05**	**641.85**	**635.43**	**632.23**	**632.23**	**632.23**	**632.23**	**632.23**	**632.23**	**632.23**

5. Financial Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide an analysis of Council's 10-year financial projections and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives and financial management principles.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Forecast 2024-25	Budget 2025-26	Budget 2026-27	Budget 2027-28	Budget 2028-29	Budget 2029-30	Budget 2030-31	Budget 2031-32	Budget 2032-33	Budget 2033-34	Budget 2034-35	Trend + / o / -
Operating Position														
Adjusted Underlying Result (an adjusted underlying surplus is generated in the ordinary course of business)	Adjusted Underlying Surplus (Deficit) / Adjusted Underlying Revenue	1	4.28%	9.15%	7.27%	7.87%	8.59%	10.88%	11.31%	12.29%	13.23%	14.90%	16.06%	+
Liquidity														
Working Capital (sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	Current Assets / Current Liabilities	2	1.39	1.34	1.22	1.18	1.27	1.17	1.12	1.19	1.39	1.75	2.20	o
Unrestricted Cash (sufficient cash that is free of restrictions is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	Unrestricted Cash / Current Liabilities	3	74.11%	75.72%	62.97%	60.60%	71.43%	61.51%	54.67%	57.53%	73.99%	108.83%	154.70%	+
Obligations														
Loans and Borrowings (level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	Interest Bearing Loans and Borrowings / Rate Revenue	4	55.69%	52.09%	48.95%	50.13%	46.68%	36.56%	26.73%	17.96%	11.81%	7.68%	5.08%	+
Loans and borrowings (level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	Interest and Principal Repayments / Rate Revenue	4	8.39%	8.65%	8.73%	9.79%	10.44%	10.43%	10.06%	8.94%	6.28%	4.22%	2.66%	o
Indebtedness (level of long term liabilities is appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities)	Non Current Liabilities / Own Source Revenue(Excluding Open Space)	5	46.95%	42.14%	40.99%	40.48%	36.67%	27.18%	19.06%	13.27%	9.17%	6.35%	4.16%	+
Asset Renewal (assets are renewed as planned)	Asset Renewal and Upgrade Expenditure / Depreciation	6	2.37	2.23	1.85	1.85	1.44	1.64	1.65	1.65	1.65	1.66	1.65	o

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Forecast 2024-25	Budget 2025-26	Budget 2026-27	Budget 2027-28	Budget 2028-29	Budget 2029-30	Budget 2030-31	Budget 2031-32	Budget 2032-33	Budget 2033-34	Budget 2034-35	Trend + / o / -
Stability														
Rates Concentration (revenue is generated from a range of sources)	Rate Revenue / Adjusted Underlying Revenue	7	71.64%	72.35%	76.16%	75.40%	75.32%	74.77%	75.82%	76.42%	76.62%	76.78%	76.92%	o
Rates Effort (rating level is set based on the community's capacity to pay)	Rate Revenue / Property Values (CIV)	8	0.23%	0.23%	0.25%	0.24%	0.25%	0.25%	0.26%	0.27%	0.27%	0.28%	0.29%	o
Efficiency														
Expenditure Level (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	Total Expenditure / No. of Assessments		$2,890	$2,758	$2,848	$2,806	$2,834	$2,862	$2,888	$2,914	$2,956	$2,973	$3,009	o
Revenue Level (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	Residential Rate Revenue / No. of Residential Assessments		$1,796	$1,811	$1,946	$1,871	$1,886	$1,926	$1,968	$2,011	$2,055	$2,101	$2,148	o
TCV Loans Framework Indicators														
Interest bearing liabilities to own source revenue	Interest Bearing Liabilities / Own Source Revenue(Excluding Open Space)	9	56.72%	54.97%	52.35%	53.58%	50.92%	41.97%	32.89%	24.33%	16.62%	10.96%	7.16%	+
Interest cover ratio	EDITBA / Interest Expense	9	11.49	15.08	12.44	12.62	13.25	16.36	20.66	28.51	41.53	65.22	101.35	+

Key to Forecast Trend
+ Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicators

Notes on indicators

5.1 Adjusted underlying results

Adjusted underlying result is the net surplus or deficit for the year (per Australian Accounting Standards) adjusted for non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure, non-monetary asset contributions, and contributions to fund capital expenditure other than grants and non-monetary asset contributions. It is an indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives. Improvement in financial performance is expected over the period. The adjusted underlying result is anticipated to continue to improve over the ten-year period.

5.2 Working capital

Working capital (current assets / current liabilities) is the proportion of current liabilities represented by current assets. It is a general measure of the organisation's liquidity and its ability to meet its commitments as and when they fall due. The working capital ratio is anticipated to remain around 1.00 for the ten-year period, with an increase in the current year forecast due to the carry-forward of capital works.

5.3 Unrestricted cash

Unrestricted cash means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash, including cash that will be used to fund capital expenditure from the previous financial year. Restricted cash means cash and cash equivalents, within the meaning of Accounting Standard *AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows*, that are not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted. The decline from the current year forecast demonstrates a reduction of cash and cash equivalents together with the utilisation of interest-bearing loans and borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program. Council will continue to review and strengthen this position in future budgets.

5.4 Debt compared to rates

Loans and borrowings means interest bearing loans and borrowings compared to rates and charges revenue. The balance of interest bearing loans and borrowings is shown as a percentage of rates revenue. Loans and borrowings also refers to interest and principal repayments compared to rate revenue. The ratio describes Council's cash flow debt repayment capacity through the inclusion of interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings as a percentage of rate revenue. The trend indicates an increased reliance on debt against annual rate revenue over to fund major initiatives in the Capital Works Program, with this debt then being progressively paid down over the ten-year period.

5.5 Indebtedness

Indebtedness compares non-current liabilities to own source revenue (excluding open space reserve). Own source revenue is defined as adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of Council (including government grants). Interest-bearing borrowings budgeted to be taken out through to 2027-28 to fund a component of the Capital Works Program has the indebtedness remaining steady over the next four years, followed by decreases for the remainder of the ten-year period.

5.6 Asset renewal

Asset renewal is calculated as asset renewal expenditure as a percentage of depreciation. This indicates the extent of Council's renewal of assets against its depreciation charge (an indication of the decline in value of its existing capital assets). An greater than 1.00 indicates Council is maintaining its existing assets, while a percentage less than 1.00 means its assets are deteriorating faster than they are being renewed and future capital expenditure will be required to renew assets. Council's asset renewal indicator is greater than 1.00 through the ten-year outlook.

Council will continue to improve asset renewal and upgrade decisions based on asset performance (condition, risk-criticality, utilisation, capacity and maintenance history) when better data becomes available.

Through asset management improvement actions, we will progressively improve the selection and timing of renew and upgrade options of our assets as they reach the end of their useful lives. We will continue to improve decision-making capability and transparency of decisions through use of tools and robust processes.

Annual renewal programs are prioritised by condition and remaining life, with consideration to functional hierarchy.

5.7 Rates concentration

Rates concentration is measured as rate revenue compared to adjusted underlying revenue. Adjusted underlying revenue is defined as total income excluding non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure, non-monetary asset contributions, and contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than grants and non-monetary contributions. Rates concentration reflects the extent of reliance on rate revenues to fund all of Council's on-going services. The trend is relatively steady for rates concentration.

5.8 Rates effort

Rates effort, which is intended to examine the community's capacity to pay, presents rate revenue as a percentage of the capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality. The trend is relatively steady for rates effort.

5.9 TCV loans framework indicators

The Victorian Government has approved the Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV) to become a direct lender to local councils. Victoria's strong credit rating means that the State can borrow and lend money at cheaper rates than are commercially available to councils. This new policy initiative enables Victorian councils to achieve interest cost savings by being able to access low-interest loans financed through TCV.

The following financial ratio criteria need to be satisfied to be eligible to borrow through TCV:

- Interest bearing loans and borrowings cannot exceed 60 percent of own source revenue
- The interest cover ratio cannot be less than 2:1.

6. Strategies and Plans

This section describes the strategies and plans that support the 10 year financial projections included in the Financial Plan.

6.1 Borrowing Strategy

6.1.1 Current Debt Position

Council is expecting to have borrowings of $83.806M as at 30 June 2025.

Council is budgeting to borrow a further $40.900M over the next four years, with no additional borrowings anticipated beyond 2028/29. As part of the 2025/26 Budget process, Council reviewed its forward borrowing projections and reduced future borrowings by $18 million. This was achieved by adopting a position that cash balances are maintained at minimal levels to prioritise debt reduction.

This section outlines the strategies and planning assumptions that underpin the 10-year financial projections in the Financial Plan.

All current and projected borrowings are structured on a 10-year principal and interest repayment basis. This approach ensures debt can be repaid within a reasonable timeframe, supporting financial sustainability without compromising service delivery or transferring the burden to future generations.

The majority of Council's borrowings are held through the Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV), which requires compliance with specific debt covenants. The Financial Plan projects that these covenants will be met in each year over the 10-year period.

6.1.2 Future Borrowing Requirements

The following table highlights Council's projected loan balance, including new loans and loan repayments for the 10 years of the Financial Plan.

	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
OPENING BALANCE	**82,671**	**83,806**	**80,126**	**80,840**	**82,002**	**78,298**	**63,578**	**48,198**	**33,569**	**22,880**	**15,421**
Plus new loans	10,000	6,000	11,500	13,400	10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Less principal repayment	(8,865)	(9,680)	(10,786)	(12,238)	(13,704)	(14,720)	(15,380)	(14,629)	(10,689)	(7,459)	(4,861)
CLOSING BALANCE	**83,806**	**80,126**	**80,840**	**82,002**	**78,298**	**63,578**	**48,198**	**33,569**	**22,880**	**15,421**	**10,560**
Interest payment	3,755	3,625	3,633	3,770	3,797	3,421	2,760	2,074	1,468	1,003	675

6.1.3 Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of debt management performance indicators.

Performance Indicator	Target	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
Total Borrowings / Rate Revenue	Below 60%	55.69%	52.09%	48.95%	50.13%	46.68%	36.56%	26.73%	17.96%	11.81%	7.68%	5.08%
Debt Servicing / Rate Revenue	Below 5%	2.50%	2.36%	2.20%	2.30%	2.26%	1.97%	1.53%	1.11%	0.76%	0.50%	0.32%
Debt Commitment / Rate Revenue	Below 10%	8.39%	8.65%	8.73%	9.79%	10.43%	10.43%	10.06%	8.94%	6.28%	4.22%	2.66%
Indebtedness / Own Source Revenue	Below 60%	45.45%	41.03%	39.73%	39.22%	35.47%	26.27%	18.44%	12.85%	8.88%	6.16%	4.04%

6.2 Reserves Strategy

6.2.1 Current Reserves

Open space reserve
The Open Space Reserve is used to provide funding for future purchases and improvements of open space. Funding is provided from developer's contributions for open space which is initially recognised in the comprehensive income statement and then transferred to the reserve from accumulated surplus to facilitate separate tracking of the total funds received but not yet spent.

Aged care reserve
The purpose of this reserve is to set aside the proceeds from the divestment of the Amaroo Gardens Aged Care Facility by Council on 2 November 2011 for aged services and infrastructure within the Knox municipality.

Basketball stadium infrastructure reserve
The purpose of this reserve is to improve basketball stadium facilities within the Knox municipality.

Defined benefits reserve
The purpose of this reserve is to fund a defined benefits call should a call be made.

HACC capital grant reserve
The purpose of this reserve is to refurbish, upgrade and maintain minor capital within the Home and Community Care funded programs.

Library reserve
The purpose of this reserve is for major capital expenditure for acquiring, refurbishing or redeveloping library premises as standalone premises or as part of community hubs for Knox Library branches.

Revegetation net gain reserve
The purpose of this reserve is to ensure any loss of vegetation through development is re-established in a sustainable location.

Scoresby Recreation reserve
The purpose of this reserve is to invest the income derived from lease of this site into the Scoresby Recreation Reserve.

Social housing reserve
The purpose of this reserve is to provide funding for the planning, development, construction and/or purchase of social housing for the Knox Community.

Unexpended grants reserve
The purpose of this reserve is to quarantine early payment of Victoria Grants Commission General Purpose and Local Roads Federal Grant funding for use in the following year.

6.2.2 Reserve Usage Projections

The table below discloses the balance and annual movement for each reserve over the 10-year life of the Financial Plan. Total amount of reserves, for each year, is to align with the Statement of Changes in Equity.

Reserves	Statutory / Discretionary	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
Open Space Reserve	**Statutory**											
Opening balance		10,792	5,949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949
Transfer to reserve		5,750	5,000	6,000	6,000	6,500	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Transfer from reserve		(10,593)	(10,000)	(6,000)	(6,000)	(6,500)	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)
Closing balance		5,949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949
Statutory Reserves Summary	**Total Statutory**											
Opening balance		10,792	5,949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949
Transfer to reserve		5,750	5,000	6,000	6,000	6,500	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Transfer from reserve		(10,593)	(10,000)	(6,000)	(6,000)	(6,500)	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)
Closing balance		5,949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949	949
Aged Care Reserve	**Discretionary**											
Opening balance		2,790	2,722	2,704	2,686	2,668	2,650	2,650	2,650	2,650	2,650	2,650
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(68)	(18)	(18)	(18)	(18)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		2,722	2,704	2,686	2,668	2,650	2,650	2,650	2,650	2,650	2,650	2,650
Basketball Stadium Infrastructure Reserve	**Discretionary**											
Opening balance		72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(72)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Defined Benefits Reserve	**Discretionary**											
Opening balance		500	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750
Transfer to reserve		250	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750
HACC Capital Reserve	**Discretionary**											
Opening balance		512	512	512	512	512	512	512	512	512	512	512
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		512	512	512	512	512	512	512	512	512	512	512
Library Reserve	**Discretionary**											
Opening balance		1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505	1,505

Reserves	Statutory / Discretionary	Forecast 2024-25 $'000	Budget 2025-26 $'000	Budget 2026-27 $'000	Budget 2027-28 $'000	Budget 2028-29 $'000	Budget 2029-30 $'000	Budget 2030-31 $'000	Budget 2031-32 $'000	Budget 2032-33 $'000	Budget 2033-34 $'000	Budget 2034-35 $'000
Revegetation Net Gain Reserve	**Discretionary**											
Opening balance		153	218	283	348	413	478	543	608	673	738	803
Transfer to reserve		65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		218	283	348	413	478	543	608	673	738	803	868
Scoresby Recreational Reserve	**Discretionary**											
Opening balance		234	267	302	338	376	415	455	496	538	581	625
Transfer to reserve		33	35	36	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		267	302	338	376	415	455	496	538	581	625	670
Social Housing Reserve	**Discretionary**											
Opening balance		2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559	2,559
Unexpended Grants Reserve	**Discretionary**											
Opening balance		0	4,631	4,678	4,724	4,772	4,799	4,847	4,896	4,945	4,994	5,044
Transfer to reserve		4,631	4,678	4,724	4,772	4,799	4,847	4,896	4,945	4,994	5,044	5,094
Transfer from reserve		0	(4,631)	(4,678)	(4,724)	(4,772)	(4,799)	(4,847)	(4,896)	(4,945)	(4,994)	(5,044)
Closing balance		4,631	4,678	4,724	4,772	4,799	4,847	4,896	4,945	4,994	5,044	5,094
Discretionary Reserves Summary	**Total Discretionary**											
Opening balance		8,325	13,164	12,781	12,910	13,043	13,156	13,309	13,464	13,620	13,777	13,936
Transfer to reserve		4,979	4,778	4,825	4,875	4,903	4,952	5,002	5,052	5,102	5,153	5,204
Transfer from reserve		(140)	(4,649)	(4,696)	(4,742)	(4,790)	(4,799)	(4,847)	(4,896)	(4,945)	(4,994)	(5,044)
Closing balance		13,164	13,293	12,910	13,043	13,156	13,309	13,464	13,620	13,777	13,936	14,096
Total Reserves Summary	**Statutory & Discretionary**											
Opening balance		19,117	19,113	14,242	14,371	14,504	14,617	14,770	14,925	15,081	15,238	15,397
Transfer to reserve		10,729	9,778	10,825	10,875	11,403	11,952	12,002	12,052	12,102	12,153	12,204
Transfer from reserve		(10,733)	(14,649)	(10,696)	(10,742)	(11,290)	(11,799)	(11,847)	(11,896)	(11,945)	(11,994)	(12,044)
Closing balance		19,113	14,242	14,371	14,504	14,617	14,770	14,925	15,081	15,238	15,397	15,557

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	Council and Health and Wellbeing	Draft Financial Plan 2025-2035	Rating and Revenue Plan 2025-29	Draft Annual Budget 2025-26						
Jun 09, 2025, 10:41 PM				1				Having digested the draft budget papers & - to our horror - having seen that the unspent Mountain Highway Wicks-Claremont footpath budget (that Council promised would be used to build stage 1 extension to just past the Fernbrook school) is now allocated in entirety to build MP Jackson Taylor's "shared path to nowhere" on Liverpool Rd (in complete contradiction of Council's own claims as to how footpaths are prioritised); plus the only other 'big win' of note for The Basin being a new seat in "Centenery Park" (noting that 9 out of 10 local residents I asked recently couldn't actually identify where/what that is) - I can comfortably say that this budget & noticeable lack of any real priorities nor action on anything important to the quiet majority of local residents is validation of why The Basin residents are seen as being resistant to change. As for the Triangle Park footpath - this is Council bread-and-butter & not something to be celebrating; other parts of Knox get these works granted with their eyes closed, we in The Basin should be able to just expect a footpath would be completed. Grateful regardless that after the 20th TBMF, it is finally happening. If only we had the very vocal, demanding State MP living up here in our very disconnected - and as pedestrians, wholly unsafe - part of The Basin, our footpath that we fought so hard to secure any funding for would have already been built, instead of being completely wiped from the budget.	When initiatives like ~40m of Triangle Park footpath extension/Liverpool Rd Shared Path (to nowhere)/Centenery Park seating upgrade (in a glorified road reserve that no one has ever heard of, let alone uses) are being sold to us as being solutions to the ongoing issues that The Basin residents are crying out for help on - safety, community connectivity, parking management/expansion - and that we continue to raise, when in fact these initiatives serve the complete opposite by distracting from the real solutions being sought - those residents (that aren't already apathetic) are going to complain, and thus be perceived as being incredibly negative and resistant. As usual, The Basin is being treated like the poor, pathetic second cousin of Council's obviously more favoured areas of Rowville, Wantirna and even Bayswater. Wouldn't catch residents of those locales having to walk on a busy Highway due to complete lack of safe footpath infrastructure for long! To The Basin, as usual and as we know to expect - Council makes it obvious that they just couldn't care less.	Council has not cancelled the Mountain Highway footpath project. A detailed design process is underway to better understand the construction complexities, costs, and impacts before any funding decisions are made, consistent with Council's October 2023 resolution. The Liverpool Road shared path has been a Council advocacy priority since 2021 and is funded over two years to connect with a planned upgrade by Maroondah Council. Council carefully considers all priorities through established processes, with transparency and safety central to decision-making. The Centenary Park improvements have been supported following advocacy from the local community and Basin Triangle projects reflect previous community consultation on the Basin Triangle masterplan
Jun 09, 2025, 10:37 PM				1				The annual budget appears to have removed plans for the Mountain Highway footpath extension between Wicks Rd & Claremont Ave. This project is a vital project required for the safety of our community and councils continued ignoring of The Basin WILL lead to a death eventually. Walking this way regularly sees me with my young daughter having to walk on the road on Mountain Highway at times due to the lack of a footpath in this area. At the same time as the funding for this footpath dissapeared, funding for a new project (a footpath to the retarding basin) has popped up which is astounding considering that this services very few people and certainly doesn't link to community facilities or shops and services.	Why is The Basin generally overlooked when it comes to planning and budgeting ? Recent examples of incomplete projects include, The Basin Masterplan and The Basin Parking Review, both have been underway for several years now with no outcome and no significant improvements to either, meanwhile Upper Ferntree Gully has had a multi million dollar makeover of the Burwood Highway shopping centre and now Ferntree Gully Central is having an expensive makeover. Why is The Basin forced to engage the local MP simply to get some lines painted in the local shopping strip when council can see their way clear to support other areas in such significant ways ?	Council has not cancelled the Mountain Highway footpath project. A detailed design process is underway to better understand the construction complexities, costs, and impacts before any funding decisions are made, consistent with Council's October 2023 resolution. The Liverpool Road shared path has been a Council advocacy priority since 2021 and is funded over two years to connect with a planned upgrade by Maroondah Council. Council carefully considers all priorities through established processes, with transparency and safety central to decision-making.
Jun 09, 2025, 10:16 PM				1				1. What happened to Mountain Highway footpath extension unspent funds? Budget update papers showed $27k of allocated $300k spent, with a forecast maximum of $100k spend by end 24/25 FY. What happened to the other $200k?? Appears - as The Basin expects - Council have tried to cancel this much needed, SAFETY-CRITICAL project by stealth; zero mention of what happened to the remainder of the funds. 2. How has Liverpool Rd shared path extension to the Retarding Basin suddenly become of highest priority to The Basin? Not only to scope but BUILD, despite never having been amongst previous priorities for The Basin? Where's the transparency in how priorities are determined? We all know this is very vocal, pushy MP Jackson Taylor's pet demand; if only residents up Mountain Highway had a state MP in their corner. $200k… coincidence?? 3. "Centenary Park" in The Basin being awarded any funding is a completely unjustified farce (most wouldn't know what/where that even is). Again, responding to the most vocal, persistent of residents instead of addressing the ongoing pressing and urgent safety matters of concern to our wider community. 4. How is the 50% increase in Planning written response fees being justified? Are Planning simply trying to deter people from submitting requests for written responses - this is the sure fire way to do it! Increasing the fee from $105 to $149 is the best possible incentive for residents to never submit another request for a written response.	For many years now, The Basin residents have been agitating for the Mountain Highway footpath extension to address MAJOR SAFETY ISSUES associated with our children, families & elderly needing to walk ON (not just inches from) busy Mountain Highway to simply connect to our town activity centre & park. I've lived here since 2015, & I'm told the requests started at least 10 years before that. Finally our community gains some traction in 2023/24, by way of securing funding in the 2024/25 budget towards the scoping - & as Council previously promised us - delivering stage 1, a footpath up to just past the Fernbrook School (the straightforward half of the path). For the allocated funds to have been barely spent in the 24/25 year, and all remaining funds be wiped from the project in the 25/26 draft budget - this is precisely why residents of The Basin are either perceived as apathetic, or more typically frustrated, angry and opposed to change, as we are too used to this treatment by Council. I implore each one of you Councillors to take a walk from The Basin Shops up Mountain Highway towards Claremont Ave, but take your young family members along with you. See how safe you feel putting the lives of your family members in danger by having to walk inches from speeding vehicles on busy Mountain Highway, because that is the best and only option from Council to 1/3 of the residents of The Basin.	Council has not cancelled the Mountain Highway footpath project. A detailed design process is underway to better understand the construction complexities, costs, and impacts before any funding decisions are made, consistent with Council's October 2023 resolution. The Liverpool Road shared path has been a Council advocacy priority since 2021 and is funded over two years to connect with a planned upgrade by Maroondah Council. Council carefully considers all priorities through established processes, with transparency and safety central to decision-making. The proposed planning fee follows benchmarking with other councils and a review of the time and cost associated with each request.

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	Council and Health and Wellbeing	Draft Financial Plan 2025-2035	Rating and Revenue Plan 2025-29	Draft Annual Budget 2025-26						
Jun 09, 2025, 07:41 PM	1	1		1	I am a local resident Brendon Agpasa from Wollert that contributes to the council and health and wellbeing plan in the local government of Knox, There's Knox city council to provide our plan into the future of local important issues for community, these include upgrade sporting pavilions, improve sports fields and training facilities, improvements at local parks, improve footpaths and cycling paths, local roads and bridges, improved reception and expansion of Flow FM via FM radio to the region and more.	I am a local resident Brendon Agpasa from Wollert contributed to the financial plan with the local, state and federal governments provided them, We reach the funding commitments of local important issues for community, these include upgrade sporting pavilions, improve sports fields and training facilities, improvements at local parks, improve footpaths and cycling paths, local roads and bridges, improved reception and expansion of Flow FM via FM radio to the region and more for nearly $10,000 and extra money funds of $2,000 had all been allocated to the local council as well.		I am a local resident Brendon Agpasa from Wollert in Victoria, we have upgrade sporting pavilions, including Park Ridge Reserve, Wally Tew Reserve, Tormore Reserve and Carrington Park, improve sports fields and training facilities, including Marie Wallace Bayswater Oval, improvements at local parks, improve footpaths and cycling paths, local roads and bridges, improved reception and expansion of Flow FM via FM radio to the region and more.	Yes, I am a local resident Brendon Agpasa from Wollert VIC contributes that would see the local important issues for community, these include upgrade sporting pavilions, improve sports fields and training facilities, improvements at local parks, improve footpaths and cycling paths, local roads and bridges, improved reception and expansion of Flow FM via FM radio to the region and more.	Noted
Jun 08, 2025, 07:47 PM				1				Do councils really need to get involved in promoting so-called " diversity & equity " and spending $ 3, 505,000 on researches on "gender equity, inclusion and reconciliation"? (see page 23, under the heading "Services 2.1".) It's creating a huge deficit, and it barely has any significant positive impacts on ratepayers. Total waste of taxpayer's money.	Please focus more on waste management, increase the frequency of garbage collections, cleaning up and maintaining our parks, playgrounds and natural reserve. Promoting "cultural diversity and equity" does not create any genuine, positive relationships within the community.	The $3.5 million expenditure listed under the heading 'social research, policy & planning' covers a number of areas in addition to those noted by the community member, including community access, social and affordable housing, community development and mental health. These are all aimed at improving community health and wellbeing. Grants provided by Council to community groups of $1.45 million are also included within this service budget.
Jun 06, 2025, 11:26 PM				1				Thank you for keeping in the extra $100 off rates for pensioners in the draft. It's extremely helpful for dsp and age pensioners		Noted
Jun 01, 2025, 08:56 PM	1	1	1	1	Please clean up the graffiti. It doesn't make you feel good walking past endless graffiti	Please add money to cleaning up the graffiti. The excuse of no money in the budge is disappointing.		Please include money to clean up the graffiti.		Council allocates significant funding each year to remove graffiti from Council-owned assets, in line with our Graffiti Management Policy. While the Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 makes graffiti a criminal offence, it does not require councils to remove graffiti from private property—this responsibility lies with property owners. To assist, Council offers free graffiti removal kits to private owners and supports education and prevention initiatives. We also encourage reporting graffiti-related offences to Victoria Police.
May 30, 2025, 11:15 AM				1				In the last capital works report, the Mountain highway footpath was 50% complete with 27K spent and an expected 63K before year end. It does not say what is happening to the remaining $200K and there is no money in the draft budget for any work to start on this footpath as were told would but there is 204K in the budget for a new footpath on Liverpool rd. The budget paper says "and establishing footpaths in areas where none currently exist. Council's capital works plan allocates money to these activities on a prioritised basis." How has this been prioritised? The Liverpool rd footpath does not help anyone get to their local shops or events in the Triangle. It does not help anyone get to or from school and it doesn't help ease parking congestion in the basin triangle. We have been told for years the mountain highway footpath is a priority but it does not look like it's being prioritised and once aagin the people in the basin miss out. Why? This is a VERY dangerous road		Council has not cancelled the Mountain Highway footpath project. A detailed design process is underway to better understand the construction complexities, costs, and impacts before any funding decisions are made, consistent with Council's October 2023 resolution. The Liverpool Road shared path has been a Council advocacy priority since 2021 and is funded over two years to connect with a planned upgrade by Maroondah Council. Council carefully considers all priorities through established processes, with transparency and safety central to decision-making.

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	Council and Health and Wellbeing	Draft Financial Plan 2025-2035	Rating and Revenue Plan 2025-29	Draft Annual Budget 2025-26						
May 29, 2025, 06:01 AM	1	1		1	I am deeply disappointed to see that the proposed Knox City Council Health and Wellbeing Plan does not allocate ANY funding toward cultural and arts activities and events. This omission is not only disheartening but also neglects a crucial dimension of community wellbeing. BRING BACK STRINGYBARK!!!! The arts play an essential role in fostering social connection, supporting mental health, and creating inclusive spaces where people of all backgrounds can feel seen, heard, and valued. Cultural events strengthen community identity, encourage civic participation, and provide vital platforms for expression, healing, and resilience—especially in times of recovery and change. For a wellbeing plan to be truly holistic, it must recognize the profound contribution of the arts and culture to the physical, emotional, and social health of a community. I urge Knox City Council to reconsider this gap and to invest meaningfully in cultural and arts initiatives as part of its commitment to the overall wellbeing of its residents.	What was the reasoning behind excluding arts and cultural programs from the health and wellbeing budget? How does the Council intend to support community connection and mental wellbeing without investing in cultural and creative opportunities? Is there potential to revise the plan to include dedicated funding for arts and cultural events that support inclusion and belonging?		The Knox Festival and Stringybark Festival plus other events have played a vital role in fostering a genuine sense of community. These events provided inclusive spaces that celebrated the diverse elements of Knox—from local community groups and sports clubs to artists, makers, and small businesses. Stringybark attracted over 15,000 attendees and Knox Festival over 20,000 demonstrating just how much these events resonate with residents and a testament to how well it is organized with local businesses. It raises an important question: where else in Knox can we find this level of accessible, community-wide engagement? And why is it that sports clubs continue to receive more consistent attention and funding, while community arts and cultural events like these are left behind?		Knox City Council has a strong focus on Arts and Culture, specifically recognised through the service areas of Arts and Cultural Venues, Creative Placemaking and Festivals and Events. The health and wellbeing priority - Improve social connection and mental wellbeing – can be aided and supports positive community outcomes through the delivery of programs and events with a creative focus. Council has committed over $2.3M to Arts and Culture in its draft 2025/26 budget. Such programs, projects and events continue to be offered through our facilities and overall programming in the public realm, recognising the importance of creating meaningful and diverse opportunities for social connection.
May 28, 2025, 01:50 PM				1				Please make sure local scouts and girl guide centres also take priority in this budget. They are overdue for upgrades especially bc it's a popular amongst the local kids. Glad to see Footpaths is included in the budget because it is needed in existing residential area.		Council acknowledges the important contribution Scouts Victoria and Girl Guides Victoria provide our local community. Council is not the building owner of the scout and girl guide facilities. The maintenance, renewal and upgrade of these assets is the responsibility of Scouts Victoria and Girl Guides Victoria.
May 28, 2025, 09:03 AM				1				The amount on community infrastructure is very low compared to your other spending such as salaries. Apparently the community comes a distant second in priority.	The community should come first, not council employees' salaries.	Council provides a wide range of services that support residents throughout all stages of life, delivered primarily by our committed staff. We support new parents and infants through our maternal and child health centres. Our school crossing supervisors ensure children travel to and from school safely. Youth programs promote the mental, physical and social wellbeing of young people. We maintain and upgrade parks, reserves, sporting facilities, local roads, footpaths and shared paths to encourage active lifestyles and community connection. We are building a more accessible and inclusive city for people living with disability and helping older residents remain connected, active and engaged. Delivering these services requires ongoing investment in both our workforce and the essential community infrastructure that enables these services to be provided.
May 27, 2025, 08:00 PM				1				It's time for you to upgrade the playground at Chandella Reserve Boronia. I have been emailing councillors about this need for over 10 years now. Also the clubrooms, canteen and toilets at Knox BMX are desperately overdue for an upgrade.		Council manages 209 playgrounds across the municipality, and upgrades are prioritised based on condition and need—Chandella Reserve is not currently scheduled for renewal under the forward program. Council recently invested $270,000 in renewing the track at Knox BMX. The clubrooms, canteen, and toilets are not included in the current future building renewal/upgrade program due to other projects having a higher relative priority.
May 27, 2025, 05:56 PM	1				Will the Knox BMX club which has been located in an ex sewage pump room for 45 years ever get some actual clubrooms ? The club has maintained the track for public use for all of that time . It has members from age 2 - 60 . It holds large event that bring people to Knox . Football clubs have millions spent on their ovals and clubrooms ... yet outside of football games the grounds are hardly used . Yet the BMX track is used by hundreds.					Council recently invested $270,000 in renewing the track at Knox BMX, the clubrooms, canteen, and toilets are not included in the current future building renewal/upgrade program due to other projects having a higher relative priority.

8.4 Knox Asset Plan 2025

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Coordinator Asset Strategy, Robin Cassidy
Manager: Manager Strategic Infrastructure, Matthew Hanrahan
Executive: Director, Infrastructure, Grant Thorne

SUMMARY
Section 92 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to develop, adopt and keep in force an Asset Plan as a component of its Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework. The Asset Plan 2026 - 2035 sets out how we will acquire, build, look after, and use assets over the next 10 years and beyond. This version of the Asset Plan is a revision and update of the Asset Plan 2022-2032 adopted by Council in 2021. The revision has been completed in accordance with Council's deliberate engagement practices.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council:

1. Endorse the Draft Asset Plan 2026 - 2035, presented as Attachment 1 for community engagement.
2. Note that the content within the Asset Plan has been informed by a deliberative engagement process, utilising a 25 member Community Panel to inform the direction and outcomes as presented in the plan.
3. Note that following the community engagement the feedback will be assessed and the Asset Plan modified, where appropriate, with the final draft Asset Plan 2026-2035 to be presented to at a future Council meeting for approval.

1. DISCUSSION
This Asset Plan has been prepared to meet the requirements of section 92 of the Local Government Act 2020. Its purpose is to:

- Ensure that assets support the achievement of the Community Vision and Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 – 2029.
- Identify the funding required to support the management of our assets.
- Demonstrate that we will responsibly manage our assets to meet the service delivery needs of our community in a cost-effective way.
- Provide a method to integrate our asset management planning outcomes with our Council Plan, Financial Plan, and Annual Budget.
- Support the continued advocacy for Federal and State Government support for the improvement of community assets.
- Make sure that we comply with our statutory and legislative obligations.

Development of the Asset Plan has been informed by a range of inputs to inform the strategic direction of the plan. Asset inventory information has been sourced from Councils asset register located in the Confirm Asset Management System. Asset condition data is current as at the latest condition audit date for each asset class. Financial information has been sourced from the long-term financial forecast (10-year horizon), which frames Council's investment profile over a 10-year

horizon and draft capital works programs (across a 4-year horizon). Funding allocation priorities have been informed by Council's Funding Allocation Policy. Community priorities have been sourced from key directions identified in the draft Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29 and the deliberate engagement process.

The draft Asset Plan is presented as an attachment to this report. The template broadly mimics the previous iteration of the Asset Plan, providing updated data on financial projections, condition data and 10-year expenditure forecasts.

A key challenge arising from the Community Panel was that utilising deliberative engagement methodologies, the community recognised (in part) that each asset grouping (transport, open space, buildings and stormwater) all have their own merit and assigning priority of one over another was a challenging process that was both revealing and at times contradictory, which in turn makes it difficult to vindicate whether a change in funding direction for one asset category over another could be strongly evidenced through the process..

For example, group discussions on priority brought about 4 unique answers from the groups as to what the most important assets were. When teased out in more detail, there was a level of clarity that our transport assets were rated as the most important, followed closely by open space and stormwater/drainage, followed by buildings, however the conversations following the assessment from the majority of participants acknowledged that all were important.

In assessing the performance of the assets, the buildings were identified as the best performing, followed by transport, open space and stormwater and drainage. There was broader consensus on the performance assessment, when compared with the importance assessment. From the assessment, it was noted that buildings ranked lowest in importance but highest in performance. Noting this, it would be reasonable to assume that if there were a category that could support a reduction in investment, the buildings category might reasonably be the first under review. Noting this, it was acknowledged that there sits a threshold whereby if Council dropped its investment in buildings, it would immediately put short term pressure on asset performance that would risk community dissatisfaction.

Equally, while stormwater assets were ranked lowest in performance, it was acknowledged by the group that the risk of regular flooding events is become more prevalent as a result of climate change and that while ranked lower, there was strong acknowledgement that Council needed to invest sufficiently to de-risk future flooding events.

It was genuinely difficult to determine whether there was a compelling direction from the panel on whether Council's investment direction in assets should change in near term. Multiple compelling arguments were made for an uplift in investment across asset categories, however the panel acknowledged that the resulting trade-offs were difficult, particularly noting the genuine acceptance that all assets were important.

On this basis, the Assets team believe that Council have an appropriate investment mix but need to have a close lens on asset performance over the short to midterm, and the ability to be responsive to a potential need to make financial allocation adjustments as the need arises.

2. ENGAGEMENT

The Local Government Act requires Council to use deliberative processes when engaging the community on the development of the Asset Plan. This gives participants the opportunity to collaborate closely with Council, to understand the dilemmas we are facing when balancing the identified community priorities and long-term financial sustainability.

In March 2025, Council invited residents of Knox to submit an expression of interest to be a part of the Knox Asset Plan Community Panel (The Panel). 89 people nominated, with 25 members selected to align with the demographic profile of Knox. This process was completed using de-identified information by an independent organisation.

A representative sample is a group chosen from a larger population that reflects the key characteristics of that population. For this project we considered age, gender, language and suburb as the primary characteristics. We also considered household makeup and length of time connected to Knox.

A representative sample allows researchers to make generalisations about the larger group based on the sample's findings. This is much more efficient and practical than surveying a large group or the entire population.

There is no set rule as to what is the minimum number/percentage considered a representative sample. For local government, deliberative panels of a similar nature to that used by Knox (i.e. 25 persons) is considered fairly standard. The group size also requires consideration of the issue being discussed, the time allocated and the budget available to implement the panel.

The Panel met in two sessions at the Knox Operations Centre in Knoxfield.

Summary of demographic profile of the Panel:

- Gender: 12 Men, 12 Women, 1 non-binary.
- Age: all targets met, noting slightly under for ages 50-59 and no EOI received from anyone aged over 85.
- Suburb: all suburbs represented, and target met, noting Boronia slightly under target.
- Language: 12 panellists spoke a language other than English at home.

Over two sessions, the Panel worked through an empowering deliberative engagement process. This process involved learning about asset planning, thinking about challenges and considerations, and deliberating on the four asset classes in response to the remit.

The asset classes: Transport, Stormwater/Drainage, Open Spaces and Buildings were the high-level focus of the facilitated engagement approach.

Session 1 - Challenges and Opportunities focused on setting the scene for the remit through a presentation, access to subject matter experts, asset class condition report posters, a workbook and a map of Knox.

Between sessions, the Panel members had access to Council’s Deliberative Engagement portal to respond to key themed questions to further enhancer thinking and learning about assets and the services they deliver.

Session 2 – Asset Importance and Performance focused on learning from each other while deliberating, making choices in a group and identifying what are the priorities for Council consideration in each focus area. In session 2, the Panel worked together to provide a collective response to the following themes:

- Opportunities and Challenges
- Key priorities for the next 10 years
- What things Council needs to consider

Feedback from the panel is provided in more detail in the attached community panel report.

Session 1 - Challenges

The groups discussed their views and created a list of responses and were asked to prioritise their top three responses, which are listed below.

Group 1	***Group 2***	***Group 3***	***Group 4***
Council concentrating on core responsibilities	*Climate change impact on assets*	*Climate change*	*Deteriorating assets & quick fixes*
Community Safety	*Ageing assets impact on budget*	*Finances – cost of living & Council's constrained funding*	*Schools fenced, lack of access to recreation facilities*
Impact of population growth	*Population density increasing leading to demographic changes*	*Overpopulation*	

A consistent theme raised by the Panel was the impact of population growth and climate change on community assets. The discussion focussed on how growth will lead to housing density and the subsequent impact on buildings, roads/paths, stormwater drains and open spaces, ultimately impacting Council's budget. The Panel discussed how these impacts will increase the funding gap as demand for services increases and more frequent asset maintenance due to weathering and higher usage rates deteriorate assets, and potentially shorten timeframes for asset renewal.

Climate change and the budgetary impact of *ageing assets* were ultimately identified as the main priorities to be addressed when planning for assets.

Session 1 – Opportunities

The groups identified a range of opportunities and prioritised their top three opportunities.

Group 1	***Group 2***	***Group 3***	***Group 4***
Divest underutilised assets	*Research*	*Improve local spaces*	*Third spaces* (see text below)*
Increase technology	*Sustainable solutions – materials & technologies*	*Diversity of opportunities*	*Communication & coordination with other Councils*
Community events	*Involve & consult with diverse community*	*Libraries expansion*	*Dog parks & bird proof bins*

The panel identified the need to adopt new technologies to improve efficiencies in data collection and inform asset decision making. In addition, they referenced the importance of community

spaces that are passive, inclusive and informal, offering community connectedness and a sense of belonging.

Also identified was the need for consultation with diverse communities to better understand and respond to service needs. In addition, collaboration with neighbouring Councils to benchmark performance and seek opportunity, highlighted the importance of communications, information and stakeholder relationships.

The two greatest opportunities identified by the panel were Reinventing unused spaces /third spaces and utilising research on assets/data trends and demands/sustainable renewable options

* Note - *Third spaces* – were identified as inclusive and accessible community spaces for reconnection, renewal and relaxation to provide a sense of social connectedness and belonging.

The summary analysis of Session 1 - Challenges and Opportunities discussion highlighted the following key themes as a priority for the next 10 years:

Climate Ready - Building community resilience to climate change.

Social connections - Providing inclusive and accessible community third spaces for reconnection, renewal and relaxation to provide a sense of social connectedness and belonging.

Enhancing information and data driven decisions – Utilise technology and data analysis to inform our thinking and decision-making processes.

Optimising the asset base – Consolidation of underutilised buildings to achieve efficiencies and activating underutilised green spaces

Retain and enhance green spaces – Preserving habitat and increasing tree canopy.

Accessible transport connections – Providing shared paths to connect neighbourhoods to parks, buildings, public transport, and shopping centres.

Session 2 - Asset Importance and Performance

Asset Importance

Rank & (score - lower is better)	Score/Sub-Total
Transport	**8**
Open Spaces	**10**
Stormwater/Drainage	**10**
Buildings	**12**

It was noted that each of the four groups contributing to the overall evaluation identified a differing asset group as being of highest importance through the discussion, and much of the subsequent conversation reflected this viewpoint. When the rankings were more broadly assessed based on overall scoring by the groups, Buildings came out as being most important, followed by transport, open space and stormwater. However, the panel groups were broadly strong of mind when expressing views about what their priorities were and as such, the accompanying Engagement report provided by the consultants identified that all assets were deemed to have equal importance when providing direction back to Council.

Asset Performance

Rank & (score - lower is better)	Asset class	What Council is doing well	Where Council can do better
1 (5.5)	Buildings	Overall feeling pretty good. Libraries	Divest unused buildings. Consider ways to increase income from buildings. Maintenance, especially toilets kept to a standard. Delays in repairs.
2 (9.0)	Transport	Locals (roads) well looked after. Meets expectation. Pathways connecting hubs.	Potholes. VicRoads lack of maintenance. Fix critical road repairs first.
3 (11.5)	Open spaces	Top quality assets	Bird proof bins. Dog poo and better waste disposal provision. Loss of Basketball (Boronia). Maintain grasses to bring wildlife. Reduce habitat fragmentation. Preserve & protect biodiversity & tree canopy.
4 (14.0)	Stormwater & Drainage	Raingardens	Mitigate flooding (Rowville). Ban leaf blowers – block drains. Increase retarding basins.

Further findings for Council to consider

Following the exercise above, the panel, were asked to identify/prioritise key considerations that Council should have regard to when managing its assets into the future. The results (in no particular order) are provided below

- Data driven decision making
- Future proofing buildings, road surfaces and stormwater drain
- Ensure assets are maintained and available
- Repurpose under-used facilities
- Collaboration with neighbouring Councils
- Communication with diverse groups
- Prioritise accessibility and inclusivity

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The engagement of the community panel and the key feedback provided by the panel across both sessions highlighted that community connection ranks highly on their list of priorities. Examples were provided often about the role of assets (open spaces, dog parks, community facilities) as playing a critical role in social cohesion. Through the sessions, the panel talked at length about the need for well designed 3rd spaces (i.e. not home, not work) where the community can gather and interact as a means of enhancing social connections. Libraries and community facilities were identified, however there was a desire for multi-service offerings at such facilities to draw a broader range of participants. This was flagged as likely to be more importance as increases in housing density take hold.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS
Designing assets that are climate ready was identified as a key risk to managing Council assets into the future. Many of the asset based discussions referenced climate risks and their impact, with stormwater and flooding being identified as particularly problematic when trying to manage the performance of assets.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS
Council has a range of key policies which inform decision making when designing and developing infrastructure assets. As an example, the sustainable buildings policy provides guidance on environmental design ratings when delivering buildings of various scale. Council continues to explore opportunities for utilising/specifying recycled materials in construction materials, such as recycled concrete aggregate.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
The draft Asset Plan presents a ten year horizon of projected capital infrastructure investment across the Asset Renewal, Legal Requirements and New/Upgrade/Expansion projects (identified as "growth" in the Asset Plan. The financial projections don't however portray the impacts of ever-increasing costs in delivering capital projects and the accompanying increase in community expectations that come with the delivery of both new and renewed assets. Across the life of the ten-year asset plan, Council will be faced with key questions about trade-offs that need to be made to ensure ongoing performance of its existing asset base. Outputs from the community panel identified opportunities for Council to consider in addressing this challenge.

These include:

- consolidation/divestment of under-utilised building assets;
- increases in fees/payments/hire for the use of assets;
- Activating under-utilised green spaces;
- Utilising technology to better understand utilisation/performance of assets and
- Building community resilience to climate change

It is acknowledged that a number of the above items might require an upfront investment to achieve subsequent financial benefits downstream.

7. RISKS
There exist a range of risks of Council not being able to maintain its asset base to current service levels into the future. As an example,

Risk: Lack of funding to maintain assets to community standards

Incident: Unavailability of Assets/Reduced service level

Cause of Incident: Ongoing cost escalations associated with renewal of capital infrastructure

Risk Consequence: Loss of asset function/access for the community

Controls in place to mitigate risk: Availability of other assets, potential decommissioning of asset, reinstate asset with reduced service.

At a strategic level, Asset Plans are developed to foreshadow scenarios such as the above with renewal modelling identifying the cost of scaled service offerings over the life of assets. The

Financial Plan and the budget process represent the best opportunity for quantifying investment shifts in infrastructure asset and trading off funding both with and across budget allocations for capital investment.

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.

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.

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

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 - Asset Plan 2026-35 Draft v 1.4 (D 25-172867) (D 25-173177) [**8.4.1** - 45 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Asset Plan Community Panel Report KC update 220525 (D25-164120) [**8.4.2** - 8 pages]

Knox City Council



ASSET PLAN
2026-2035

Asset Plan 2026 - 2035

Document Control

Prepared by	CT Management Group
Council Business Unit	Strategic Infrastructure
Responsible Officer	Manager, Strategic Infrastructure
Approval Authority	Executive Management Team
Date Approved	

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This Asset Plan will be owned and managed by:

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Wantirna South
Melbourne Victoria 3152

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL LAND OWNERS

Knox City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land. The Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community come from a variety of different Nations within Australia and Torres Strait, including the Traditional Custodians and Stolen Generation. As such we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's history.

Located at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges, Knox has many places of historic significance to the Kulin nation. Important cultural and historical sites within Knox hold both the traditional knowledge of the First Nations People and the traumatic stories of colonisation.

The journey ahead for Knox involves the land, the traditional custodians, the local Indigenous community, the wider community and the Council itself. Walking together and listening together to create a culturally safe and culturally rich community for all.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Our City



Located approximately 25 kilometres from Melbourne's central business district, the Knox municipality is a major hub of cultural, commercial, business and innovative activity in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. It is a diverse municipality with residents from 130 different countries who speak 54 languages. The city of Knox has an estimated resident population of 163,302[1] and covers an area of 113.84 square kilometres.

The area boasts a green, leafy image extending to the foothills of the picturesque Dandenong Ranges, Knox consists of the following suburbs Bayswater, Boronia, Ferntree Gully, Knoxfield, Lysterfield, Rowville, Scoresby, The Basin, Upper Ferntree Gully, Wantirna and Wantirna South.

1.2 Our Assets

We manage close to **$1.88 billion** of infrastructure assets (*excluding land*) on behalf of our community. These assets, which range from significant structures such as roads, bridges and buildings, through to park furniture and play equipment are fundamental to supporting services for the community.

1.3 Scope of the Asset Plan

While we manage an extensive portfolio of assets, this Asset Plan focuses on our physical infrastructure. The majority of our infrastructure falls into major asset classes, being:

- Facilities (buildings).
- Open Space (parks, reserves and playgrounds).
- Pathways (footpaths and shared Paths).
- Roads and Carparks.
- Stormwater (drainage network).
- Structures (Bridges, major culverts, and other infrastructure).

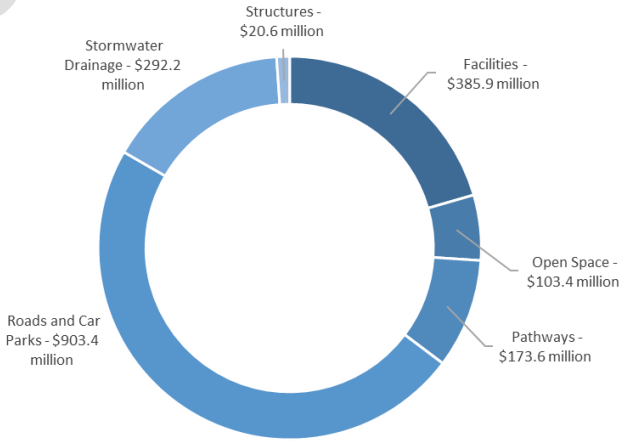


Figure 1 - Summary of Council Infrastructure Assets

[1] ABS Estimated Resident Population 2024

1.4 What is Asset Management and Why is it Important?

The practice of 'asset management' refers to the range of coordinated activities that monitor and care for physical assets. These activities cover practices such as planning, inspections and maintenance, replacement, upgrade, improvement, or sometimes disposal of an asset.

Asset Management is a structured approach to aligning strategic planning with assets and service delivery. It answers the following fundamental questions:

- What assets does the community need now and in the future?
- How can we best manage the assets to serve the community?

Infrastructure is at the heart of everything we do. The choices we make today can impact the quality of life for future generations. Sound asset management provides us with the ability to understand the immediate, medium, and long-term impacts of our decisions and provide solutions on how to mitigate risk.

The benefits of sound asset management include:

- Improved cost efficiency by looking at the costs of assets over their entire lifecycle.
- Being able to target critical assets to ensure performance is maintained and risks are managed.
- Aligning levels of service for assets to meet community needs.
- Making sure infrastructure assets are appropriately funded for the long term.

1.5 What is an Asset Plan

The Asset Plan is part of our Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework and sets out we will acquire, build, look after, and use assets over the next 10 years and beyond. This version of the Asset Plan is a revision and update of the Plan adopted by Council in 2021.

This Asset Plan has been prepared to meet the requirements of section 92 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. Its purpose is to:

- Ensure that assets support the achievement of the Community Vision and Council Plan.
- Identify the funding required to support the management of our assets.
- Demonstrate that we will responsibly manage our assets to meet the service delivery needs of our community in a cost-effective way.
- Provide a method to integrate our asset management planning outcomes with our Council Plan, Financial Plan, and Annual Budget.
- Support the continued advocacy for Federal and State Government support for the improvement of community assets.
- Make sure that we comply with our statutory and legislative obligations

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2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

We are committed to planning for the future of Knox in a sustainable way. We do this by working with our community to understand their needs and aspirations identified in our Community Plan 2021-2031, delivering the initiatives set out in our Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan, and ensuring we have the right resources to do so (our Financial Plan, Asset Plan and Workforce Plan).

2.1 Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework

Knox's integrated strategic planning and reporting framework illustrates the medium- and long-term plans that guide and manage our city. This Asset Plan plays a key part in this framework.

The ***Knox Community Plan*** incorporates a Community Vision statement and describes our community's aspirations for the future. It sets out Key Directions which articulate what we, as a collective, need to focus on to achieve our vision.

> ***"Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive"***

Knox's ***Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29*** is our key strategic document. It describes how we are going to contribute to the achievement of the Community Vision and shows how we are going to measure our success. It also demonstrates our commitment to the health and wellbeing of our community by incorporating Knox's Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan.

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan's objectives, strategies, and indicators to support the Community Vision are organised around the following key themes:



This ***Asset Plan*** outlines how we will responsibly maintain and manage our assets in a cost-effective way. It will ensure we deliver our Council Plan initiatives, the services we provide to the community, and ultimately help achieve our Community Vision.

There are a range of other plans that also guide our work and support the achievement of our Community Vision. They include plans about how we're going to manage our financial resources (the Financial Plan, Budget and Revenue and Rating Plan) and how we can make sure we have the right staff to deliver our services and initiatives (the Workforce Plan).

Figure 2 shows how our plans fit together, and how we track our progress against them, ensuring we remain open, transparent and accountable.



Figure 2 - Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework

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3 OUR ASSETS

Our infrastructure asset portfolio represents not only a significant community investment, but also it is a substantial financial asset for Council with an estimated replacement value of ***$1.88 billion*** (as at 30 June 2024).

Facilities
Total Replacement Cost: **$385.9 million**
Includes: 235 buildings and minor structures. Libraries, leisure centres, community halls, civic centres, etc.

Network Condition:

Roads and Car Parks
Total Replacement Cost: **$903.4 million**
Includes: 728 km local roads and 251 car parks

Network Condition:

Pathways
Total Replacement Cost: **$173.6 million**
Includes: 1,248 km footpaths and 106 km of shared paths

Network Condition:

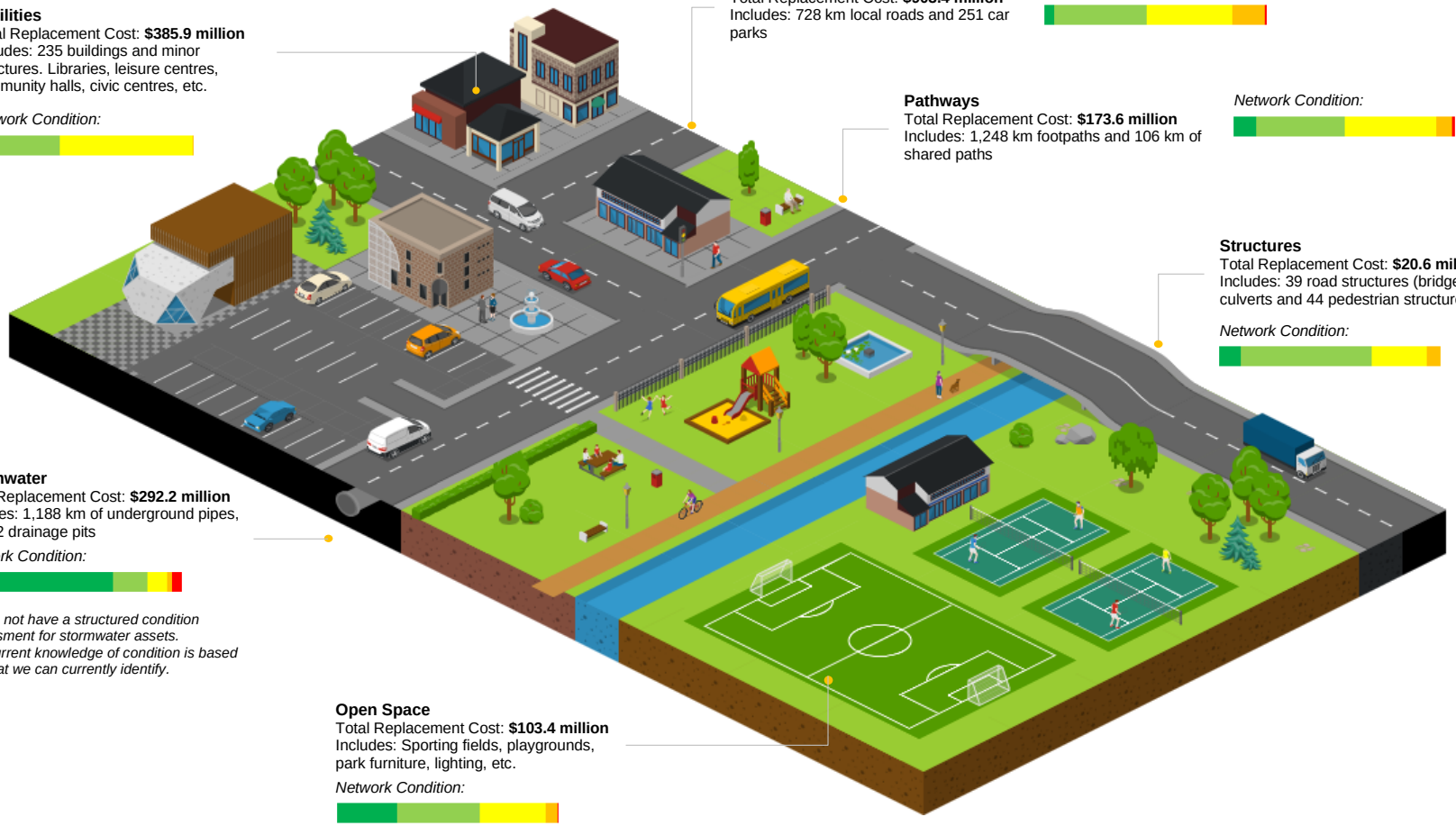
Structures
Total Replacement Cost: **$20.6 million**
Includes: 39 road structures (bridges and culverts and 44 pedestrian structures

Network Condition:

Stormwater
Total Replacement Cost: **$292.2 million**
Includes: 1,188 km of underground pipes, 39,612 drainage pits

Network Condition:

We do not have a structured condition assessment for stormwater assets. Our current knowledge of condition is based on what we can currently identify.



Open Space
Total Replacement Cost: **$103.4 million**
Includes: Sporting fields, playgrounds, park furniture, lighting, etc.

Network Condition:

Very Good
Meets existing and future service needs

Good
Current meets existing service needs

Fair
May require minor work to continue to meet existing service needs

Poor
May require major work to continue to meet existing service needs

Very Poor
Fails to meet existing service needs.

4 Our Changing City

Various external and internal factors such as local, national, and global trends all have the potential to impact the future outlook of our City. We need to understand these trends, harness their benefits, and adaptively respond to preserve the health, vibrancy, resiliency of Knox.

Population Growth and Demographic Changes	Ageing Infrastructure	Rising Cost of Services
The City of Knox population forecast for 2025 is 163,653 and is forecast to grow by around 13% to 185,148 by 2046. Projections also indicate that there will be a 38.1% increase in population of retirement age, and a 10.8% increase in population of working age. We also need to plan for an additional 43,000 houses in Knox by 2041 to meet the Victorian State Government's statewide housing targets. Our community expects us to be able to quickly respond to their emerging needs, without understanding the implication.	One of the biggest financial challenges facing us is the cost of renewing and upgrading our ageing infrastructure. Our ageing assets have been built reflective of the standards of the time, which doesn't always align with current needs. As much of Knox was built in the 1960's/70's/80's a large peak in asset needs is looming. Lifestyle choices will influence the quality and standards of services and assets we provide. Taking a critical look at community demands, we are planning to cater for assets that are responsive and adaptable to meet shifting community needs (such as multipurpose facilities).	Cost increases to items such as electricity, petrol, and raw materials all impact on our ability provide value for money services. For us, this occurs within an expectation of doing more with less or improving our efficiency to ensure more can be achieved with less money. This is compounded by significant limitations on our ability to generate our own source revenue from rates due to rate capping.
What does this mean for asset management and service delivery?		
We strive to enhance/improve our services and assets to cater for the needs of our growing community. We will need to balance our financial investment in infrastructure so that our assets support capacity for growth without diminishing servicing provided by existing assets. Change in the age structure of the population will mean it will be critical for us to plan age-based facilities and services. A changing demographic will mean that we will need to maintain a focus on providing assets that promote access and equity for community health and wellbeing and social outcomes.	As our assets continue to age/deteriorate, more investment in maintenance and operational expenditure may be required to ensure that the current levels of service enjoyed by the community continue to be supported. There is a critical need to introduce robust lifecycle asset management practices to ensure that our spending on our existing assets is optimised.	We will need to aim to continually balance the affordable provision of services against the needs of our community. This may at time results in us not meeting the service expectations of the community. There exists an ongoing requirement to ensure that the cost of delivering Council assets provides value for money to the Knox community.

Political and Regulatory Influence	Climate Change and Technology Changes	Meeting Current and Future Needs
We operate in a complex legislative environment that directly influences the way manage our assets. Cost shifting from other levels of government will continue to play a key role in Council's ability to maintain service level provided to the community. There is an expectation that Council will continue to deliver services, even when State and Federal government funding is withdrawn or reduced. This may result in Council consideration for reduced levels of service than may currently be provided or potentially consideration for not providing certain services.	We are already experiencing the impacts of climate change. In the future, we can expect; storm damage to infrastructure; decreased water quality and security of water supply; reduced summer outdoor activities due to higher temperatures, and hotter urban spaces. New technologies are emerging at an increasingly rapid rate and offer possibilities for our city that we may not have thought of yet. We are expected to make more use of available and emerging technology to make asset information and services more accessible. We have started to use emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence to optimise data collection, planning and decision-making spanning over large network of assets we are managing.	The community expects us to be able to quickly respond to emerging needs which can be influenced by numerous drivers such as generational change, legislation, environmental standards, facilities experienced elsewhere, and new technology. There is ongoing pressure from the community for higher quality assets and services to be provided for most of our activities. More advanced and functional buildings, enhanced open space areas, modern technology and convenience are some examples. The expectation is for a higher level of service for the same amount of money – in other words doing more with less.
What does this mean for asset management and service delivery?		
We strive to meet our regulatory and statutory obligations while being conscious of maintaining affordability and financial sustainability. This requires good decisions to be made to manage competing funding demands across a broad range of projects, programs, and services. We may also need to commit to key advocacy activities to identify our challenges an seek resolution on key issues, both through State and Federal Government channels.	We will need to recognise climate change risks and examine the vulnerability of our asset network. If and when disasters occur, we will need to focus or energy and resources on supporting the recovery of our community. Our assets will need to be rebuilt to a higher standard in the expectation that risks will only increase in the future. There may also be increased expectation for leadership from Council to make use of sustainable energy sources and to provide assets that are environmentally efficient.	We will need to plan assets that are responsive and adaptable to meet shifting community needs. We will continue to strongly advocate to other levels of government for support in meeting the current and future needs of the community. We will look to form service delivery partnerships with organisations where appropriate for non-asset service delivery solutions in turn optimising the use of Council's asset portfolio. Our assets must cater for the expectations of the community by remaining accessible, well maintained, and fit for purpose. This must be balanced and prioritised against investment in new and expanded assets to support the City's future and the ability of the community to pay.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This Asset Plan along with our Community Vision and Council Plan has been developed with input from our community via detailed deliberative engagement processes in line with our Community Engagement Policy and the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

A dedicated Knox Asset Plan Community Panel was established in March 2025 to discuss and identify the key issues that will shape how we will manage our assets over the next 10 years.

Community engagement was undertaken through two separate workshops held in April and May 2025.

The diverse members of the Community Panel reflected the broad demography of our community. They worked together to deliberate over the following important questions to inform the development of our Asset Plan:

Like many Councils, we're facing financial challenges and constraints. While we continue to invest in community facilities and assets, we need to prioritise and make hard decisions about our services to overcome a forecast funding gap.

> Which assets should we prioritise improving to maximise positive outcomes for our community?
> How should we spend wisely on our assets and facilities in the future?

In deliberating over this remit, the Panel considered the following:

- Future opportunities and challenges.
- Which assets are most important to the community.
- How our assets are performing.

The process resulted in a set of key themes driven by community input for us to consider in shaping our asset planning and decision making.

5.1 Community Panel Outcomes

5.1.1 Future Opportunities and Challenges

The Community Panel worked together to identify the following priority opportunities and challenges that will impact the way our assets will be planned and managed in the future.

Opportunities



Research on assets – have data on trends and demands



Rationalising under used assets



Reinventing unused spaces /third spaces

Challenges



Climate change



Ageing assets



Cost of living – Community and Council

5.1.2 Priority Assets

The Community Panel told us that all of our assets were all equally important in supporting the health, wellbeing, and prosperity of our community.



Transport Assets



Open Space



Stormwater Drainage



Facilities

Some participants referred to an increased understanding and appreciation for the importance for protecting our green spaces and the role of our stormwater drainage system through their participation in our workshop sessions.

5.1.3 Asset Performance

The Panel responded to the question of how our assets are performing and ranked our assets in the following order.

The Panel indicated that our libraries and other community buildings were of good quality.

They also expressed that we are doing a good job in looking after our local roads and the standard met their expectations.

Participants suggested that we need to put more effort in maintaining the appearance of our parks, along with doing more to preserve and protect biodiversity and reduce habitat fragmentation.



1. Facilities



2. Transport Assets



3. Open Space



4. Stormwater Drainage

5.1.4 Key Considerations

The analysis highlighted the following key considerations that we should consider as priority for the next 10 years:

 Climate Ready	Building community resilience to climate change.
 Social Connections	Providing inclusive and accessible community third spaces for reconnection, renewal and relaxation to provide a sense of social connectedness and belonging.
 Enhancing Information and Data Driven Decisions	Utilise technology and data analysis to inform our thinking and decision making processes.
 Optimising the Asset Base	Consolidation of underutilised buildings to achieve efficiencies and activating underutilised green spaces for community use.
 Retain and Enhance Green Spaces	Preserving habitat and increasing tree canopy.
 Accessible Transport Connections	Providing shared paths to connecting neighbourhoods to parks, buildings, public transport, and shopping centres.

We are committed to making our future asset management and investment decisions in line with our asset management planning framework and the important feedback provided by the Community Panel.

6 MANAGING OUR ASSETS

Our Asset Management Policy provides Council and staff with a framework to administer and manage its asset network to ensure responsible and sustainable decisions are made now and into the future.

"…sound asset management practices underpin Council's approach to delivery of services to the community…"
Knox Asset Management Policy

6.1 Our Asset Management Framework

Our Asset Management Framework provides that we follow a systematic approach to asset management that delivers prudent and efficient outcomes to meet both our community and asset management objectives.

The key elements of our Asset Management Framework are:

Asset Management Policy

This policy provides Council with a framework to administer and manage the asset network to ensure responsible and sustainable decisions are made now and into the future. The current policy is due for renewal and will be undertaken following adoption of the Asset Plan by Council.

Asset Plan

The Asset Plan outlines how we will acquire, build, look after, and use infrastructure assets over the next 10 years and beyond to ensure they meet our community's needs now and into the future.
It is an integral part of strategic planning to ensure we achieve our community vision. The Asset Plan aligns with Council's Financial Plan and responds to the Community Plan.

Strategic Asset Management Plan

Outlines the need for a strategic approach to asset management across asset categories and aims to guide Council in:

- Supporting the implementation of Council's Asset Management Policy.
- Supporting the integration of service planning and asset management.
- Aligning with external guidelines

Asset Management Plans

Our Asset Management Plans provide information on how we intend to manage each of our asset classes to meet the demands of our community in the future. They provide the roadmap for achieving value from our assets by optimising cost, risk, and performance across the lifecycle of an asset. Currently, Council has 5 major asset plans (Major) and 4 minor asset plans. Council's strategic direction for these plans is to consolidate them into four service based asset management plans.

Appendix A outlines the forward planning horizon for consolidating and progressing these plans.

6.2 Our Asset Management Principles

We are committed to making all asset decisions in accordance with our asset management principles articulated in our Asset Management Policy.

Strategically, our asset management principles are:

1 **Strategic Planning for Assets** – Council will invest in its asset knowledge and strategically plan for future asset needs across the municipality

2 **Asset Stewardship** - Council will be a responsible steward of assets across their service life.

3 **Financial Responsibility** - Council will adhere to relevant financial standards and guidelines when accounting for its assets and will plan for asset investment needs when budgeting.

4 **Community Engagement** - Council will engage with the community to define service expectations and manage its asset base to best respond to community needs

5 **Resource and Funding Allocation** - Council will appropriately resource asset needs across their life and prioritise expenditure in line with its financial plan and funding policy

6 **Risk Management** - Council will manage its asset base within its financial capacities to mitigate risk to people and property.

7 **Legislative Compliance** - Council will manage its asset base to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and regulations.

6.3 Lifecycle Management

Our approach to asset management is centred on asset life-cycle management decision making processes that are used to manage our infrastructure.

Through careful and efficient lifecycle management, our goal is to meet our agreed levels of service in the most cost-effective manner.

Underpinning this approach are our asset risk management processes to support decision making through each lifecycle phase.



Figure 3 - Asset Lifecycle

The management strategies we follow in each asset lifecycle phase are:

Planning and Design

- Asset planning and analysis to meet long term service needs.
- Asset design balances affordability, equity, and environmental performance.
- Whole of life cost considerations

Creation/ Acquisition

- Before building or acquiring new assets non-asset service delivery solutions such as leasing, strategic partnerships, etc. are considered.
- Assets are constructed according to planning and design documentation.
- Efficient procurement strategies are utilised.
- Asset performance standards are met when Council assets are delivered by Knox or others.

Maintenance and Operations

- Systems and processes record information about assets.
- Cyclic condition assessments are undertaken.
- Assets are operated and maintained to reduce risk/failure.
- Assets are available to meet community needs
- Optimisation of works and intervention to minimise ongoing costs.

Renewal

- Optimisation of asset renewal to minimise cost and risk
- Maximise the use of our assets through reuse or co-location of services, where possible.

Disposal or Rationalisation

- Where assets do not directly support service objectives they are considered for decommissioning, disposal or rationalisation to reduce lifecycle costs and financial burden.

Table 1 - Asset Lifecycle Management Strategies

6.4 Gender Equality, Access, and Inclusion

So that every resident and visitor to our City can fully participate in community life, our infrastructure must be usable, welcoming, relevant, and safe for all.

Many disadvantaged groups may miss out on opportunities to improve their lives as the infrastructure around them is not provided with their needs in mind. This means that services are likely to be experienced differently and have different outcomes for people of different genders or backgrounds.

We are committed to considering gender equality and social inclusion in planning, delivering, maintaining, and managing our assets to support equal access to services.

This commitment begins with an inclusive design that ensures our infrastructure works for everyone, including women, men, gender-diverse people, people with disabilities, refugees, and culturally and linguistically diverse community members. This is to make sure that our public spaces and facilities are accessible, equitable, functional, and remove barriers that may be experienced by members of Knox's diverse community.

7 FUNDING OUR ASSET PLAN

The main theme underpinning our Asset Plan and broader asset management planning principles is ensuring responsible management of our assets to meet the needs of our community and maintain affordability.

This acknowledges the many and varied factors that influence the delivery of our community's infrastructure.

Some of these challenges are legacy issues, others are simply the demands of a progressive society that is constantly seeking to improve. Either way, we are responsible for ensuring that our infrastructure contributes to us achieving our long term aspirations and supports a healthy, well connected, and prosperous community.

7.1 Asset Investment Strategy

Looking ahead to the next 10 years, our approach is to be careful in our investment decisions using a holistic lifecycle approach to asset management. This means that we will aim to plan our infrastructure assets so that they will continue to support quality living, economic development, and the environmental integrity of our city in the long-term.

In planning and providing infrastructure requirements in the next 10 years, we will aim to:

Optimise asset life through timely and effective maintenance	There is no one-size-fits-all care programme for all our assets. We will continue to use a mix of approaches, including preventive maintenance, reactive maintenance, predictive maintenance, and risk-based maintenance for critical assets.
Continue to renew infrastructure	Through a robust asset renewal programme, we will progressively replace of assets as they reach the end of their service life. The rate of asset renewal is intended to maintain the overall condition of the asset system at a standard that reflects its criticality and age profile and ensures that the community's investment in infrastructure is sustained.
Sustain current levels of service	Using a holistic lifecycle approach to asset management, our decisions will be data driven to maximise the performance and service life of our assets without diminishing our net level of service over the long term.
Manage the impacts of growth and land use change	Our strategic plans will provide guidance on future asset needs by identifying location and scale of growth. Contributions from development will be taken to fund necessary infrastructure so that growth pays for growth, and costs are not unfairly borne by established communities.
Comply with legislative requirements	We acknowledge and will action legislated standards in infrastructure planning and development.
Provide long-term affordable services	Our financial strategy will continue to reflect the balancing of ratepayer affordability against community needs and aspirations.
Consider asset disposal or rationalisation	Our decision making should ensure that consideration is given to asset disposal or rationalisation as a legitimate direction for an asset where it can be identified that such a decision is warranted.

7.2 Asset Investment Categories

For the purposes of this Asset Plan, our expenditures on infrastructure assets are categorised in the table below. Classifying our expenditure in this way helps us to plan our budgets and track how we spend our money on our assets and services.

Expenditure Category	Activity	Description
Operational	Maintenance	Ongoing work required to keep an asset performing at the required level of service.
	Operations	Recurrent expenditure that is continuously required to provide a service.
Renewal	Renewal	Returns the service potential or the life of the asset up to that which it had originally.
Growth	Upgrade	Enhancements to an existing asset to provide a higher level of service.
	Expansion	Extends or expands an existing asset at the same standard as is currently enjoyed by residents, to a new group of users.
	New	Creates a new asset that provides a service that does not currently exist.
Disposal	De-commission	Removes an asset from service at the end of its functional life, where the service need can no longer be demonstrated.

Table 2 - Expenditure Categories

7.3 Lifecycle Costs

Life cycle costs are essentially how much money we will need to spend on an asset over the course of its useful life. This includes costs from the time an asset is acquired or built, while it is in use (e.g. maintenance) through to the time it is either replaced or disposed of.

The true cost to deliver, use, and maintain assets (including future costs) needs to be forecast over the long term so that we can budget appropriately. There are a number of ways we determine when and how much we need to allocate to fund the lifecycle costs of our assets.

Operational	Operational or recurrent costs (i.e., asset maintenance and care) are determined according to our levels of service and the required frequency of operational activities (e.g., mowing, street sweeping, etc).
Renewal	Renewal costs are determined using our analysis/modelling tools that predict when an asset needs to be replaced based on its current condition and our understanding of how assets age and deteriorate over time.
Growth	The priority and amount we need to allocate to grow/expand our asset base are guided by our various strategies, plans and community expectations. The selection of discretionary projects such as these must pass through our investment evaluation processes before they are selected for inclusion on our capital works program.

Table 3 - Asset Lifecycle Cost Determination

7.4 Funding Allocation Policy

As part of our annual budget process, judgement is required to determine the allocation of our available funding. In making such decisions, we seek to deliver the best overall outcome for the community in line with the goals articulated in our Community Plan and Council Plan.

As part this process, available funding is allocated between capital and operating expenditure, and between discretionary and non-discretionary funding.

Figure 4 shows our framework for prioritising our available funding across both capital and operational programs, as articulated in Council's Funding Allocation Policy, adopted in July 2020.

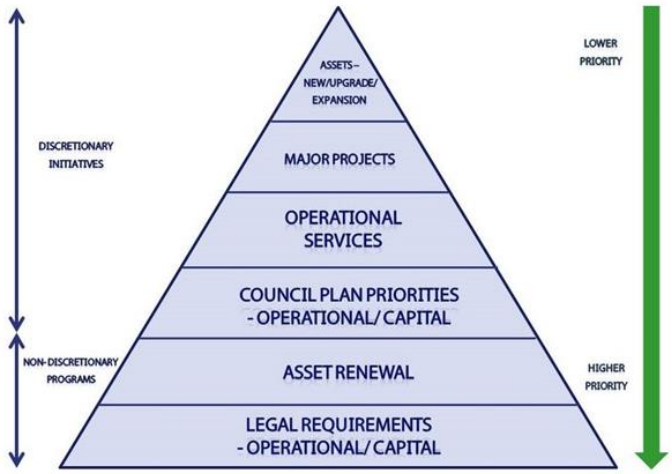


Figure 4 - Funding Allocation Framework

Our Funding Allocation Framework ensures that:

- Non-discretionary projects and programs are funded as a priority over discretionary items.
- Legislative and regulatory requirements for both our services and assets are prioritised over other programs.
- Business improvement initiatives, where approved inform both operational and capital requirements.
- Existing assets are managed as a priority over new, upgraded, or expanded assets.
- Operating funds are provided to maintain any additional asset stock managed by us.

7.5 Investment Evaluation and Decision Making

MAINTENANCE DECISION MAKING PLANNING
Planned maintenance work is identified either through routine or programmed inspections/investigations conducted by Council. Unplanned maintenance is reactive work resulting from customer requests and unscheduled inspections.

All activities (whether planned or reactive) are managed via our asset management system. This system captures all of our inspections, the identification of the issue/defects, the need for intervention and/or make safe measures, prioritisation and scheduling of works based on risk, and completion of rectification works.

The advantage of planned maintenance over reactive maintenance is that it lowers risk exposure by identifying and correcting defects before they reach an unacceptable level.

RENEWAL DECISION MAKING PLANNING
Condition inspection programs for our major asset categories are proactively scheduled on a routine cycle to assess their current condition.

By adopting a whole of asset assessment, relative priorities for investment can be programmed and delivered on an annual basis through our capital works program. Asset renewals are prioritised over upgrades and expansion of assets and represents the backbone of our capital works program.

NEW AND UPGRADE DECISION MAKING PLANNING
New and upgraded assets are determined based on a priority ranking assessment across key infrastructure delivery programs. This allows for transparency of decision making and consistency of assessment for all investment proposals. The ranking criteria that we use to prioritise our projects are reviewed and endorsed by Council on an annual basis.

DISPOSAL DECISION MAKING PLANNING
Infrastructure disposal should be given reasonable consideration when an existing asset has reached/is reaching the end of its useful life, having regard to the broader service needs delivered by equivalent/similar assets. This can be assessed on an asset by asset basis or through review via service planning or strategy development associated with that service.

7.6 Financial Plan Integration

The integration of the Asset Plan and the Financial Plan is critical so that the resources we need to manage our assets are provided in our financial planning instruments. The balance between maintaining and renewing our assets and accommodating funding for improvement and growth is a constant challenge. Underfunding renewal can lead to lower levels of service and deferring important asset upgrades can result in assets that are no longer fit for purpose. The forecasts included in this Asset Plan for the projected asset costs are consistent with our Financial Plan and cover the planned asset activities over the next 10 years.

Funding provision for assets represents a balance which acknowledges the current condition of assets, their service performance and asset provision in line with community expectation and our overall financial capacity. This will require future monitoring and further analysis as new asset information becomes available such as new asset condition data.

There is a strong likelihood in the near future that trade-offs will need to be made between the community's service expectations and our ability to fund them. Funding requirements may potentially change and require adjustment to both this Asset Plan and the Financial Plan.

7.7 Financial Projections

The spending we make on our assets represents a significant investment that is made on behalf of the community and is fundamental in enabling us to meet ever changing demands and to safeguard future use of our infrastructure.

Our planned expenditure across the infrastructure assets included in this Asset Plan over the next 10 years is shown in Figure 5.

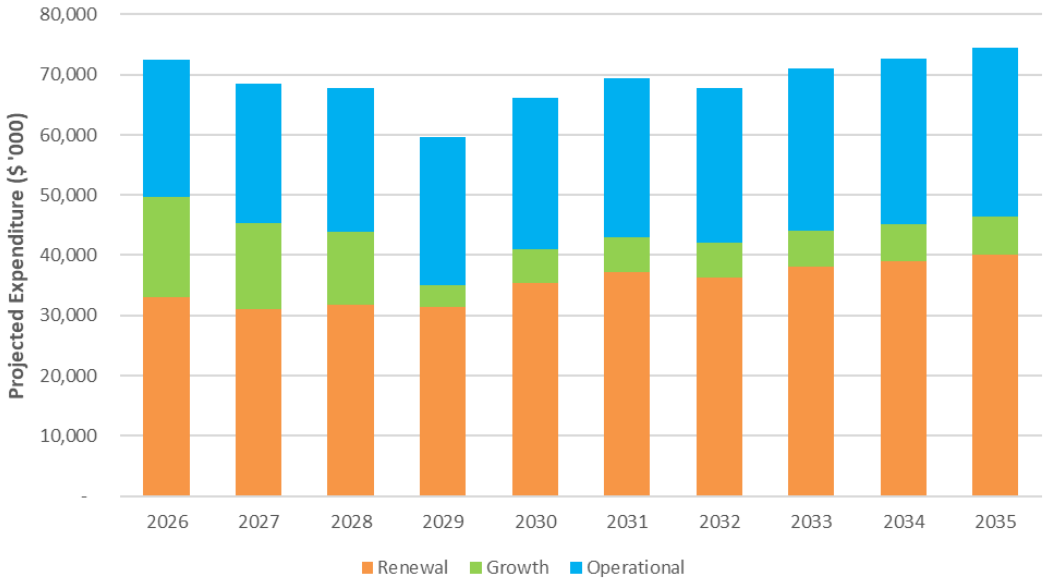


Figure 5 - Projected Total Asset Expenditure

This is further summarised in Table 4 which shows the total planned expenditure related to renewal, growth, and recurrent activities (i.e., operations and maintenance) over the next 10 years for each asset class.

Asset Class	Renewal ($'000)	Growth ($'000)	Operational ($'000)	Total ($'000)
Roads and Car Parks	123,032	9,751	30,911	163,694
Facilities	74,001	38,572	40,491	153,064
Pathways	47,082	12,381	7,625	67,088
Open Space	54,981	16,945	148,201	220,128
Stormwater	43,633	5,036	26,638	75,307
Structures	10,211	-	200	10,411
Total	352,940	82,686	254,066	689,692

Table 4 - Planned Expenditure by Asset Class

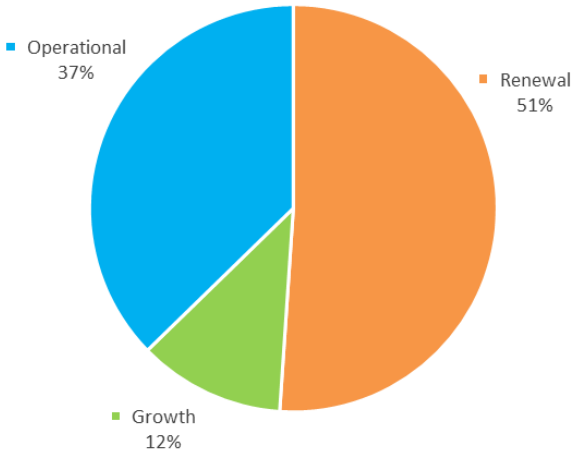


Figure 6 - 10 years Expenditure by Expenditure Category

Over the next 10 years we expect to budget a total of ***$352.9 million*** for renewing our assets and ***$82.7 million*** improving existing and creating new assets.

We are also projected to allocate around ***$254.1 million*** over the same period to operate and maintain our assets.

Combined, it is an investment of ***$689.7 million*** in our assets over the next 10 years.

This represents a significant investment that is made on behalf of our community and is fundamental in enabling us to meet ever changing demands and to safeguard future use of our infrastructure.

Our forecast spending is based on the best available information we have about our assets and the planning we have done to formulate our capital works program.

As our data and processes improve, the financial forecasts to renew, improve, and maintain our infrastructure will be refined and will be used to inform future versions of this Asset Plan and the Financial Plan.

7.8 Financial and Performance Indicators

The following performance measures demonstrate we are investing in our assets in a financially sustainable manner and to ensure that levels of services to the community are maintained.

Measure	Definition	Industry Target	Result[2]
Asset Sustainability Ratio[3]	Measures the extent to which assets are being replaced as they reach the end of their useful life.	90 - 110%	128%
Asset Renewal Requirement[4]	Indicates financial capacity to fund forecast asset renewal demands over the next 10 years.	90 - 110%	90%
Asset Renewal[5]	Measures whether assets are being renewed or upgraded at the rate they are wearing out.	> 100%	151%

Table 5 - Asset Management Financial Performance Indicators

[2] Projected 10 year average
[3] Capital renewal expenditure divided by depreciation expense
[4] Planned capital renewal expenditure divided by required capital renewal expenditure.
[5] Asset Renewal and Upgrade Expenditure divided by annual depreciation.

7.9 Managing the Asset Renewal Funding Gap

Our projections tell us we will need to spend a total of approximately **$394 million** to renew our infrastructure over the next 10 years. When compared with how much we have to spend in our Financial Plan over the same period (**$348 million**), we are faced with a total asset renewal funding gap of **$46 million**.

Asset Renewal Gap

In simple terms, this is the difference between the current level of actual expenditure on renewing existing assets and the level of funding necessary to replace our assets when they need to be.

Looking at our projections (Figure 7), right now we are faced with significant challenges in funding the renewal of our assets due to the affordability limits of our Financial Plan and the need to also allocate funds to support a growing Knox community.

We will need to review how we refine our capital works plans so that funding is directed towards to critical areas of need. This may include reviewing how we distribute our spending so that it is prioritised towards the replacement of our ageing assets.

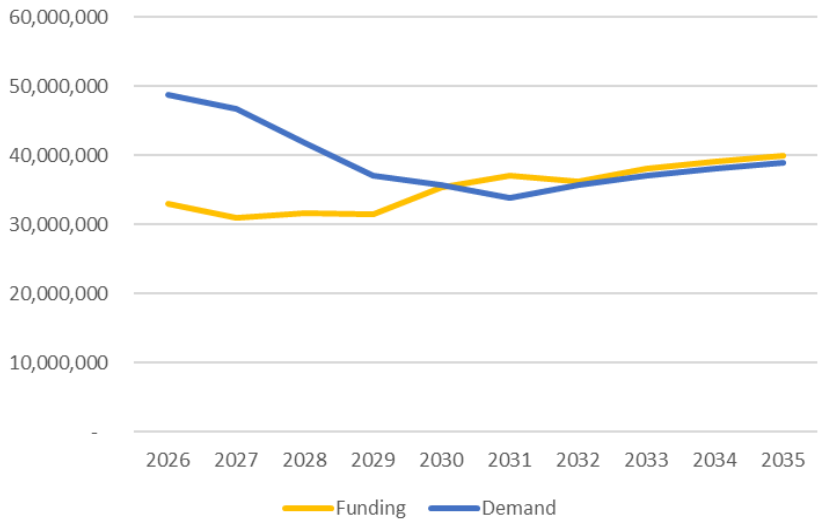


Figure 7 - Asset Renewal Projections

Council has many options available to manage the asset renewal gap. These include:

- Further strengthening our asset condition data, renewal modelling and community needs data which is necessary for efficient and cost-effective planning of renewal and maintenance works.
- Reviewing major procurements and contracts to secure the best value for money and ensure renewal and maintenance funds achieve as much as possible.
- Improving efficiency as part of our ongoing commitment to continuous innovation. Operational efficiencies with how Council manages its assets, from day to day maintenance, construction, replacement, and longer term planning can reduce the overall costs.
- Continue our advocacy efforts to attract support through government grants to increase the available sources of funding and reduce our direct cost burden.
- Adapting or consolidating existing assets to maximise multiuse potential could result in the divestment or rationalisation of unnecessary assets.
- Forming or strengthening alliances with strategic partners to find opportunities for finding non-asset solutions to the delivery of services. This can reduce direct costs to Council.
- Giving strategic consideration to reduce service standards provided by assets, with accompanying engagement with the community prior to making such decisions.

- Giving strategic consideration to having renewal only investment profiles in years where the overall financial envelope for capital investment is tight, noting that asset renewal investment can still provide fit for purpose service provision reflective of the infrastructure standards necessary at the time of delivery.
- Giving strategic consideration to implementing an Asset Rationalisation process, whereby Council conducts an end of functional life review which assesses the need for an asset to be retained for its intended purpose in alignment with the strategic direction of its service planning models prior to assigning funding towards either renewal, upgrade or expansion of the asset.

Our imperative is to continually strive to responsibly fund the renewal of our assets to ensure that they are safe, fit for purpose and meet the needs of our community.

8 MONITORING AND REVIEW

A full review of the *Asset Plan* will be undertaken every 4 years following Council elections in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

As the funding requirements for asset investment are reviewed annually as part of the Council budget process, it follows that the data within the Asset Plan working tools will also be updated annually to align with most recently available data. Council's Asset Strategy team continue to undertake ongoing condition audits of Council assets, analyse performance of assets and modelling key asset requirements to maintain requisite asset performance and inform budget setting process. This work is all undertaken to ensure that annual budgeting decisions are informed by the best available data and reflect:

- Our available financial resources.
- The best available data to inform asset condition and performance
- Asset needs identified in long term capital works programs that are reviewed annually.
- Any external factors that are likely to influence the Asset Plan.

8.1 Reporting

Reporting on service levels and other performance measures will be undertaken as part of the Annual Report.

8.2 Improving Our Evidence Base

This Asset Plan is strongly aligned with our Financial Plan. Both of these documents incorporate forecasts and predictions of factors that will influence their accuracy, including assumptions about future demand, revenue, and operating environment. These assumptions have been derived using the best data and information we currently have available to us

We are committed to managing our assets in accordance with recognised best practice and are continuously working to improve what we know about our assets and enhance the tools we use to manage them.

Future versions of this *Asset Plan* will build on the work we have done and will reflect our improved knowledge base, deliberative engagement with the Knox community and technical analysis which reflects changes in asset knowledge, revenue, demands, financial sustainability, and external drivers.



ASSET PROFILES

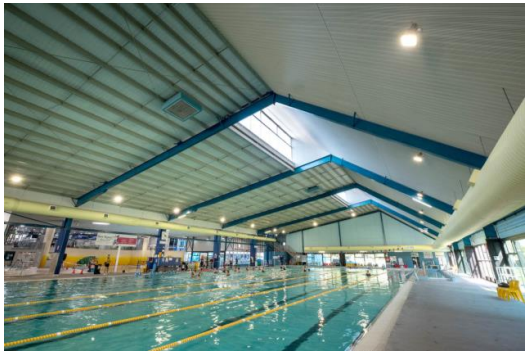
The following asset class summaries provide the current state, challenges, choices and projected expenditure requirements for each key asset class over the next 10 years.

These funding requirements have been determined based on what we know about the current performance of our assets and the affordability assessments made in our Financial Plan.

The projections represent the investment that is necessary to renew, improve, and care for our infrastructure over the next 10 years.









ROADS AND CAR PARKS



Service

- Provision of transport services to the community including vehicular and other active modes.
- Provision of off-street carpark facilities at key locations.

Service Objective

- To provide the community and road users with a safe, functional, and fit for purpose road network.
- To provide safe and suitable off-street carparking facilities.

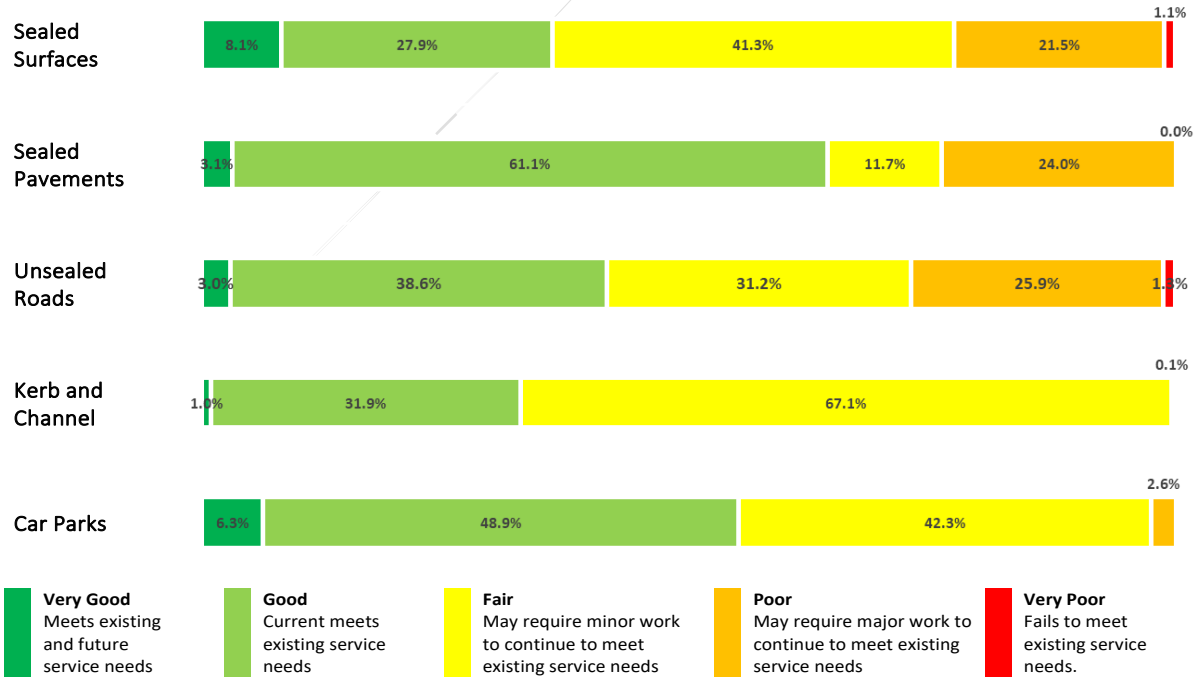
Asset Summary

The replacement value of our local roads and car parks is approximately $903.4[6] million.

This value does not include land under roads.

Asset	Quantity	Replacement Cost ($)
Sealed Roads	708 km	737,418,534
Unsealed Roads	20 km	
Kerb and Channel	1,358 km	137,486,106
Car Parks	251 No. (32 Ha)	28,486,472
Total		**903,391,111**

Current Condition



[6] As at 30 June 2024

Asset Performance Assessment

Current Performance	Fit for the Future?
Most of our local roads are generally in 'Good' to 'Fair' condition. Our road network is one of our most valuable assets, not only in terms of its financial value but also its contribution to overall community prosperity. For that reason, we place a strong emphasis on monitoring the performance of these assets through structured inspection and maintenance programs. This is to inform our planning and to make sure that we are investing sufficient funds to maintain current service levels over the long term.	The local road network and car parks are considered to be fit for the future. The continued funding of long-term road, pathway and bridge renewal and maintenance is essential to maintain these assets in a safe condition and continue to provide current levels of service.

Key Challenges and Choices

Sustainable Transport	City Redevelopment	Transport Safety
> Community demand for more accessible public transport. > The need to accommodate electric vehicles (including charging station infrastructure) and driverless vehicles on the existing road network	> We need to manage increasing demands for on street parking while also addressing parking issues in and around key activities centres. > We are faced with continued challenges in managing the impacts of urban development which can damage our roads, paths and kerb during construction.	> Increased traffic resulting from population growth will not only impact on the condition of our transport network but may also highlight other issues like congestion and safety issues.

Key Activity Types

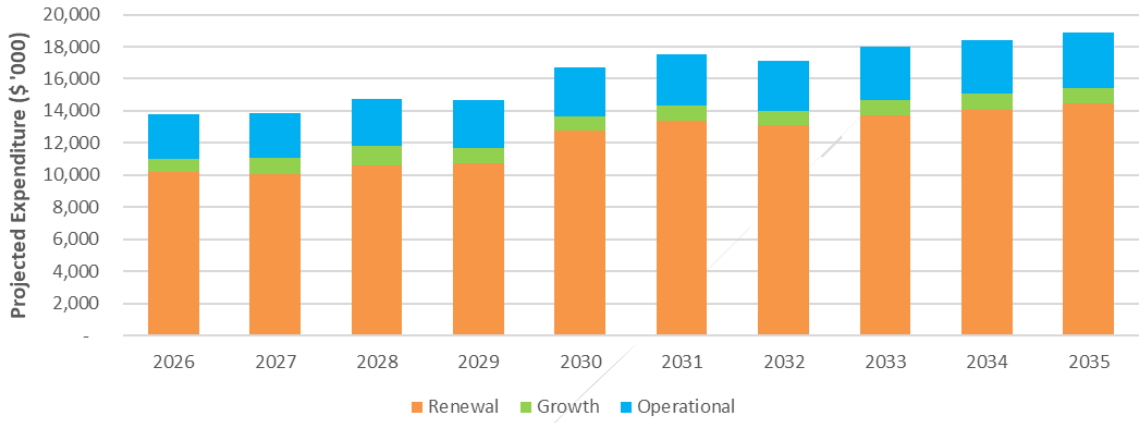
Operational	Renewal	Growth
> Maintenance and repairs to roads such as patching potholes, crack sealing etc. > Line marking > Street sweeping > Inspections of the road network.	> Resurfacing of existing roads > Road reconstruction or major patching of road failures > Replacement of sections of kerb and channel in poor condition	> Road safety improvements > Widening or duplication of existing roads > Installing traffic calming treatments

Financial Projections

Road renewal and rehabilitation strategies are based on the most current asset condition available at the time of developing our forward works programs.

We allocate renewal funding at a level that aims to keep pace with the deterioration of our roads and other related assets.

These allocations are informed by strategic modelling analysis that predicts deterioration of our roads and the impact of various renewal funding scenarios on asset condition. Our modelling allows us to identify what treatments that need to be applied and when. Our overall objective is to maintain the current standard of our network over the long term.



10-Year Expenditure Plan

	2026 ($'000)	2027 ($'000)	2028 ($'000)	2029 ($'000)	2030 ($'000)	2031 ($'000)	2032 ($'000)	2033 ($'000)	2034 ($'000)	2035 ($'000)	10 year Total
Operational	2,746	2,830	2,916	2,982	3,052	3,199	3,125	3,275	3,353	3,433	**30,911**
Renewal	10,181	10,056	10,568	10,716	12,762	13,407	13,080	13,741	14,084	14,437	**23,032**
Growth	851	999	1,235	996	888	932	910	956	980	1,004	**9,751**
Total	**13,778**	**13,885**	**14,719**	**14,694**	**16,702**	**17,538**	**17,115**	**17,972**	**18,417**	**18,874**	**163,694**

FACILITIES



Service

> Buildings accommodate the various services that Council provides to the community.
> They support social connectedness serving as community focal points.

Service Objective

> Our buildings and facilities are safe, functional, and fit for purpose.
> Our buildings are inclusive and accessible to all people.

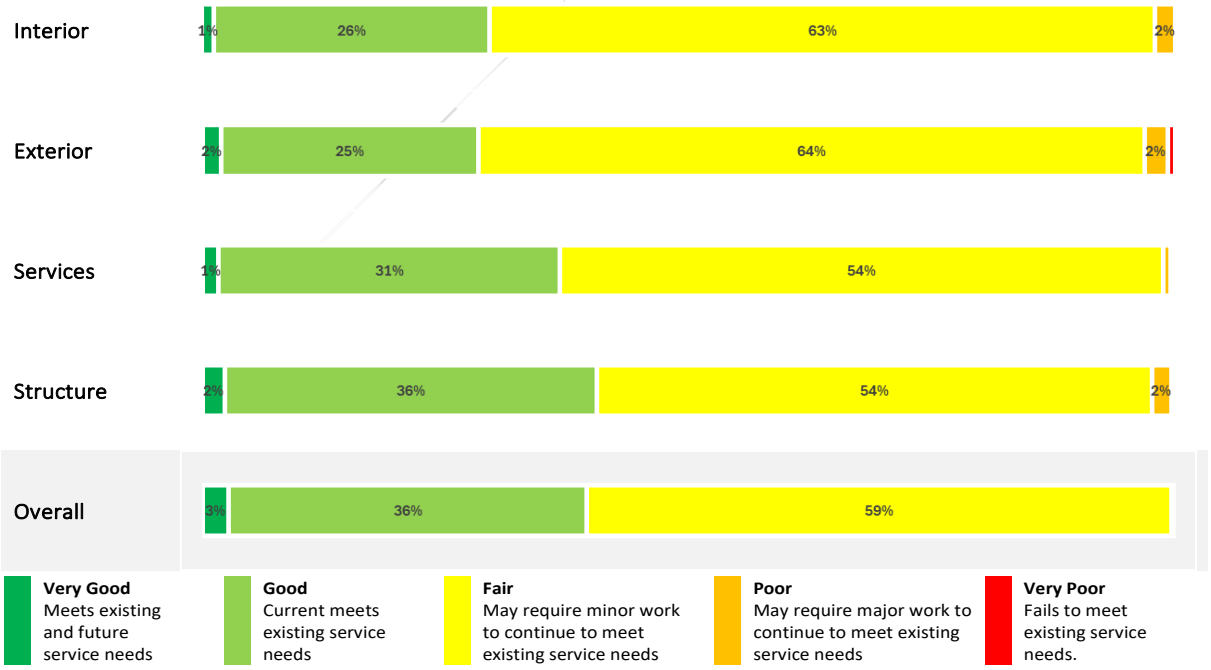
Asset Summary

The value of our facilities is estimated to be approximately $458.27 million[7].

Asset	Quantity	Replacement Cost ($)
Council Owned Buildings	235 No.	385,853,907
Councill Maintained Buildings	238 No.	

Council's portfolio of buildings incorporates public toilets, libraries, aquatic and leisure centres, sports pavilions, community centres and halls, administration buildings, etc. There are a small number of buildings that are maintained by Council but not owned. These buildings are managed and maintained through Council's annual programs.

Current Condition



[7] As at 30 June 2024

Asset Performance Assessment

Current Performance	Fit for the Future?
The current portfolio of buildings is generally in good condition. Building maintenance and renewal programs enable Council to renew and replace building elements as they fall due for renewal. A number of Council's buildings will require upgrade or extensions to meet current day standards and requirements such as provision for required spaces for kindergartens and female friendly change rooms and facilities at sporting pavilions, and accessibility improvements.	Future building provision will need to be aligned with the changing service delivery needs of our community. Buildings will need to be adaptable multi use spaces that encourage diversity of use. They will also need to remain compliant and safe and be accessible and promote equity by removing barriers where possible. Potential for the divestment of under-performing assets will need to be investigated along with non-asset based service solutions to reduce ongoing costs. We will also continue to improve the performance of our facilities to reduce dependence on fossil fuel derived energy and make them more sustainable and resilient to future climate shocks.

Key Challenges and Choices

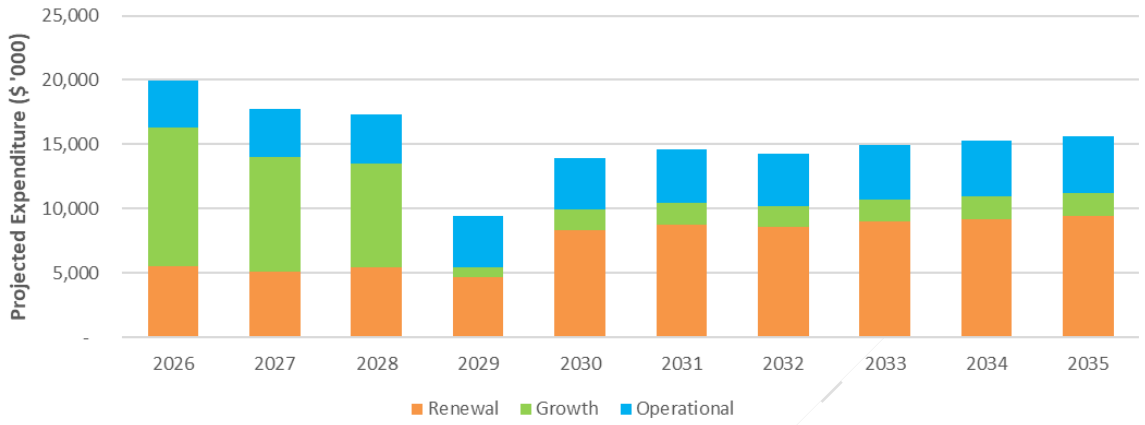
Changing Population	Changing Needs	Technology
> Facilities will need to be adaptable to meet the evolving needs all users. > Effort will be needed to improve access for all genders, abilities and for other under-represented communities. > Demand for universally accessible facilities can be expected to increase as the city's population continues to age.	> Increasing female participation in sports and the need to provide equitable services for all users > Co-location of services within facilities > Higher quality service provision within facilities. > Accommodating costs associated with new buildings within existing budget allocations.	> Increased demand for technology- enabled buildings is anticipated supporting access, security and services provided within facilities. > Demand for on-line and other innovative service delivery may mean that the types and configurations of the buildings we need may change in the future. > Greater knowledge of asset utilisation to better plan and identify facilities that may be surplus to service requirements.

Key Activity Types

Operational	Renewal	Growth
> Minor repairs to building components. > Unblocking drains, service checks, carpet repairs > Painting > Safety, compliance, and condition inspections > Cleaning and pest control	> Major structural repairs > Replacement of building components such as roof or wall cladding > Replacement of heating and cooling systems >	> Construction of a new building to cater for increased or changing demand. > Building expansions. > Sustainability improvements (e.g., Solar panels, water harvesting and reuse systems, etc.)

Financial Projections

Our challenge will be striking a balance between maintaining the condition of our buildings as they age and deteriorate and providing facilities that are accessible, environmentally sustainable, and meet the service needs of our growing and changing community.



10-Year Expenditure Plan

	2026 ($'000)	2027 ($'000)	2028 ($'000)	2029 ($'000)	2030 ($'000)	2031 ($'000)	2032 ($'000)	2033 ($'000)	2034 ($'000)	2035 ($'000)	10 year Total
Operational	3,654	3,728	3,824	3,923	4,006	4,180	4,092	4,269	4,361	4,455	**40,491**
Renewal	5,515	5,134	5,465	4,692	8,328	8,749	8,536	8,968	9,192	9,422	**74,001**
Growth	10,807	8,882	8,025	770	1,580	1,659	1,619	1,700	1,743	1,787	**38,572**
Total	**19,976**	**17,744**	**17,314**	**9,385**	**13,914**	**14,588**	**14,247**	**14,937**	**15,296**	**15,664**	**153,064**

PATHWAYS



Service

Connecting the community to the pedestrian transport network including cycling, pedestrian, and other modes.

Service Objective

To provide a connected network of paths that allows for the safe movement of pedestrians and other users around the city.

Asset Summary

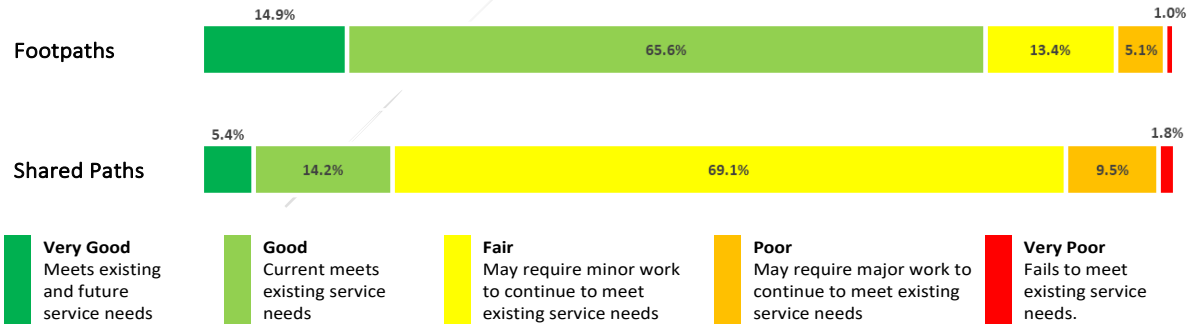
The replacement value of our footpaths and shared paths is approximately $173.6 million[8].

Asset	Quantity	Replacement Cost ($)
Footpaths	1,248 km	150,312,741
Shared Paths	106 km	23,304,055
Total		173,616,796

This network has been developed over time and contributes to the community through providing safe, comfortable and accessible linkages for people to local destinations (e.g., shops, schools).

The integrated network also promotes walking as a sustainable transport option and facilitates access to recreation and health and fitness opportunities.

Current Condition



[8] As at 30 June 2024

Asset Performance Assessment

Current Performance	Fit for the Future?
The current network of pathways and footpaths are performing well. Historic and ongoing investment in renewal of both footpaths and shared paths continues to maintain the pathway network to a high level of service for our community. This is reflected in the current asset condition profile for these networks.	Our pathways are currently providing an adequate level of service. This is projected to continue based on what it plans to spend on these assets in the future. Pathways are inspected regularly, and defects are addressed in accordance with our Road Management Plan. The small percentage of pathway sections in poor condition will be programmed for renewal/replacement over the next five years as part of our capital works programs. We will continue to improve the connectivity and accessibility across the pathway network by building new linkages where they are strategically needed.

Key Challenges and Choices

Sustainable Transport	City Redevelopment	Climate Change
> Continuing to support the uptake of active transport modes - walking, cycling, scooters. > Universal access requirements and an ageing population will necessitate improvements to pathways to accommodate diverse mobility needs.	> Development works (which can damage paths during construction) and introduction of additional pathways through development. > Maintaining connectivity of footpaths and shared path networks/	> Achieving circular economy outcomes when procuring construction materials. > Supporting access to public transport > Managing interface between hard and soft asset (trees/vegetation)

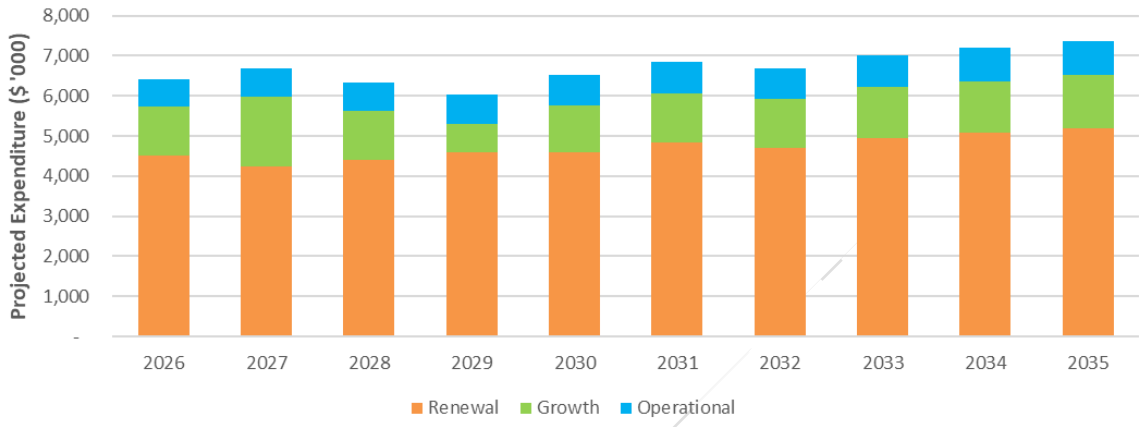
Key Activity Types

Operational	Renewal	Growth
> Pathway repairs such as pothole patching, joint grinding, relaying of pavers > Inspections > Weed and vegetation control > Sweeping and pathway cleansing	> Replacement of sections of existing pathways to an equivalent standard	> Accessibility improvements (e.g., accessible pram ramps, installation of tactiles at intersections, etc)

Financial Projections

A balance of funding is allocated between non-discretionary operations and maintenance and renewal and new and upgraded segments of pathway. A steady funding increase is also required for pathway renewal over the forward 10 years to maintain the network to the current level of service.

We will have a strong focus on replacing parts of our pathway network that are in poor condition, with a commitment to cover the whole of the city within a reasonable timeframe.



10-Year Expenditure Plan

	2026 ($'000)	2027 ($'000)	2028 ($'000)	2029 ($'000)	2030 ($'000)	2031 ($'000)	2032 ($'000)	2033 ($'000)	2034 ($'000)	2035 ($'000)	10 year Total
Operational	676	697	718	736	753	790	771	808	828	847	**7,625**
Renewal	4,507	4,250	4,400	4,597	4,591	4,824	4,706	4,944	5,068	5,195	**47,082**
Growth	1,228	1,730	1,215	692	1,176	1,236	1,206	1,267	1,299	1,332	**12,381**
Total	**6,411**	**6,677**	**6,333**	**6,025**	**6,521**	**6,850**	**6,683**	**7,019**	**7,195**	**7,374**	**67,088**

STRUCTURES



Service

Provide connectivity for local road and pathway networks across natural or other barriers.

Service Objective

To ensure that our bridges, major culverts and pedestrian structures are safe and functional.

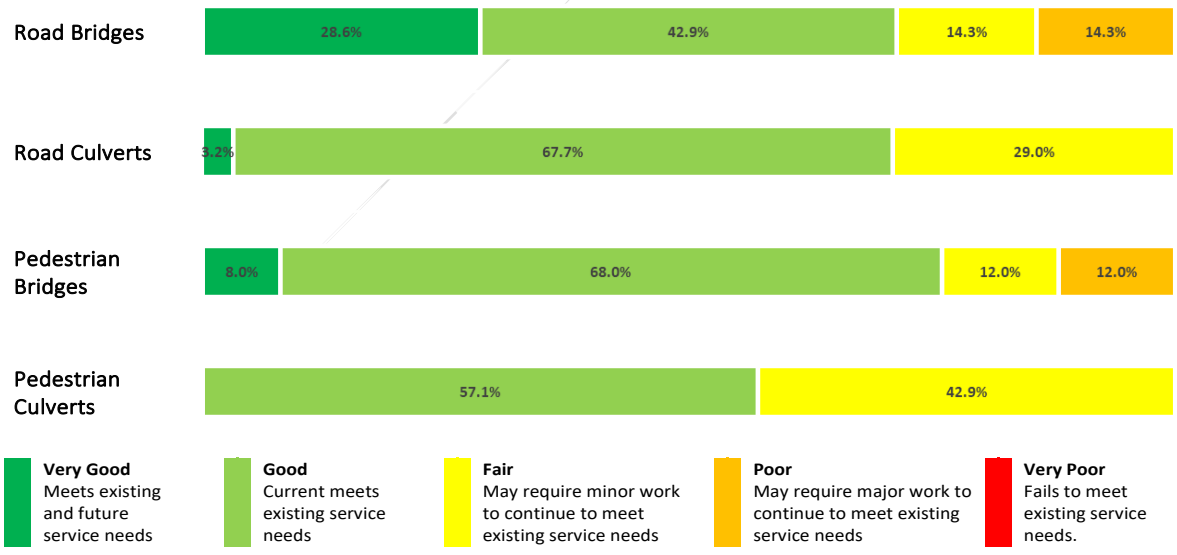
Asset Summary

Asset	Quantity	Replacement Cost ($)
Road Bridges	7 No.	20,631,234
Road Culverts	32 No.	
Pedestrian Bridges and Culverts	44 No.	

The replacement value of our footpaths and shared paths is approximately $20.6 million[9].

While our bridges and major culverts are a relatively small asset class based on total value, they are often critical features within the public realm and carry significant risk should they fail.

Current Condition



[9] As at 30 June 2024

Asset Performance Assessment

Current Performance	Fit for the Future?
The bridge and pedestrian structure portfolio is performing well. Ongoing monitoring and condition assessment is being undertaken to ensure that any bridge or structure elements identified in poor condition are treated, maintained, or renewed under our ongoing maintenance and renewal programs.	The current bridge and pedestrian structure portfolio is considered fit for the future. However, the deterioration of road structures can be accelerated if they are subject to continuous over loading. Ongoing monitoring and use of detailed structure assessment techniques will be required to ascertain extent of deterioration. Council's current renewal program may have to adapt and be flexible to accommodate increased renewal and maintenance funding needs to address any poor condition bridge assets identified as a result of more in-depth or ongoing assessment activities.

Key Challenges and Choices

Increased Freight Task	Climate Change	Ageing Assets
> Increased traffic and number of heavy vehicles on roads putting pressure on assets. > Unauthorised loading of road bridges and major culverts can result in increased deterioration and risk.	> More frequent and intense storm events will pose an increased risk of damage to assets through: - Falling trees - Erosion and scouring around the foundations and approaches - Intense sunlight causing damage to protective coatings - Cracking caused by ground movement	> Increased demand for timely asset renewal and upgrade as ageing assets begin to show increasing signs of deterioration, or non-compliance with newer design standards.

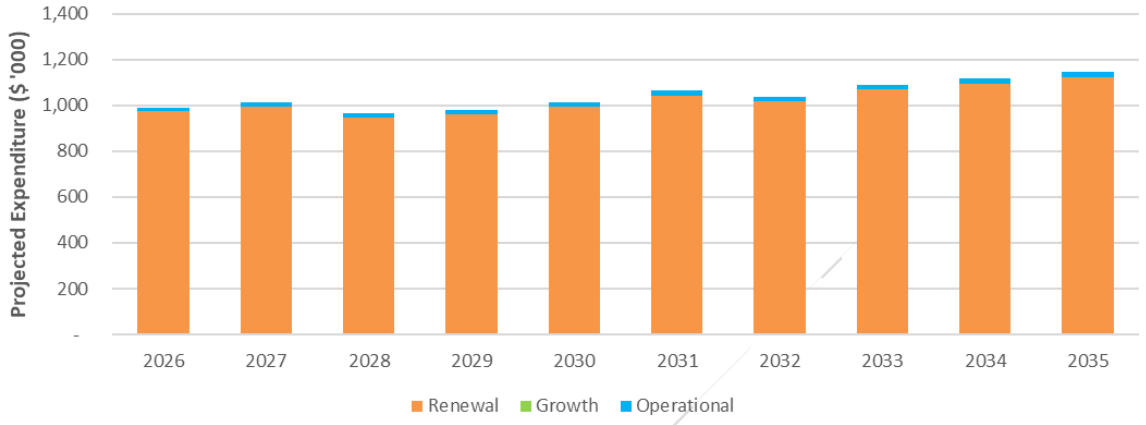
Key Activity Types

Operational	Renewal	Growth
> Deck and handrail repairs > Weed and vegetation control > Maintaining waterways free of debris > Programmed inspections	> Replacement of bridges or major components > Renewal of existing major culverts	> Strengthening or widening of an existing bridge > Upgrade of pedestrian bridges to accommodate cyclist and cycle path requirements

Financial Projections

All bridge and pedestrian structure funding is allocated to non-discretionary operations, maintenance, and renewal over the next 10 years.

A steady funding increase is required for bridge non-discretionary activities over the next 10 years to maintain these assets to the current level of service as they age over time.



10-Year Expenditure Plan

	2026 ($'000)	2027 ($'000)	2028 ($'000)	2029 ($'000)	2030 ($'000)	2031 ($'000)	2032 ($'000)	2033 ($'000)	2034 ($'000)	2035 ($'000)	10 year Total
Operational	17	18	19	19	20	21	20	21	22	22	**200**
Renewal	973	996	944	962	992	1,042	1,017	1,068	1,095	1,122	**10,211**
Growth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Total	**990**	**1,014**	**963**	**981**	**1,012**	**1,063**	**1,037**	**1,089**	**1,117**	**1,144**	**10,411**

OPEN SPACE



Service

> Provision of parks, recreation reserves, and natural bushland to support active and passive recreation activities.
> Provision of streetscapes and street tree amenity

Service Objective

To enhance the public open spaces so they promote quality of life and contribute to social connectedness.

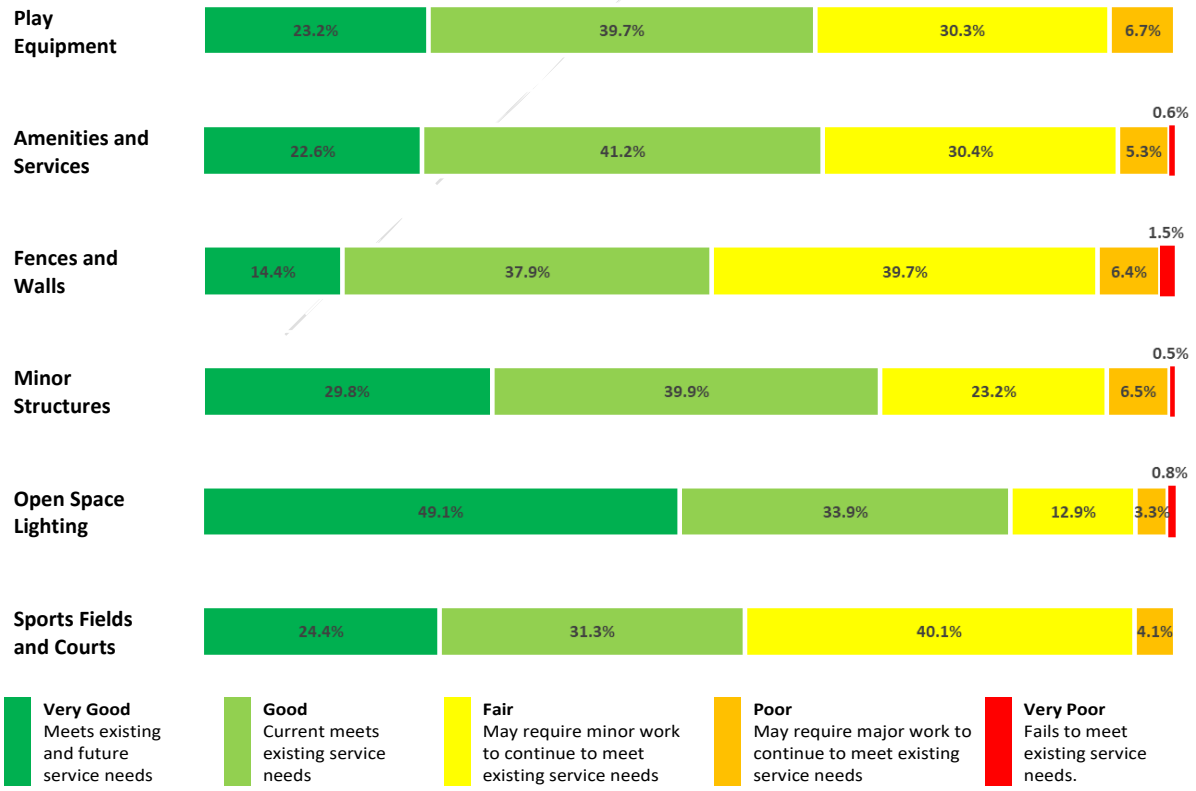
Asset Summary

The replacement value of our open space assets is approximately $103.4 million.

This value does not include trees, and landscaping assets.

Asset	Quantity	Replacement Cost ($)
Total Open Space	768 Ha	103,406,289
Playgrounds	281	
Outdoor Gyms	22 No.	
Sports Fields	62 No.	
Sports Courts	62 No.	
Bike Repair Stations	14 No.	
Area of Bio Significance	30.4 Ha	

Current Condition



Asset Performance Assessment

Current Performance	Fit for the Future?
The current open space asset portfolio is performing well with the majority of assets reported here being in 'Very Good' to 'Good' condition. Assets that are in poor condition are scheduled in Council's 10 Year Capital Works Program to be renewed or replaced at an appropriate time. Significant investment in park upgrades in key locations has ensured a high level of service.	The key challenges for us relate to the quantity, quality and resilience of our open space and natural assets now and into the future. Further urban densification and development will continue to place demand on these spaces as more people seek to use these areas. We will need continue to enhance the quality of our open space areas to improve facilities and accommodate increased and changing user needs. Continued investment in climate change adaption measures for open space assets will also be required to ensure they continue to remain resilient to climate impacts such as heat and weather events and more sustainable asset materials are utilised going forward.

Key Challenges and Choices

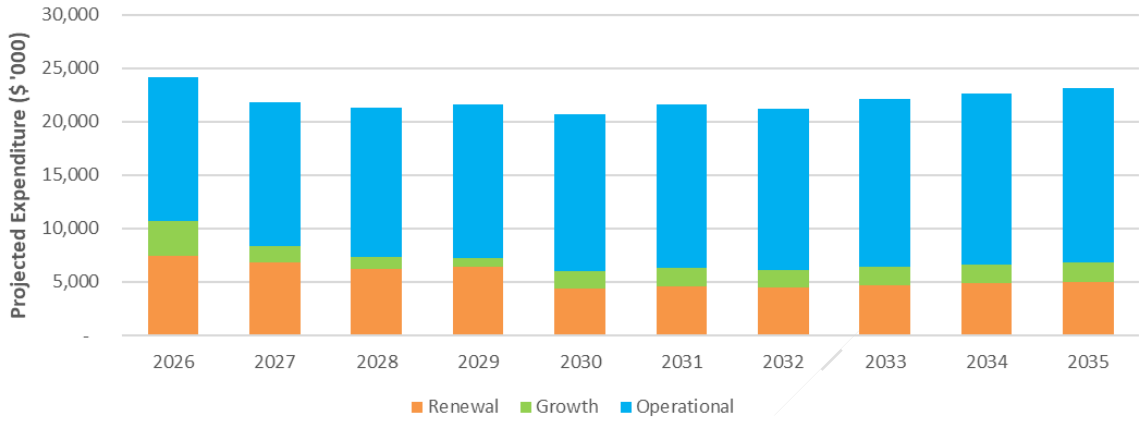
Open Space Provision	Participation Patterns	Environmental Sustainability
> Population increase will have increased demand for specific outdoor recreation activities, features and landscape settings, as well as new open spaces in proximity to where people live. > There will be an increased expectation that we will work towards preserving or increasing the current amount and quality of green space within the city.	> Participation and leisure trends are expected to have a greater focus on health and enhanced social connectivity. > A diverse range of high quality facilities will be needed to meet community demand, including spaces for structured recreation, and non-competitive, social, and passive leisure opportunities.	> Impacts on parks, gardens and local flora and fauna due to prolonged drought conditions increasing the need for planting of drought tolerant plants and grasses. > Potential for higher levels of water consumption to maintain the presentation of open spaces and the safe function of sporting ovals.

Key Activity Types

Operational	Renewal	Growth
> Hazard/defect inspections > Mowing, vegetation and weed control > Garden bed maintenance > Litter collection and facility cleaning > Graffiti removal	> Replacement of playground equipment > Replacement of park furniture > Rejuvenation or replacement of entire playing courts or sports fields to an equivalent standard	> Playing court extension > Replacement of playground equipment to a higher standard > Development of new park or reserve

Financial Projections

The great majority of funding is allocated to non-discretionary recurrent and renewal activities. The large ongoing operations and maintenance budget is needed to maintain the standard and appearance of our valuable parks, reserves, and bushland areas. Steady increases to our maintenance budgets will be required to account for new assets and rising costs.



10-Year Expenditure Plan

	2026 ($'000)	2027 ($'000)	2028 ($'000)	2029 ($'000)	2030 ($'000)	2031 ($'000)	2032 ($'000)	2033 ($'000)	2034 ($'000)	2035 ($'000)	10 year Total
Operational	13,466	13,491	13,953	14,313	14,689	15,323	15,002	15,651	15,986	16,329	**148,201**
Renewal	7,474	6,824	6,245	6,398	4,385	4,613	4,497	4,730	4,847	4,968	**54,981**
Growth	3,247	1,515	1,053	868	1,606	1,687	1,646	1,730	1,774	1,819	**16,945**
Total	**24,187**	**21,830**	**21,251**	**21,579**	**20,680**	**21,623**	**21,145**	**22,111**	**22,607**	**23,116**	**220,128**

STORMWATER DRAINAGE



Service

Provision of flood mitigation and drainage to the community including stormwater treatment and pollutant removal from stormwater run-off.

Service Objective

To protect the community from flooding and improve the quality of stormwater runoff discharged to natural water courses.

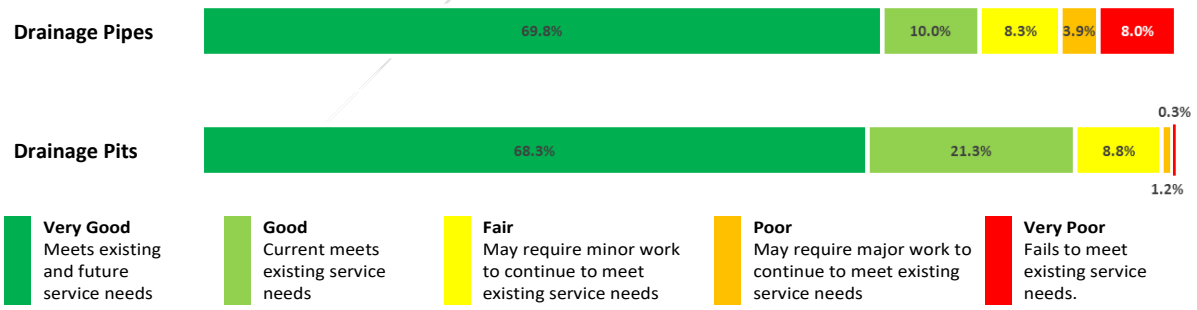
Asset Summary

The replacement value of Council's stormwater drainage assets is approximately $292.2 million[10].

Asset	Quantity	Replacement Cost ($)
Drainage Pipes	1,188 km	292,212,804
Drainage Pits	39,612 No.	

Our stormwater assets include grey assets and a range of green-blue assets (known as water sensitive urban design features or WSUDs). Grey assets primarily act to provide flood protection, whilst green-blue assets are used to capture water for re-use or to improve the quality of water discharged to the natural environment and provide opportunity for biodiversity enhancement. The total replacement value of our green-blue assets has yet to be quantified.

Current Condition



[10] As at 30 June 2024

Asset Performance Assessment

Current Performance	Fit for the Future?
In the absence of having detailed condition information for large portions of the drainage network, we have made some conservative estimates on the condition of our drainage assets based information we have about their age. The lack of condition data is due to the high cost of auditing underground assets. To address this, we are investigating the feasibility of establishing our own CCTV pipe auditing crew so that a greater proportion of pipes can be audited each year.	We acknowledge that we have more work to do to understand the performance of our drainage network to make sure that we are allocating sufficient funds towards the management of our stormwater drainage assets. We have recently completed a study of the capacity of the network in order to identify areas that need improvement to control flooding. The costs of these upgrades still need to be quantified. These costs will be assessed over time and will be reflected in future revisions of our Asset Plan and Financial Plan.

Key Challenges and Choices

Development Density	Climate Change	Ageing Infrastructure
> Continued urban consolidation will affect stormwater runoff volume and quality. > More impervious surfaces leading to more polluted, higher velocity stormwater runoff and increasingly difficult access to easements.	> It is projected that there will be an increase in extreme weather events leading to flooding. This will reduce current levels of service with respect to flood protection and accessibility during minor and major rainfall events. > Low lying areas within the municipality are subject to riverine or flash flooding. This occurs when the intensity or duration of rainfall exceeds the capacity of the local drainage network creeks and waterways.	> Some older stormwater assets are under capacity and require upgrade to improve flood immunity. > More recurrent flooding incidents. > The ability to fund timely renewal and upgrade of stormwater assets in poor condition, leading to increased maintenance costs

Key Activity Types

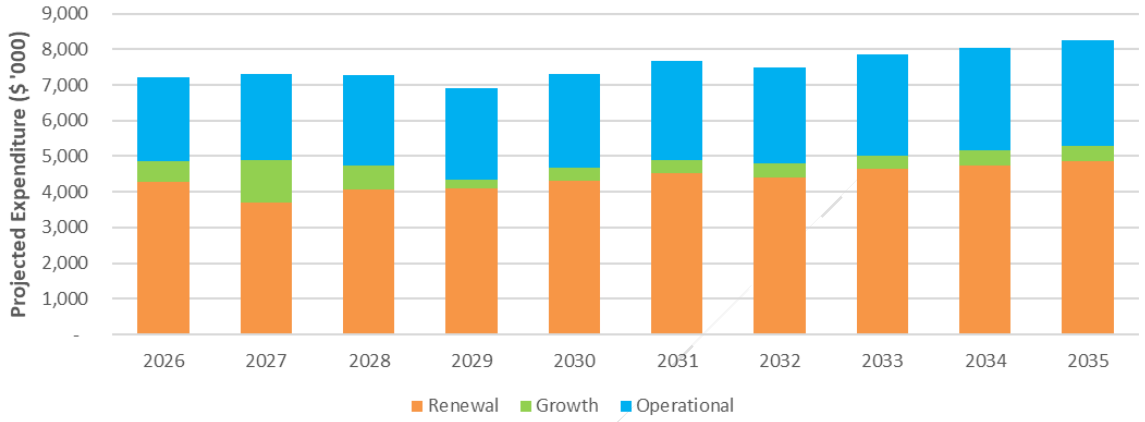
Operational	Renewal	Growth
> Pit cleaning > Pipe cleansing and removal of debris, sediment, etc > Removal of litter from Gross Pollutant Traps > Programmed inspections	> Replacement of pits and pipes > Relining of stormwater pipes > Renewal of stormwater treatment and harvesting devices	> Replacement of pipes to a higher hydraulic capacity > Extension of the stormwater drainage network > Installation of stormwater quality improvement devices > Stormwater harvesting initiatives

Financial Projections

The great majority of funding is allocated to non-discretionary operations and maintenance and renewal.

We acknowledge that we have more work to do to understand the performance of our drainage network to make sure we are allocating sufficient funds towards the management these assets.

The financial projections in this Asset Plan will be further refined as our knowledge of the condition and capacity of the drainage system improves. This will help in optimising the replacement and upgrade of parts of the network that are in most need. Improvements to the drainage system will be important in the future as our city grows and in response to the impacts of climate change.



10-Year Expenditure Plan

	2026 ($'000)	2027 ($'000)	2028 ($'000)	2029 ($'000)	2030 ($'000)	2031 ($'000)	2032 ($'000)	2033 ($'000)	2034 ($'000)	2035 ($'000)	10 year Total
Operational	2,336	2,424	2,515	2,575	2,636	2,763	2,699	2,829	2,896	2,965	**26,638**
Renewal	4,292	3,709	4,068	4,094	4,300	4,518	4,408	4,631	4,747	4,866	**43,633**
Growth	576	1,184	682	250	368	386	377	395	404	414	**5,036**
Total	**7,204**	**7,317**	**7,265**	**6,919**	**7,304**	**7,667**	**7,484**	**7,855**	**8,047**	**8,245**	**75,307**

Asset Plan Community Panel Report – May 2025

Introduction

This report outlines the process and presents the outputs from the Knox City Council Asset Plan Community Panel deliberative engagement process conducted in April and May 2025.

The Knox community is growing, and Council needs to deliver a wide range of services to meet the diverse needs of the community. Assets are core to delivering these services.

Building on the work already completed to define priorities and services as part of the development of the Council Plan, health and Wellbeing Plan and Financial Plan, Council needs to ensure they have balanced the potential financial investment into assets with long term financial sustainability.

Knox continues to invest in community facilities and assets. But with a limited budget, rising costs, forecast population increase by 13% (Forecast 2035 is 174,125) and more extreme weather events, they need to prioritise.

Given Council's current financial challenges and diverse needs of the community, a Panel of community members were asked to consider how they understand their asset priorities, their performance and what Council needs to consider when making decisions on discretionary funding. This report summarises the feedback of the Panel and their discussions.

The report has been prepared by CTM Group who were engaged to facilitate the deliberative process. The report presents the outputs from the two sessions and online workbook as a summary of the feedback from the community.

The report from the Community Panel will inform the development of Council's 10-year Asset Plan and be considered by Council when making decisions on long term asset management.

The Deliberative Panel

The Local Government Act requires Council to use deliberative processes when engaging the community on the development of the Asset Plan. This gives participants the opportunity to collaborate closely with Council, to understand the dilemmas we are facing when balancing the identified community priorities and long-term financial sustainability.

In March 2025, Council invited residents of Knox to submit an expression of interest to be a part of the Knox Asset Plan Community Panel (The Panel). Over 80 people nominated, with 25 members selected to align with the demographic profile of Knox. This process was completed using de-identified information by an independent organisation.

- **Summary of demographic profile of the Panel:** Gender: 12 Men, 12 Women, 1 non-binary
- Age: all targets met, noting slightly under for ages 50-59 and no EOI received from anyone aged over 85
- Suburb: all suburbs represented and target met, noting Boronia slightly under target
- Language: 12 panellists spoke a language other than English at home

The full demographic profile listing targets and selected panel profile is available on haveyoursay.knox.vic.gov.au/asset-plan.

The full profile also includes household structure, connection to Knox and previous participation in consultation.

Session 1 was attended by 21 participants and session 2 was attended by 20 participants.

Remit

The remit is the question or statement that sets the scope for the Panel. This is the remit set by Knox City Council for the Panel to consider:

Like many Councils, we're facing financial challenges and constraints. While we continue to invest in community facilities and assets, we need to prioritise and make hard decisions about our services to overcome a forecast funding gap.

Which assets should we prioritise improving to maximise positive outcomes for our community?

How should we spend wisely on our assets and facilities in the future?

Agenda and activities

The Panel met in two sessions at Knox Operations Centre in Knoxfield.

Session 1 – Wednesday 16 April 2025 – 6.00pm–8.00pm

Session 2 – Wednesday 16 April 2025 – 6.00pm-8.00pm

Over two sessions, the Panel worked through an empowering deliberative engagement process. This process involved learning about asset planning, thinking about challenges and considerations, and deliberating on the four asset classes in response to the remit. The asset classes; Transport, Stormwater/Drainage, Open Spaces and Buildings were the high-level focus of the facilitated engagement approach.

Session 1 focused on setting the scene for the remit through a presentation, access to subject matter experts, asset class condition report posters, a workbook and a map of Knox.

Between session, the Panel members had access to Council's Deliberative Engagement portal to respond to key themed questions to further enhancer thinking and learning about assets and the services they deliver.

Session 2 focused on learning from each other while deliberating, making choices in a group and identifying what are the priorities for Council consideration in each focus area.

In session 2, the Panel worked together to provide a collective response to the following themes:

- Opportunities and Challenges
- Key priorities for the next 10 years
- What things Council needs to consider

Feedback from the Panel

Opportunities and Challenges

The Panel, in four groups of five, were asked to respond to the questions, *'What big challenges and what big opportunities are Council facing over the next 10 years?'*.

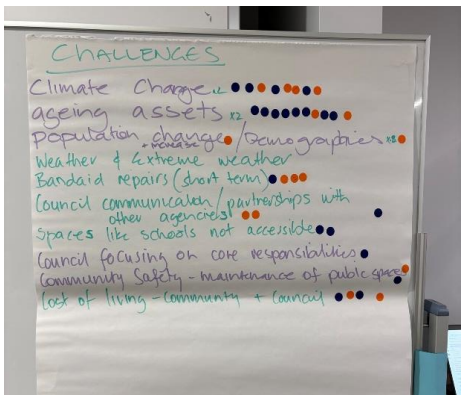
Challenges

The groups discussed their views and created a list of responses. They were then asked to prioritise their top three responses which were then captured on butchers paper as listed in the table below.

Group 1	*Group 2*	*Group 3*	*Group 4*
Council concentrating on core responsibilities	*Climate change impact on assets*	*Climate change*	*Deteriorating assets & quick fixes*
Community Safety	*Aging assets impact on budget*	*Finances – cost of living & Council's constrained funding*	*Schools fenced, lack of access to recreation facilities*
Impact of population growth	*Population density increasing leading to demographic changes*	*overpopulation*	

A consistent theme raised by the Panel was the impact of population growth and climate change on community assets. The discussion focussed on how growth will lead to housing density and the subsequent impact on buildings, roads/paths, stormwater drains and open spaces, ultimately impacting Council's budget. The Panel discussed how these impacts will increase the funding gap as demand for services increases and more frequent asset maintenance due to weathering and higher usage rates deteriorate assets, and potentially shorten time-frames for renewals.

From the consolidated list, the groups deliberated further on what they believed were Council's top two challenges. The Panel were asked to show their two preferences by adding a blue dot for their first choice and an orange dot for their second choice on the consolidated list.



Outcome

This activity highlighted what the Panel believe are the top two challenges facing Council over the next 10 years:

1. **Aging Assets**
2. **Climate Change**

Opportunities

The groups identified a range of opportunities and prioritised their top three preferences which was captured on butchers paper to create a consolidated list as detailed below.

Group 1	*Group 2*	*Group 3*	*Group 4*
Divest underutilised assets	*Research*	*Improve local spaces*	*Third spaces**
Increase technology	*Sustainable solutions – materials & technologies*	*Diversity of opportunities*	*Communication & coordination with other Councils*
Community events	*Involve & consult with diverse community*	*Libraries expansion*	*Dog parks & bird proof bins*

What we heard from the discussion, was the need to adopt new technologies to improve efficiencies in data collection to inform decision making. Also, the importance of community spaces that are passive, inclusive and informal which offer community connectedness and a sense of belonging.

Consultation with diverse communities to better understand and respond to service needs. Also, collaboration with neighbouring Councils to benchmark performance and seek opportunity, highlighted the importance of communications, information and stakeholder relationships.

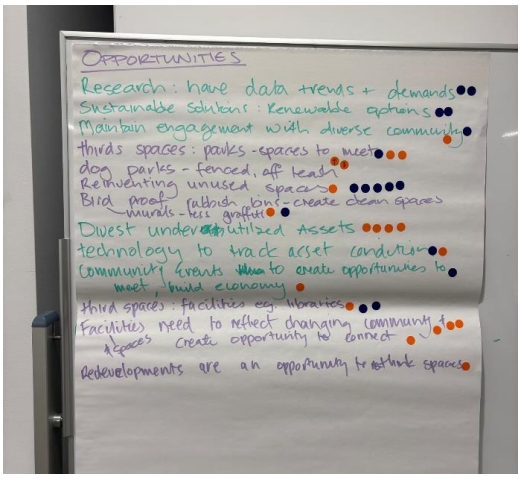
Outcome

This activity highlighted what the Panel believe are the top two opportunities for Council over the next 10 years:

1. Reinventing unused spaces /third spaces*

2. Research on assets – data trends and demands / sustainable renewable options

* *Third spaces* - Inclusive and accessible community spaces for reconnection, renewal and relaxation to provide a sense of social connectedness and belonging.



Key themes and priorities for next 10 years

The panellists responded to key themed questions in a workbook activity. Knox City Council hosted the workbook on their online engagement portal. Some panellist chose to complete the workbook in hard copy. The analysis of workbook feedback was grouped into six themes. We found the following key themes a priority for Council consideration:

Climate Ready - Building community resilience to climate change.

Social connections - Providing inclusive and accessible community third spaces for reconnection, renewal and relaxation to provide a sense of social connectedness and belonging.

Enhancing information and data driven decisions – Utilise technology and data analysis to inform our thinking and decision-making processes.

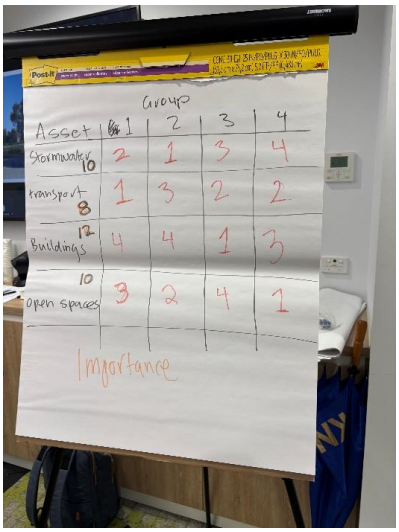
Optimising the asset base – Consolidation of underutilised buildings to achieve efficiencies and activating underutilised green spaces

Retain and enhance green spaces – Preserving habitat and increasing tree canopy.

Accessible transport connections – Providing shared paths to connect neighbourhoods to parks, buildings, public transport, and shopping centres.

Asset importance and performance

Asset classes – The Panel was divided into four groups of five. They were asked to rank the four asset categories: Transport, Stormwater, Open Spaces and Buildings, in order of importance.



Each group chose a different asset class for their most important asset which showed no clear winner.

Consideration – When considering the whole community **all assets are equally important.**

What we found when adding the values of the ranking of asset importance, we found that transport scored as most important.

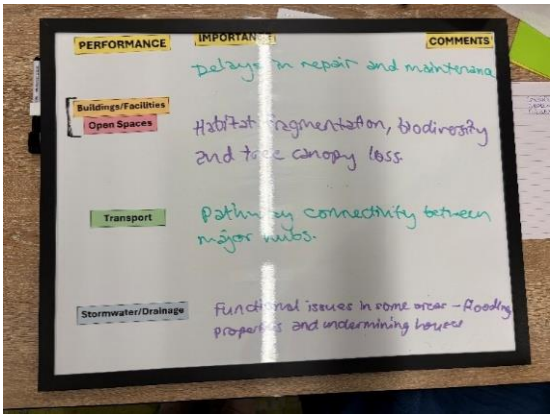
Asset performance – The Panellists undertook an activity to rank each asset class on their level of service performance.

The table below shows the Panellist scorings for performance, and supporting commentary on what things Council is doing well and where Council can do better. Note the lower the score the higher the ranking.

Rank & score	Asset class	What Council is doing well	Where Council can do better
1 5.5	Buildings	Overall feeling pretty good. Libraries	Divest unused buildings. Consider ways to increase income from buildings. Maintenance, especially toilets kept to a standard. Delays in repairs.
2 9.0	Transport	Locals well looked after. Meets expectation. Pathways connecting hubs.	Potholes. VicRoads lack of maintenance. Fix critical road repairs first.
3 11.5	Open spaces	Top quality assets	Bird proof bins. Dog poo and better waste disposal provision. Loss of Basketball (Borornia). Maintain grasses to bring wildlife. Reduce habitat fragmentation. Preserve & protect biodiversity & tree canopy.
4 14.0	Stormwater & Drainage	Raingardens	Mitigate flooding (Rowville). Ban leaf blowers – block drains. Increase retarding basins.

Consideration - Panel discussion highlighted the need to use new technologies to capture data on asset usage rate and performance monitoring to make wise and well evidenced decisions.

***Consideration* – Performance criteria and evidence-based reporting is important when making financial decisions.**



Further findings for Council to consider

- Data driven decision making
- Future proofing buildings, road surfaces and stormwater drain
- Ensure assets are maintained and available
- Repurpose under-used facilities
- Collaboration with neighbouring Councils
- Communication with diverse groups
- Prioritise accessibility and inclusivity

"It doesn't matter which asset category, but it needs to be maintained, where possible utilise technology to build efficiencies, safe, accessible, lean towards trending demographics, able to flex to trends, minimal maintenance needs, smarter monitoring of assets and resilient to impacts of climate change."

Panel participant

Limitations

The community panel represented the services needs of a diverse population which is growing rapidly. The panel should be commended on their efforts to learn about asset planning and participate in a deliberative approach. With population growth comes a change in demographics, trends and priorities. A lot can happen in four years, let alone ten years. There are limitations in predictability in the longer term. Further consultation and monitoring of assets and their service level performance are vital to stay attuned to impacts and changing trends.

Finally

The Asset Plan Community Panellists showed their commitment the deliberative engagement through high attendance rates and the level of involvement in discussion and activities. Positive feedback has been received on the process. There is an appetite for more involvement and deeper conversations in the future. Further community involvement would assist Council with keeping pace with emergency needs, changing trends and population growth.

8.5 Knox Arts and Culture Committee - Annual Report and Terms of Reference

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For Decision
Author:	Coordinator Arts and Cultural Services, Emma Bentley
Manager:	Manager Active and Creative Communities, Nicole Columbine
Executive:	Acting Director Connected Communities, Gail Power

SUMMARY
The Knox Arts and Culture Committee (2023-2025) comprises 12 community members and four industry members, who provide a diverse range of specialist skills, experience and industry knowledge in arts and culture management. The Committee performs as a strategic consultative group who guides the planning, development and evaluation of Council's Arts and Cultural Services, and provides insight into the local arts and cultural sector's needs and interests.

The current Knox Arts and Culture Committee (the Committee) are nearing completion of their two-year term, having delivered some significant outcomes, including evaluating Arts and Cultural Services programming, advocating to the community on behalf of Council, assisting in the design, delivery and evaluation of Immerse, providing recommendations and strategic input for the inaugural Stage Scape event, contributing to the development of the Council Plan and participating in consultation of the Significance Assessment for Council's Art collections.

The current Committee term will be completed on 14 August 2025, which prompts the recruitment campaign for new membership to the Committee from 2025 to 2027.

The Committee's Terms of Reference have been updated (refer to Attachments 1 and 2) to ensure their continued relevance and to better support effective engagement of the group.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolve to:
1. Acknowledge the achievements of the Knox Arts and Culture Committee 2023-2025 and thank the outgoing members for their valuable contribution;
2. Adopt the changes proposed to the current Knox Arts and Culture Committee Terms of Reference 2025-2029 located in Attachment 1 and the updated clean version provided in Attachment 2.
3. Note that the recruitment process for new membership for the Committee will now commence for the term September 2025 – September 2027.

1. DISCUSSION

The function of the Committee is to facilitate stakeholder engagement which supports quality decision making and in turn, the achievements of Council's goals and strategies under the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Committee provides Council with strategic advice on issues relating to the advancement of arts and culture in Knox. It assists in promoting greater awareness and understanding of arts and

cultural services in Knox and the value of arts and culture in supporting community health and wellbeing. The Committee also provides Council with direct insight into the local needs, interests and trends in arts, culture and creative industry development in Knox.

The objectives of the Committee are to:

- Provide advice and recommendations to Council on arts and cultural issues;
- Promote access to a diverse range of arts and cultural activities within Knox;
- Assist Council in the development of arts and cultural policy, procedure and planning;
- Contribute ideas and recommendations on the key service portfolios of the Arts and Cultural Services Unit, such as Festivals and Events, Creative Placemaking, Community and Public Arts, Heritage and Cultural Venues;
- Advocate and promote arts and cultural development in Knox; and
- Actively network and build connections and opportunities for increased collaboration between the Knox Community and Council through arts and cultural initiatives.

The current Committee membership two-year term sunsets on 14 August 2025, prompting a final report of this Committee to Council, followed by a recruitment campaign for new membership to the Committee for a two-year term from 1 September 2025 to 1 September 2027.

1.1 Committee Overview 2023-2025

The Committee provides an effective engagement tool for Council to collaborate and partner with local arts and cultural representatives in the review, development and monitoring of arts and cultural services, projects, events and programs that impact the wider Knox community.

Membership comprises a diverse suite of representatives across a variety of sectors including arts management, public art, visual arts, secondary and tertiary education, music and voice, festivals and events, performing arts and cultural development.

With quarterly meetings, this Committee is actively engaged in strategic level discussions and has a deep understanding of the issues that impact the Knox arts sector and Council's role in supporting local arts and cultural development. Overall, the thoughtful commentary on Council's arts and cultural service planning, development and evaluation has had a profound impact on the way we deliver our services and has heightened our customer focused service modelling.

Members also advocate, participate and promote local partnerships between Council and local arts services, and take an active role within Council venues, programs, projects and events. This partnership model ensures socially engaged and highly relevant services within the local community and strengthens our community engagement practice.
Seven meetings were held over a two-year period.

1.2 Committee Membership 2023 - 2025

The current Committee comprises two Councillors, 12 Community members and four Industry members, as follows:

Councillor Representatives		
1	Councillor Peter Lockwood	Chair Knox Arts and Culture Committee
2	Councillor Glen Atwell	Deputy Mayor

Community Representatives		
1	Mark Grondman	The Basin Music Festival
2	Daniel van Bergen	Wantirna College Performing Arts Department
3	Amy Calvert	1812 Theatre
4	Heather King	The Hut Gallery
5	Melanie Lindupp	Community Representative
6	Bree Ogden	Community Representative
7	David Woods	SLAMS Music Theatre Company
8	Andrea Cobern	ASV Academy
9	Elizabeth Birch	Community Representative
10	Felicity Kaye	Community Representative
11	Kathy Kermanidis	Drumming Circle
12	Michelle Kemp	Your Library / Miller's Homestead
Industry Representatives		
1	Shane Hulbert	RMIT University School of Art
2	Marten Visser	St Margaret's Berwick Grammar Music & Performing Arts Dept
3	Larry Parkinson	Swinburne University
4	Marie Allaman	Yarra Ranges Council

Councillor Peter Lockwood and Deputy Mayor Councillor Glen Atwell are the nominated Councillors on this committee for 2024/2025. Former Councillors Jude Wright, Sorina Grasso and Susan Laukens all served on this committee during 2023/2024.

1.3 Committee Achievements 2023-2025

The Committee has been instrumental in a range of key arts and cultural services planning, development and evaluation during their two-year term. Some of their key achievements include:

- **Arts and Cultural Programs**
  Providing insightful feedback on Knox City Council's Arts and Cultural Services, with a focus on Festivals and Events and programming at Cultural Venues. This includes offering suggestions on innovative programming ideas, identifying suitable locations and recommending strategic partnerships that reflect the needs and interests of the Knox community.
- **Community Input**
  Offering ongoing and responsive feedback to Council on programming and funding opportunities, while highlighting emerging community trends and challenges.

- **Community Advocacy and Promotion**
  Advocating on behalf of Council's arts initiatives and programs within the community, including promoting funding programs, volunteer awards and opportunities for community participation.
- **Immerse**
  Contributing to the development and delivery of the Immerse program, including assisting with program design, participating in the community program and offering evaluation insights to help guide future iterations of the program.
- **Stage Scape**
  Providing recommendations during the development of the inaugural Stage Scape initiative, which focused on the Performing Arts community.
- **Arts Assessment Panel**
  Participation on the Arts Assessment Panel, reviewing proposals for public art commissions and contributing to decisions around accessions and deaccessions.
- **Council Plan**
  Playing a role in shaping the future direction of arts and culture in Knox through contributions to the development of the Council Plan 2021–2025.
- **Significance Assessment**
  Offering feedback to inform the Council's Significance Assessment (Art Collections) project.

These contributions have supported Council in making effective decisions regarding arts and cultural service provisions for the Knox community.

1.4 New Committee Membership 2025-2027

It is recommended that continued engagement of an Arts and Culture Committee is vital for a further two years until 2027. This will prompt the commencement of a campaign to recruit new and eligible returning members to the Committee for a term duration, from 1 September 2025 to 1 September 2027.

1.5 Updates to the Terms of Reference

To support the continued operation of the Knox Arts and Culture Committee, the Terms of Reference (2025-2029) have been reviewed. The following updates are recommended:

1. The number of community members be reduced from 12 to 8 to create a smaller, more focused group, enabling better engagement and higher-quality discussions. This change is also consistent with the majority of other Council advisory committees.
2. Removal of the sunset clause.
3. Other administrative changes to ensure consistency with the various other Terms of Reference documents for other committees.

2. ENGAGEMENT

The key engagement and consultation timeline is as follows:

Activity	Proposed Dates
Report to document the Committee's achievements and seek Council support for a further two-year term, operating alongside the updated Terms of Reference.	23 June 2025
Recruitment of new Committee members 2025-2027 –	25 June to 23 July 2025

Activity	Proposed Dates
Expression of Interest (EOI) Open via "Better Impact" Volunteer Recruitment Framework	
Applications reviewed by the Panel. Draft report presenting proposed Committee membership for 2025-2027	23 July to 1 August 2025
Council Meeting: Report presenting proposed Committee membership for 2025-2027	25 August 2025
Knox Arts and Culture Committee Members 2025-2027 commences two-year term alongside updated Terms of Reference	1 September 2025 to 1 September 2027

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Knox Arts and Cultural Committee is the strategic conduit between Council and the community that enables a deeper understanding of the impact of Arts and Cultural Services on the health and wellbeing of a community, and how the Service might positively contribute to the social and cultural connections between members of our diverse 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 related to this report.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Committee requires an operational budget allocation of approximately $2,500 to support catering and materials required for meetings and is funded within existing operational resources.

7. RISKS

If the Knox Arts and Culture Advisory Committee were discontinued, there would be several key risks to the ongoing development and success of arts and culture in Knox. The Committee plays a vital role in ensuring community representation and alignment with key strategic documents. Without it, there would be a loss of expert advice, local knowledge and community voice. This could lead to a reduction in the quality, relevance and impact of arts initiatives, as well as diminished transparency and accountability. The absence of the committee may also weaken stakeholder engagement and reduce opportunities for collaboration.

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.

Civic Engagement & Integrity

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

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

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

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Terms of Reference - Knox Arts & Culture Committee (marked up) - 2025-2029 [**8.5.1** - 6 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Terms of Reference - Knox Arts & Culture Committee - 2025-2029 [**8.5.2** - 6 pages]

Attachment 1

Terms of Reference

Knox Arts & Culture Committee

Directorate:	Connected Communities		
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Coordinator Arts & Cultural Services
Approval Date:	~~10 May 2021~~23 June 2025	Version Number:	~~4~~5
Review Date:	~~14 August 2025~~23 June 2029		

1. Purpose

The function of the Knox Arts and Culture Committee is to facilitate stakeholder engagement which supports quality decision making and in turn, the achievements of Council's goals and strategies under the Community and Council Plan.

The Knox Arts and Culture Committee (the Committee) provides Council with strategic advice on issues relating to the advancement of arts and culture in Knox. It assists in promoting greater awareness and understanding of arts and cultural services in Knox, and the value of arts and culture in supporting community health and wellbeing. The Committee also provides Council with direct insight into the local needs, interests and trends in arts, culture and creative industry development in Knox.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Committee are to:

- Provide advice and recommendations to Council on arts and cultural issues;
- Promote access to a diverse range of arts and cultural activities within Knox;
- Assist Council in the development of arts and cultural policy, procedure and planning;
- Contribute ideas and recommendations on the key service portfolios of the Arts and Cultural services Unit, including but not limited to Festivals and Events, Community and Public Arts, and Cultural Venues;
- Advocate and promote arts and cultural development in Knox; and
- Actively network and build connections and opportunities for increased collaboration between the Knox Community and Council through arts and cultural initiatives.

~~The Committee supports the delivery of the following Knox Community & Council Plan goals:~~

~~Goal 1. We value our natural and built environment.~~
~~Goal 7. We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity.~~

~~The Arts and Culture Committee is aligned to the 'Inclusive, Active and Creative Communities' Group. Whilst the individual committees will meet at the designated times within its Terms of Reference each 'group' will meet once annually, this will generally be between October to December each year. A designated Directorate will be responsible for coordinating group meetings.~~

~~The purpose of these meetings will be to:~~

- ~~Provide feedback to group on priorities for individual committees;~~
- ~~Update group of progress of key issues; and~~

- ~~Identify synergies between groups and links to progressing the Community and Council Plan.~~

~~In addition to group meetings, all committees will be provided with an opportunity to meet together annually. The 'annual advisory committee' sessions will generally be held between April or May each year and will be coordinated by the Governance team. The purpose of these meetings will be to:~~

- ~~Report on progress by Council against Community and Council Plan;~~
- ~~Provide overview of industry trends and Council priorities for the upcoming year;~~
- ~~Consider synergies and opportunities for sharing information and collaboration; and~~
- ~~Deliver training to support to committees.~~

3. Membership, Period of Membership and Method of Appointment

The Arts & Culture Committee shall comprise the following:

- A maximum of ~~12~~ 8 community members.
- A maximum of 4 industry members (including any relevant government agency representatives).
- ~~3~~ 2 Councillors.

3.1 Selection and Recruitment of Community and Industry Representative Members

The process to appoint community members will be advertised on Council's website, digital platforms, publications and through local networks. Applicants must make an application via an online expression of interest process.

Submissions for community and industry membership will be assessed alongside the following selection criteria:

- Live, work or study in Knox, or regularly participate in Knox Arts and Cultural activities;
- Demonstrate an interest and knowledge of Arts and Cultural activities within Knox, including services, events, venues, programs, projects and initiatives offered through Council, Community and local Businesses;
- Contribute specialist skills and experience in one of more areas of Arts and Culture, including but not limited to Cultural Development, Arts Management, Public Art, Arts Facilities, Programming, Arts Education, Event Management, Placemaking, Cultural Tourism, Arts Marketing, Community Engagement, Creative Industry Development, Arts Funding, Performance or Creative Arts Practice; and
- Offer insight into the social, cultural, environmental and economic factors impacting the wider Knox community and how these may influence local arts and cultural service delivery.

The approach and method for appointing representatives will include the following:

- Community and industry members will be selected by a panel comprising a Councillor and 2 Council Officers from the relevant service unit.
- The method of appointment will be via an online expression of interest process.
- Members will be appointed for a two-year term.
- All members will be eligible to re-apply for appointment, however continuous membership for longer than four years will not be considered, unless otherwise recommended by the Committee Chair and endorsed by Council on a case by case basis.
- Council will be responsible for appointing all Councillor, community and industry representative members.

- Casual vacancies which occur due to community or industry members being unable to complete the full term of their appointments, may be filled by co-opting suitable candidates from a previous selection process for the remainder of the previous incumbents' terms, or where the previous applications are unsuitable, new members may be recommended and must apply as per Item 3.1. The selection panel will make a recommendation to the CEO, who will have the authority to appoint the recommended candidate/s to the committee for the remainder of the previous incumbent's term.
- Community and Industry representatives unable to attend a committee meeting are able to nominate a proxy or alternate member from the organisation they represent. Any proxy attendance should be notified to Council's nominated officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. It is expected the Committee member will provide an appropriate briefing of the committee purpose and objectives and relevant meeting notes to enable active participation and contribution of the proxy representation within the meeting.
- The committee Chair may invite observers to meetings from time to time. This is at the discretion of the committee.
- The committee Chair may invite guests to attend and participate at meetings, this would generally be for a specific purpose and/or specified period of time. This is at the discretion of the committee.

3.2 Councillors

Council will appoint Councillor representation annually.

Unless otherwise appointed to the committee by Council, the Mayor is, by virtue of the Office, an ex officio member of the committee. It is important that whilst the Mayor may not chair these meetings, appropriate recognition should be given to the presence of the Mayor if in attendance.

The role of Councillors is to participate in the meetings, review Agendas and Minutes, listen to community and stakeholder views and keep the Council informed, through reports on committees by Councillors at Council meetings, on issues of community and Council interest being considered at meetings.

3.3 Council Officers

Council officers will be nominated to support the committee by the CEO as required to provide advice and administrative support to the committee.

3.4 Arts Assessment Panel Membership

The Arts Assessment Panel (AAP) is a working group that assesses and makes recommendations for the acquisition and deaccession of public art and civic art collection items, as per the Knox Public Art Policy (2022 – 2026). Community and Councillor representation on the AAP is derived from the Knox Arts and Culture Committee, joining key internal officers.

At the commencement of the two-year term for Knox Arts and Culture Committee members, between two and four community/industry members will be nominated to be members of the AAP for their Committee term, with a preference for nominated members to demonstrate experience in visual arts management. At least one Councillor will be also nominated from the Committee, who will take on the role of AAP Chair. Where multiple Arts and Culture Committee Councillors' wish to take part in the AAP, the role of Chair will be given to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, or negotiated where this does not apply. Other Councillors may also take part in the AAP, by negotiation with the AAP Chair.

Meetings of the AAP are ad-hoc as required (approximately 4 per year), and some decisions may be made via email. The AAP members will regularly report back to the Knox Arts and Culture Committee on outcomes.

4. Delegated Authority and Decision Making

The committee acts in an advisory capacity only and has no delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of Council.

5. Meeting Procedures

The committee will meet approximately every three months with a minimum of four meetings per year, and an annual schedule of meetings will be agreed upon at the first meeting of the ~~committee in~~committee each year. There will be no designated quorum for Council Committees. A Council Committee can proceed if Councillor nominee/s are not present at the meeting. ~~The committee will also be invited to participate in the 6 monthly Group Meetings and the annual advisory committee Forum.~~

The committee is not required to give public notice of its meetings, and its meetings are not open to the public.

At the commencement of each financial year the committee will develop a work plan for the upcoming year. This will generally be aligned with the Community and Council Plan. The committee may also highlight any emerging issues which will also be documented. For efficiency purposes the business of the committee throughout the ensuing year should align with the work plan and list of emerging issues.

Meetings will follow standard meeting procedure protocols, which are in summary:

- Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time;
- Be scheduled and confirmed in advance with all relevant papers distributed (as appropriate) to each member;
- Encourage fair and reasonable discussion, participation and respect for each other's views;
- Focus on the relevant issues at hand; and
- Provide advice to Council as far as possible on a consensus basis.

6. Chair

The position of Chairperson shall be held by a Councillor and shall be reviewed annually immediately following Councillor appointments to committees. The position of Chairperson is to be agreed upon between Councillors. When this cannot be achieved, the Mayor of the day shall determine the Chair.

If the Chairperson is not present at a meeting, any other Councillor who has been appointed to the committee shall be appointed Chairperson. In the absence of any other Councillor representative/s, a staff member appointed by the relevant Director may Chair the meeting.

7. Agendas and Meeting Notes

Agendas and meeting notes must be prepared for each meeting.

The Agenda must be provided to members of the committee not less than 4 days before the time fixed for the holding of the meeting.

The Chairperson must arrange for meeting notes of each meeting of the committee to be kept.

The meeting notes of a Council Committee must:

(a) contain details of the proceedings and recommendations made;

(b) be clearly expressed;

(c) be self-explanatory; and

(d) incorporate relevant reports or a summary of the relevant reports considered by the committee.

Draft meeting notes must be:

(a) submitted to the Committee Chairperson for confirmation within 7 days of the meeting;

(b) distributed to all Committee Members following confirmation from the Chairperson and within 14 days of the meeting; and

(c) submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for information.

In compliance with section 58 of the 2020 Act and the requirements of the Council's Public Transparency Policy the agenda and minutes of this group will be made available on Council's website unless:

- the information contained in the agenda and/or minutes is confidential by virtue of the 2020 Act or any other Act; or
- the public availability of the information has been deemed by the Chief Executive Officer or nominee to be contrary to the public interest.

8. Voting

As this is an advisory committee, voting on issues is not required. Any recommendations will generally be developed through consensus. Where a matter cannot be agreed the differing opinions should be clearly expressed in the notes of the meeting.

9. Conflict and Interest Provisions

In performing the role of Advisory Committee member, a person must:

- Act with integrity;
- Impartially exercise his or her responsibilities in the interests of the local community;
- Not improperly seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person;
- Treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, beliefs, rights and responsibilities of other persons;
- Commit to regular attendance at meetings; and
- Not make improper use of information acquired because of their position or release information that the member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information.

Meetings of the Panel will typically constitute a Meeting Conducted under the Auspices of Council pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Councillors are consequently required to comply with the conflict of interest provisions as set down in section 131 of the 2020 Act and Chapter 5 of the Council's Governance Rules.

Councillors must:

- disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present immediately before the matter is considered;
- absent themselves from any discussion of the matter; and
- as soon as practicable, provide the CEO with a written notice recording the nature of the conflict.

Where a member of staff or a community member has a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in relation to a matter before the Group, they must disclose the matter to the group before the matter is considered or discussed. Disclosure must include the nature of the interest and be recorded in the meeting notes. It will be at the discretion of the Chairperson if the staff and/or community member remains or leaves the room whilst the matter is discussed, and this must also be recorded in the notes of the meeting.

All members of the Advisory Committee may be invited to attend annual ~~shall participate in~~ training on ~~the~~ Conduct and Interest provisions ~~which will be~~ run ~~a minimum of annually~~ by the Governance team.

10. Reporting

The committee will prepare a formal report on an annual basis in line with their stated objectives. The report must be adopted by the committee and should directly reflect the objectives and the performance measures of the committee as set out in the Terms of Reference. Once adopted by the committee the report will be presented to Council.

11. Administration Support

Administration support will be provided by the Connected Communities Directorate.

12. Contact with the Media

Contact with the Media by Advisory Committee members will be conducted in accordance with the Councillor and Staff Media Policies. Community members should defer any media enquiries to the Chairperson in the first instance and should take care not to respond as a representative of the committee.

13. Review Date

~~The committee will sunset after 4 years.~~ Council Committees must be reviewed on a regular basis, with a review date generally not exceeding a 4 year period. If the committee continues to have a relevant function at the end of the standard review period, a report must be presented to Council ~~prior to this date that includes~~ including a review of the committee's Terms of Reference and seeking endorsement from Council to continue to act for a further period. ~~in an advisory capacity.~~

14. Meals

Council will provide reasonable meals for Council Committee meetings at times that immediately precede, follow or extend through normal meal times. The provision of meals will be determined by the CEO or delegate, and be within the capacity of the relevant department's budget. ~~The provision of refreshments during the course of a committee meeting will be provided in accordance with the Meals and Beverages for Council Committees Policy.~~

15. Administration Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter ~~this~~these Terms of Reference, such a change may be made administratively and approved by the Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate).

Examples of minor administrative changes include change 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 Terms of Reference, it must be considered by Council ~~at a Council~~ or delegated Committee ~~meeting~~.

Attachment 2

Terms of Reference

Knox Arts & Culture Committee

Directorate:	Connected Communities		
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Coordinator Arts & Cultural Services
Approval Date:	23 June 2025	Version Number:	5
Review Date:	23 June 2029		

1. Purpose

The function of the Knox Arts and Culture Committee is to facilitate stakeholder engagement which supports quality decision making and in turn, the achievements of Council's goals and strategies under the Community and Council Plan.

The Knox Arts and Culture Committee (the Committee) provides Council with strategic advice on issues relating to the advancement of arts and culture in Knox. It assists in promoting greater awareness and understanding of arts and cultural services in Knox, and the value of arts and culture in supporting community health and wellbeing. The Committee also provides Council with direct insight into the local needs, interests and trends in arts, culture and creative industry development in Knox.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Committee are to:

- Provide advice and recommendations to Council on arts and cultural issues;
- Promote access to a diverse range of arts and cultural activities within Knox;
- Assist Council in the development of arts and cultural policy, procedure and planning;
- Contribute ideas and recommendations on the key service portfolios of the Arts and Cultural services Unit, including but not limited to Festivals and Events, Community and Public Arts, and Cultural Venues;
- Advocate and promote arts and cultural development in Knox; and
- Actively network and build connections and opportunities for increased collaboration between the Knox Community and Council through arts and cultural initiatives.

3. Membership, Period of Membership and Method of Appointment

The Arts & Culture Committee shall comprise the following:

- A maximum of 8 community members.
- A maximum of 4 industry members (including any relevant government agency representatives).
- 2 Councillors.

3.1 Selection and Recruitment of Community and Industry Representative Members

The process to appoint community members will be advertised on Council's website, digital platforms, publications and through local networks. Applicants must make an application via an online expression of interest process.

Submissions for community and industry membership will be assessed alongside the following selection criteria:

- Live, work or study in Knox, or regularly participate in Knox Arts and Cultural activities;
- Demonstrate an interest and knowledge of Arts and Cultural activities within Knox, including services, events, venues, programs, projects and initiatives offered through Council, Community and local Businesses;
- Contribute specialist skills and experience in one of more areas of Arts and Culture, including but not limited to Cultural Development, Arts Management, Public Art, Arts Facilities, Programming, Arts Education, Event Management, Placemaking, Cultural Tourism, Arts Marketing, Community Engagement, Creative Industry Development, Arts Funding, Performance or Creative Arts Practice; and
- Offer insight into the social, cultural, environmental and economic factors impacting the wider Knox community and how these may influence local arts and cultural service delivery.

The approach and method for appointing representatives will include the following:

- Community and industry members will be selected by a panel comprising a Councillor and 2 Council Officers from the relevant service unit.
- The method of appointment will be via an online expression of interest process.
- Members will be appointed for a two-year term.
- All members will be eligible to re-apply for appointment, however continuous membership for longer than four years will not be considered, unless otherwise recommended by the Committee Chair and endorsed by Council on a case by case basis.
- Council will be responsible for appointing all Councillor, community and industry representative members.
- Casual vacancies which occur due to community or industry members being unable to complete the full term of their appointments, may be filled by co-opting suitable candidates from a previous selection process for the remainder of the previous incumbents' terms, or where the previous applications are unsuitable, new members may be recommended and must apply as per Item 3.1. The selection panel will make a recommendation to the CEO, who will have the authority to appoint the recommended candidate/s to the committee for the remainder of the previous incumbent's term.
- Community and Industry representatives unable to attend a committee meeting are able to nominate a proxy or alternate member from the organisation they represent. Any proxy attendance should be notified to Council's nominated officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. It is expected the Committee member will provide an appropriate briefing of the committee purpose and objectives and relevant meeting notes to enable active participation and contribution of the proxy representation within the meeting.
- The committee Chair may invite observers to meetings from time to time. This is at the discretion of the committee.
- The committee Chair may invite guests to attend and participate at meetings, this would generally be for a specific purpose and/or specified period of time. This is at the discretion of the committee.

3.2 Councillors

Council will appoint Councillor representation annually.

Unless otherwise appointed to the committee by Council, the Mayor is, by virtue of the Office, an ex officio member of the committee. It is important that whilst the Mayor may not chair these meetings, appropriate recognition should be given to the presence of the Mayor if in attendance.

The role of Councillors is to participate in the meetings, review Agendas and Minutes, listen to community and stakeholder views and keep the Council informed, through reports on committees by Councillors at Council meetings, on issues of community and Council interest being considered at meetings.

3.3 Council Officers

Council officers will be nominated to support the committee by the CEO as required to provide advice and administrative support to the committee.

3.4 Arts Assessment Panel Membership

The Arts Assessment Panel (AAP) is a working group that assesses and makes recommendations for the acquisition and deaccession of public art and civic art collection items, as per the Knox Public Art Policy (2022 – 2026). Community and Councillor representation on the AAP is derived from the Knox Arts and Culture Committee, joining key internal officers.

At the commencement of the two-year term for Knox Arts and Culture Committee members, between two and four community/industry members will be nominated to be members of the AAP for their Committee term, with a preference for nominated members to demonstrate experience in visual arts management. At least one Councillor will be also nominated from the Committee, who will take on the role of AAP Chair. Where multiple Arts and Culture Committee Councillors' wish to take part in the AAP, the role of Chair will be given to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, or negotiated where this does not apply. Other Councillors may also take part in the AAP, by negotiation with the AAP Chair.

Meetings of the AAP are ad-hoc as required (approximately 4 per year), and some decisions may be made via email. The AAP members will regularly report back to the Knox Arts and Culture Committee on outcomes.

4. Delegated Authority and Decision Making

The committee acts in an advisory capacity only and has no delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of Council.

5. Meeting Procedures

The committee will meet approximately every three months with a minimum of four meetings per year, and an annual schedule of meetings will be agreed upon at the first meeting of the committee each year. There will be no designated quorum for Council Committees. A Council Committee can proceed if Councillor nominee/s are not present at the meeting.

The committee is not required to give public notice of its meetings, and its meetings are not open to the public.

At the commencement of each financial year the committee will develop a work plan for the upcoming year. This will generally be aligned with the Community and Council Plan. The committee may also highlight any emerging issues which will also be documented. For efficiency purposes the business of the committee throughout the ensuing year should align with the work plan and list of emerging issues.

Meetings will follow standard meeting procedure protocols, which are in summary:

- Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time;
- Be scheduled and confirmed in advance with all relevant papers distributed (as appropriate) to each member;
- Encourage fair and reasonable discussion, participation and respect for each other's views;
- Focus on the relevant issues at hand; and
- Provide advice to Council as far as possible on a consensus basis.

6. Chair

The position of Chairperson shall be held by a Councillor and shall be reviewed annually immediately following Councillor appointments to committees. The position of Chairperson is to be agreed upon between Councillors. When this cannot be achieved, the Mayor of the day shall determine the Chair.

If the Chairperson is not present at a meeting, any other Councillor who has been appointed to the committee shall be appointed Chairperson. In the absence of any other Councillor representative/s, a staff member appointed by the relevant Director may Chair the meeting.

7. Agendas and Meeting Notes

Agendas and meeting notes must be prepared for each meeting.

The Agenda must be provided to members of the committee not less than 4 days before the time fixed for the holding of the meeting.

The Chairperson must arrange for meeting notes of each meeting of the committee to be kept.

The meeting notes of a Council Committee must:

(a) contain details of the proceedings and recommendations made;

(b) be clearly expressed;

(c) be self-explanatory; and

(d) incorporate relevant reports or a summary of the relevant reports considered by the committee.

Draft meeting notes must be:

(a) submitted to the Committee Chairperson for confirmation within 7 days of the meeting;

(b) distributed to all Committee Members following confirmation from the Chairperson and within 14 days of the meeting; and

(c) submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for information.

In compliance with section 58 of the 2020 Act and the requirements of the Council's Public Transparency Policy the agenda and minutes of this group will be made available on Council's website unless:

- the information contained in the agenda and/or minutes is confidential by virtue of the 2020 Act or any other Act; or
- the public availability of the information has been deemed by the Chief Executive Officer or nominee to be contrary to the public interest.

8. Voting

As this is an advisory committee, voting on issues is not required. Any recommendations will generally be developed through consensus. Where a matter cannot be agreed the differing opinions should be clearly expressed in the notes of the meeting.

9. Conflict and Interest Provisions

In performing the role of Advisory Committee member, a person must:

- Act with integrity;
- Impartially exercise his or her responsibilities in the interests of the local community;
- Not improperly seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person;

- Treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, beliefs, rights and responsibilities of other persons;
- Commit to regular attendance at meetings; and
- Not make improper use of information acquired because of their position or release information that the member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information.

Meetings of the Panel will typically constitute a Meeting Conducted under the Auspices of Council pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Councillors are consequently required to comply with the conflict of interest provisions as set down in section 131 of the 2020 Act and Chapter 5 of the Council's Governance Rules.

Councillors must:

- disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present immediately before the matter is considered;
- absent themselves from any discussion of the matter; and
- as soon as practicable, provide the CEO with a written notice recording the nature of the conflict.

Where a member of staff or a community member has a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in relation to a matter before the Group, they must disclose the matter to the group before the matter is considered or discussed. Disclosure must include the nature of the interest and be recorded in the meeting notes. It will be at the discretion of the Chairperson if the staff and/or community member remains or leaves the room whilst the matter is discussed, and this must also be recorded in the notes of the meeting.

All members of the Advisory Committee may be invited to attend annual training on Conduct and Interest provisions run by the Governance team.

10. Reporting

The committee will prepare a formal report on an annual basis in line with their stated objectives. The report must be adopted by the committee and should directly reflect the objectives and the performance measures of the committee as set out in the Terms of Reference. Once adopted by the committee the report will be presented to Council.

11. Administration Support

Administration support will be provided by the Connected Communities Directorate.

12. Contact with the Media

Contact with the Media by Advisory Committee members will be conducted in accordance with the Councillor and Staff Media Policies. Community members should defer any media enquiries to the Chairperson in the first instance and should take care not to respond as a representative of the committee.

13. Review Date

Council Committees must be reviewed on a regular basis, with a review date generally not exceeding a 4 year period. If the committee continues to have a relevant function at the end of the standard review period, a report must be presented to Council including a review of the committee's Terms of Reference and seeking endorsement from Council to continue to act for a further period.

14. Meals

Council will provide reasonable meals for Council Committee meetings at times that immediately precede, follow or extend through normal meal times. The provision of meals will be determined by the CEO or delegate, and be within the capacity of the relevant department's budget.

15. Administration Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter these Terms of Reference, such a change may be made administratively and approved by the Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate).

Examples of minor administrative changes include change 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 Terms of Reference, it must be considered by Council or delegated Committee.

9 Supplementary Items

9.1 Council submission for Draft Planning Scheme Amendment to the Knox Planning Scheme – C194knox - 191 George Street, Wantirna and 1257 Ferntree Gully Road, Scoresby

This report will be distributed prior to the meeting.

10 Notices Of Motion

11 Urgent Business

12 Questions Through the Chair

13 Confidential Items