

AGENDA

Mid Month Meeting of Council

To be held at the

Civic Centre

511 Burwood Highway

Wantirna South

On

Tuesday 10 March 2026 at 7:00 PM

This meeting will be conducted as a hybrid meeting



Order of Business

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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 Mid Month Meeting of Council on Monday 9 February 2026.

4 Items For Tabling

4.1 Internal Arbitration Decision: IAP 2025-17 and IAP 2025-18

SUMMARY

This item tables a copy of the arbiter's decision and statement of reasons arising from the internal arbitration processes IAP 2025-17 and IAP 2025-18 (Attachment 1), in accordance with section 147(4) of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act).

Section 147 of the Act requires the arbiter's decision and statement of reasons to be tabled at the meeting and recorded in the minutes. Consequently, no resolution is required.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Internal Arbitration Decision IAP 2025-17 and IAP 2025-18

INTERNAL ARBITRATION PROCESS – Knox City Council

In the matter of an Application by Councillor Lisa Cooper concerning
Councillor Peter Lockwood
(IAP 2025-17)

In the matter of an Application by Councillors Lisa Cooper, Glen Attwell, Meagan
Baker and Parisa Considine concerning Councillor Peter Lockwood
(IAP 2025-18)

Note: Applications IAP 2025-17 and IAP 2025-18 were forwarded to the Arbiter pursuant to section 144A(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as related applications to Application IAP 2025-15.

Applications IAP 2025-17 and IAP 2025-18 were joined to Application IAP 2025-15 by the Arbiter, with the agreement of the parties, at the Directions Hearing on 21 August 2025. Application IAP 2025-15 was subsequently withdrawn on 13 February 2026 and consequently, is not covered in this Determination.

**HEARING PURSUANT TO DIVISION 5 OF PART 6 OF THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020**

Application IAP 2025-17

Applicant: Cr Lisa Cooper

Respondent: Cr Peter Lockwood

Application IAP 2025-18

Applicant: Cr Lisa Cooper (appointed representative), Cr Glen Attwell, Cr Meagan Baker and Cr Parisa Considine

Respondent: Cr Peter Lockwood

Arbiter: Jo-Anne Mazzeo

DETERMINATION

Pursuant to section 147(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) the Arbiter makes a finding of misconduct against Cr Peter Lockwood.

SANCTION

Pursuant to section 147(2)(b) of the Act, Cr Lockwood is suspended from the office of Councillor for a period of one calendar month commencing the day after this decision is tabled at the Council Meeting to be held on 10 March 2026 in accordance with section 147(4)(a) of the Act.

STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR DECISION

The Applications

1. Application IAP 2025-17 dated 18 August 2025 seeks a finding of misconduct against the respondent relating to alleged breaches of the following clauses of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct:
 - a. Standard 1(e): Performing the role of a Councillor, specifically acknowledging and supporting the Mayor in the performance of the role of the Mayor.
 - b. Standard 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(c) and 2(2): specifically treating others (including other Councillors, members of Council staff and members of the public) with fairness, dignity, objectivity, courtesy and respect. This includes not engaging in demeaning, abusive, obscene or threatening behaviour (including where the behaviour is of a sexual nature), not engaging in behaviour that intentionally causes or perpetuates stigma, stereotyping, prejudice or aggression against a person or class of persons. Furthermore, this Standard also outlines the requirement to not engage in discrimination or vilification and to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
 - c. Standard 3(b)(i) relating to good governance and Councillor conduct in Council meetings or meetings of delegated committees.
 - d. Standard 4(1)(a) regarding integrity and taking reasonable steps to avoid any action which may diminish the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of local government by acting in a way that secures and promotes public confidence in the integrity of local government by ensuring that their behaviour does not bring discredit upon the Council.
2. The specific allegations are as follows:
 - a. That the respondent's behaviour at the Council Meeting of 15 July 2025 was very disruptive, with inappropriate remarks made towards the Deputy Mayor Cr Glen Atwell and Cr Chris Duncan which compromised the public perception of Council's integrity;
 - b. On 25 July 2025 the respondent "liked" a post on the social media page of Council Watch which the applicant alleges had sections in it that were both untrue and defamatory towards Council as a whole, mocked and criticised individual Councillors, made personal attacks on Council officers and accused Council of cultural bias.

- c. At the Council Meeting of 28 July 2025, the respondent's behaviour was again disruptive, making inappropriate comments which compromised the public perception of Council's integrity;
 - d. On 29 July 2025 the respondent and two fellow Councillors spoke with the media (channel 10 News to be specific) speaking against an endorsed position of Council;
 - e. On 29 July 2025 the respondent "liked" a comment posted by a community member responding to a post on his own Facebook page which was disrespectful towards fellow Councillors. The applicant alleges that this action was disrespectful to other Councillors and brought the Council into disrepute; On 30 July 2025 at 7:13pm the respondent sent an email to the applicant copying in all Councillors titled "Christmas Comments" denying that his recent comments and actions on social media denigrated anyone.
3. Application IAP 2025-18 also dated 18 August 2025 seeks a finding of misconduct against the respondent relating to alleged breaches of the following clauses of the model Councillor Code of Conduct:
 - a. Standard 1(e): Performing the role of a Councillor, specifically acknowledging and supporting the Mayor in the performance of the role of the Mayor.
 - b. Standard 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(c) and 2(2): specifically treating others (including other Councillors, members of Council staff and members of the public) with fairness, dignity, objectivity, courtesy and respect. This includes not engaging in demeaning, abusive, obscene or threatening behaviour (including where the behaviour is of a sexual nature), not engaging in behaviour that intentionally causes or perpetuates stigma, stereotyping, prejudice or aggression against a person or class of persons. Furthermore, this Standard also outlines the requirement to not engage in discrimination or vilification and to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
 - c. Standard 3(b)(i) relating to compliance with Council Policies and Procedures required for the delivery of good governance for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community.
 - d. Standard 4(1)(a) and 4(1)(c) in relation to acting with integrity and ensuring their behaviour does not bring discredit upon the Council and not making Council information publicly available where public availability of the information would be contrary to public interest.
4. The specific allegation is that on 31 July 2025 the respondent published an excerpt of an internal Council email he received from the Mayor (an applicant in this matter) on his public social media page. In his post, the respondent:

- a. Wrote "After our vote on Christmas decorations, we had a chat or two with media orgs, including Ch10 (the only one I was on). [A fellow Councillor] then invited all to a chat about what we might expect of our year 2 mayor. This was the response from the mayor." The respondent then invited users to comment on the Mayor's internal correspondence. The respondent shared a portion of the Mayor's email (on his Public Facebook Page), specifically the section about Councillor behaviour, whilst leaving out the rest of the email, which directly answered the original request from a fellow Councillor. The selective disclosure intentionally misrepresented the Mayor's intent and painted a skewed picture of the exchange.
- b. The respondent also tagged external individuals and a Facebook Page titled "Council Watch". Within an hour of this action, Council Watch published a critical and personally targeted post about the Mayor.

Evidence provided

5. A virtual Directions Hearing was listed and heard on 21 August 2025 in relation to Application IAP 2025-15 (which has been withdrawn), and the above applications (IAP 2025-17 and IAP 2025-18).

Applications IAP 2025-17 and IAP 2025-18 were joined to Application IAP 2025-15 by the Arbiter, with the agreement of the parties, at the Directions Hearing on 21 August 2025.

On 26 August 2025 the Councillor Conduct Officer for Knox City Council sent a lengthy email to the parties providing them with written Directions prepared by the Arbiter reflecting the Directions given orally at the Directions Hearing on 21 August 2025.

6. The Council's Councillor Conduct Officer was in regular email contact with the parties regarding the Arbitration process and next steps. For example, on both 12 and 15 September 2025 the Councillor Conduct Officer emailed the respondent with the applicant's evidence attached and reminded him of his obligation to provide his own documents and a list of the witnesses he intended to call.
7. On 5 October 2025 the respondent emailed the Councillor Conduct Officer asking for clarification regarding the practicalities of the Arbitration process despite the Arbiter having explained the process in detail and at length to the parties at the Directions Hearing on 21 August 2025. On 6 October 2025 the Councillor Conduct Officer responded to the email providing a detailed outline of the process and clarification on administrative matters such as whether an oath or affirmation was required for all witnesses, how to address the Arbiter during the hearing and the process for being able to cross examine the witnesses who had been called in support of the Application.

8. A single, in person Full Hearing date was set for Saturday, 11 October 2025 for the three related Applications to expedite the hearing, minimise the cost to Council, and to accommodate other commitments both parties flagged that they had during normal business hours. This date was vacated due to the illness of both the parties in the days leading up to the hearing. A further virtual Directions Hearing was set for 20 October 2025, and an in person Full Hearing date of 5 November 2025 was agreed to by both parties.
9. On the morning of the Full Hearing, the Arbiter experienced a family emergency and elected to conduct the Full Hearing via Microsoft Teams, so as to ensure the matter would still proceed given the prior delays that had occurred. All other parties attended in person.
10. This Statement of Reasons does not summarise all of the information submitted to the Arbiter but refers to the information relied on by the Arbiter to make her decision.

The jurisdiction of the Arbiter in relation to this Application

11. Section 143 of the *Local Government Act 2020* provides that an Arbiter may hear an Application that alleges misconduct by a Councillor.
12. Pursuant to section 147 of the Act an Arbiter may determine whether or not a Councillor has engaged in misconduct.
13. "Misconduct" is defined in section 3 of the Act and is defined as follows:
 "... any breach by a Councillor of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct."
14. The standards of conduct are set out in Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020.

Evidence of the Applicants

15. The applicants alleged that the conduct of the respondent has fallen short of that expected of a councillor and required by the prescribed standards of conduct.
16. The applicants submitted photographic evidence of the social media posts subject of the Application, along with the Council Watch article/social media post and the emails referred to in the Application.
17. The applicants submitted that the respondent's conduct in formal meetings, within the public domain and across social media platforms has had a detrimental impact on the function, reputation and psychological safety of Council and particular Councillors. Furthermore, the applicants contended that the repeated behaviour of the respondent has eroded public confidence in Council and the cumulative effect of the behaviour has undermined the

community perception of Council as a cohesive and respectful governing body.

18. Cr Atwell, Cr Baker and Cr Considine provided witness statements and attended the hearing to give more fulsome evidence and answer questions.
19. When giving evidence at the Full Hearing, Cr Atwell said that he had directly observed Cr Lockwood conducting himself in a manner that breaches the Model Councillor Code of Conduct (the Model Code), including at times when Cr Atwell was chairing meetings in the absence of the Mayor. This included behaviour as a Councillor at Council Meetings, in internal correspondence with Councillors, in the mainstream media, and on social media platforms. Cr Atwell said there was a pattern of inappropriate and inflammatory emails that caused great distress amongst the majority of Councillors.
20. Cr Atwell made specific reference to the Council Meeting of 15 July 2025 where he as Deputy Mayor was targeted by the respondent as potentially being "part of a clique" of Councillors.
21. Regarding the Council Meeting of 28 July 2025, Cr Atwell told the Arbiter of the fictitious names the respondent had attributed to him and other Councillors and found it deeply offensive. He also confirmed that he was one of the Councillors that the respondent had referred to as "a pack of grinches" and that he "had no heart".
22. Regarding the use of social media on 29 July 2025, Cr Atwell gave evidence that an inappropriate comment was posted by the respondent on his Facebook page, which read as follows:

"Council's official position is that we will not have decorations. The grinches won. Should we decorate for Christmas? And other festivals? Lunar New Year? Diwali?"
23. Cr Robert Williams responded to this comment with a picture and the phrase "Christmas Story. Except in this narrative the Knox City", which was then "liked" by the respondent. The respondent then went on to "share" the post and provide additional commentary himself.
24. Cr Baker gave evidence also submitting that the conduct of the respondent at both of the July 2025 Council Meetings was disruptive, inappropriate, unprofessional and compromised the community perception of Council integrity. She too gave specific time stamped recordings of the specific behaviour for the Arbiter to review in person via the visual recording of the Council Meeting.
25. Cr Baker agreed with the evidence of Cr Cooper and Cr Atwell that the respondent's actions on social media were inappropriate, at times defamatory, disrespectful and showed a clear division in Council, rather than a cohesive group working together for their constituents.

26. Cr Considine also provided a written statement and attended the Full Hearing in person. She told the Arbiter that the social media posts the respondent was involved in caused significant disturbance to her and her children, who were still grieving the loss of her husband and their father. She said the manner in which the respondent behaved and interacted at Council meetings further exacerbated her stress and anxiety, and that it had been going on for so long that he needed to be held to account, formally managed, and acknowledge the behaviour was unacceptable and impacting on the ability for all Councillors to act in an environment of respect and collaboration.
27. The applicants do not accept the respondent's explanation for the conduct in question and relied on the content of the Applications (as outlined above), the oral evidence presented at the Full Hearing and the evidence of the witnesses. The Applicants seek a finding of misconduct. Regarding sanction in the event of a finding of misconduct, the applicants submitted that the respondent should be required to apologise to all Councillors and Council Officers and serve a three month suspension period given the severity and repeated nature of his conduct.

Evidence of the Respondent

28. The respondent provided both oral evidence at the hearing and supplemented it with written evidence submitted to the Arbiter. He also called witnesses who gave evidence in support of his response to the allegations made. The witnesses were:
 - a. Cr Robert Williams; and
 - b. Cr Susan Pearce.
29. The respondent confirmed the authenticity of the social media posts and agreed that there was no factual dispute regarding whether it was the respondent who authored the comments and liked the posts provided to the Arbiter.
30. The respondent submitted that the complaints made by the applicants in the Applications were trivial in nature, personalised, derogatory and trying to paint him in the worst possible light.
31. Regarding the Council Meeting that took place on 15 July 2025, the respondent submitted that all the remarks made by him were made in the context of a meeting that was below the usual standard of the Council. He told the Arbiter he still sees no problem with his actions and the acting chair of the meeting (Cr Atwell) was usually much more capable than he was on the night of that meeting.
32. Regarding the Council Meeting on 28 July 2025, the respondent submitted that his remarks were "wilfully misinterpreted". He submitted that his

comment to "POQ" did not reference the colloquial saying "piss off quickly", instead meaning "pass out quietly", which is not offensive or an acronym for another saying. The respondent told the Arbiter he had no intention of being offensive, and regarding the Officer's report tabled at the meeting, he submitted that it was problematic and so he criticised the report, not the person.

33. Also, regarding the 28 July Council Meeting, the respondent submitted that he had every right to comment on a time extension and saw the approach as hypocrisy and called it out as such.
34. When asked about his statement about other Councillors being "grinches" and "lacking heart", the respondent submitted that these comments were said in the heat of the moment and then picked up by the media. The respondent did concede that the use of the terms in the media "may have been unsettling" but as insults go, he had "heard worse during my high school debates".
35. When discussing the Channel Ten media coverage, the respondent submitted that he did not frame anything as excessive and merely stated an idea on potential money saving. When asked about this further the respondent said no one was disrespected because no one individual was mentioned.
36. In his closing statement, the respondent acknowledged that his social media activity (specifically liking the comments and posting the comments as outlined above) was inappropriate, it has been his grandchildren teaching him the context of social media that helped him realise his actions in this regard were inappropriate. He did not make a comment regarding the internal email shared to his social media page.
37. The respondent was comfortable enough to have a social media page titled "Cr Peter Lockwood" making it open to interpretation that anything posted on this page was posted by the author in his capacity as a Councillor. He did not make it clear that the opinions and activity on this page were his own personal view and should be closely moderated by him.
38. The respondent also apologised in his written closing submissions for the use of the terms "grinches" (in his Facebook post of 29 July 2025) and that other Councillors "lack heart" but said the remainder of the allegations against him were merely trivialising the deliberations of Council.

Findings and Determinations of the Arbiter

39. Section 147 of the Act provides that if after completing the internal arbitration process the arbiter determines a Councillor has failed to comply with the Model Code, the arbiter may make a finding of misconduct.
40. As detailed above, I find that:

- a. At the Council Meetings of both 15 and 28 July 2025, the respondent's conduct (as directly observed by the Arbiter watching video footage) contravened Standard 2(1) and Standard 4(1) of the Model Code;
 - b. On 29 July 2025 the respondent's comments in mainstream television media contravened Standard 2(1) and 4(1) of the Model Code. His social media activity on that same day also breached Standard 2(1) and 4(1) of the Model Code;
 - c. On 31 July 2025 the respondent made a Facebook post that shared an internal email sent from the applicant in her capacity as mayor that was dated 30 July 2025 and added his own editorial comments, including abbreviations for profanities. The Arbiter has seen these extracts firsthand and finds his social media activity on that day breached Standard 2 of the Model Code
41. Having made these findings of misconduct, s147(2) provides that I may impose any one or more of a number of sanctions, which are:
- a. direct the Councillor to make an apology in a form or manner specified by the arbiter;
 - b. suspend the Councillor from the office of Councillor for a period specified by the arbiter not exceeding 3 months;
 - c. direct that the Councillor be removed from any position where the Councillor represents the Council for the period determined by the arbiter;
 - d. direct that the Councillor is removed from being the chair of a delegated committee for the period determined by the arbiter;
 - e. direct a Councillor to attend or undergo training or counselling specified by the arbiter;
 - f. direct that the Councillor is not to attend or participate in a Council meeting specified by the arbiter that occurs after the meeting at which the decision and statement of reasons are tabled under subsection (4); and/or
 - g. direct that the Councillor is ineligible to hold the office of Mayor or Deputy Mayor for a period specified by the arbiter not exceeding 12 months.

Reasons for the Arbiter's Decision

42. In relation to the social media posts subject to this Application, the Arbiter accepts the submission of the applicants that the respondent's behaviour on social media fell below the standard of conduct expected of a Councillor. The

posts clearly demonstrate a failure to treat other Councillors with dignity, fairness, objectivity and respect and the Arbiter was unable to conclude that the posts could be read or interpreted as anything other than disrespectful towards other Councillors.

43. The Arbiter accepts the submission of the applicants that the respondent committed multiple breaches of the Model Code, primarily related to a Facebook post and associated online activity such as "liking" posts made by other individuals which explicitly targeted Councillors who voted a particular way on a divisive issue at Council (regarding Christmas decorations) undermining their integrity, fostering community division, and inciting hostility.
44. Standard 4(1) provides that Councillors have a duty to exercise reasonable care to avoid actions which may diminish the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of local government. This includes ensuring that their behaviour does not bring discredit upon the Council.
45. The conduct of the respondent both on social media and at the two July Council Meetings did not fall into the realm of "robust political debate". It was unwarranted and inappropriate. His conduct fell well short of what is reasonably expected of a Councillor. The respondent failed to exercise reasonable care not to diminish public trust and confidence in the Council and brought discredit upon the Council.
46. Regarding the conduct alleged by the applicant regarding the Council Meetings of both 15 and 28 July 2025, the arbiter viewed the video recordings and is satisfied that the behaviour of the respondent fell below the standard expected of a Councillor.
47. I have not directed the respondent to undergo any training in respect of the Model Code. Cr Lockwood is an experienced Councillor and does not lack an understanding of the Model Code but appears to have chosen to disregard it when making the ill-considered public comments/behaviour at Council Meetings and social media interactions he engaged in.
48. Further, general and specific deterrence are important considerations. It is necessary to convey to all local Councillors that conduct of this type is not acceptable and, if engaged in, will result in appropriate sanction. In addition, regard must be made to maintaining public confidence in Councillors, the system of local government and the arbitration process. This public confidence is best achieved when Councillors who breach the standards reasonably expected of them are properly held to account.
49. I find that given the nature and seriousness of the conduct and the harm that would be suffered if the respondent and other Councillors were not deterred from engaging in similar conduct, a period of suspension is required.

50. Accordingly, I have determined that the respondent is to serve a suspension of one calendar month commencing the day after this decision is tabled at the Council Meeting to be held on 10 March 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Mazzeo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jo-Anne Mazzeo
Arbiter

Date: 02 March 2026

5 Officer Reports

5.1 Minor Grants Program 2025-2026 Monthly Report

Final Report Destination:	Mid Month Council
Paper Type:	For Decision
Author	Senior Community Grants Officer, Kim Johnstone Community Grants Officer, Bryony Lee
Manager:	Manager Community Strengthening, Kerryn Jansons
Executive:	Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

SUMMARY

This report summarises the grant applications recommended for approval in March 2026 for the 2025-26 Minor Grants Program. All applications have been assessed against the criteria set out in the Knox City Council Community Grants Guidelines 2025-2026 (Guidelines).

Applications under the Minor Grants Program are limited to a maximum of \$2,500.00 within the current financial year.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. Approve seven applications under the Minor Grants Program for a total of \$14,076.58 (excluding GST) as detailed below:

Minor Grants Program				
Applicant Name	Project Title	10% Contribution for Equipment	Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Amount Recommended (excl. GST)
U3A Knox Inc.	U3A Knox, New Horizon Concert Band Weekend Workshop U3A Knox New Horizons Concert Band seeks funding to support an intensive workshop.		\$2,200.00	\$2,200.00
Eildon Park Cricket Club	Dishwasher Seeking funding for a dishwasher at Eildon Park to support shared kitchen use and ease volunteer workload for both sporting clubs.	\$247.00	\$2,227.25	\$2,227.25
Ferntree Gully Eagles Football Netball Club Inc.	Line Marker Machine Replacement The Club seeks funding to replace its unreliable	\$627.00	\$2,299.00	\$2,090.00 (lesser amount due to GST)

Minor Grants Program				
Applicant Name	Project Title	10% Contribution for Equipment	Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Amount Recommended (excl. GST)
	line marker, ensuring safe, consistent field preparation while reducing volunteer workload and improving sustainability.			
Temple Society Australia	Replacement Freezer - Food Relief pantry CHAMPION seeks funding to replace a failed freezer, restoring safe frozen meal storage essential for supporting community members facing food insecurity.	\$364.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,272.73 (lesser amount due to GST)
Rowville Knights Community Football Club	Rowville Knights - Portable PA System The Club seeks funding to replace its stolen portable PA system, essential for effective communication during club and community events.	\$215.00	\$1,935.00	\$1,935.00
Melbourne Chinese Arts and Theatre Inc.	Knox Chinese Community Cultural Event A one-off Chinese cultural event fostering connection and understanding in Knox, needing support for venue hire, materials, and light refreshments.		\$2,000.00	\$1,176.00 (lesser amount due to some ineligible expenditure)
We Are One Club Inc.	Culture Connects Us All A multicultural event uniting Chinese, Indian and Greek communities through movement, games, food and music to celebrate diversity and strengthen cross-cultural connections.	\$35.80	\$2,500.00	\$2,175.60 (lesser amount due to some ineligible expenditure)

Minor Grants Program				
Applicant Name	Project Title	10% Contribution for Equipment	Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Amount Recommended (excl. GST)
Total			\$15,661.25	\$14,076.58

2. Defer two applications under the Minor Grants Program requesting a total of \$3,265.00 as detailed below:

Minor Grants Program			
Applicant Name	Project Title	Reason for Deferral	Amount Requested
Wantirna Retirement Village	Resident Entertainment 2026 Request to purchase a garment steamer, bin enclosure cover, sandwich press, and funding for entertainment for the year.	Requested additional information from applicant. Some of the requested items (such as the steamer and fencing) are considered regular operating or maintenance expenses, therefore they are not eligible for funding. An updated quote for entertainment has also been requested before the assessment continues. Catering is allowed but must be kept to no more than 20% of the total grant request, so this part of the budget may need to be reduced. Grant has been reopened to the applicant.	\$2,500.00
Forest Road MCHC Playgroup Inc.	Shed Mural We would like to commission an artist to paint a mural on the side and front of the outdoor garden shed that stores playgroup's outdoor toys.	We are seeking further information from both the applicant and the Early Years team.	\$765.00
Total			\$3,265.00

3. Refuse two applications under the Minor Grants Program requesting a total of \$4,212.00 as detailed below:

Minor Grants Program			
Applicant Name	Project Title	Amount Requested	Reason for Ineligibility
Mother's Day Classic - Lysterfield	Mother's Day Classic – Lysterfield Mother's Day Classic seeks Knox Council sponsorship to support event costs for the Lysterfield run, promoting women's health research and community participation.	\$2,500.00	The project's start date has already occurred, and Council does not provide funding for sponsorship under the current guidelines.
Knox and District Over 50s Inc.	Purchase of Two Laptop Computers The club seeks funding for two laptops to improve data security and ensure continuity, replacing reliance on personal devices for committee tasks.	\$1,712.00	Recurring applications as per our guidelines are not supported. The group has already received two laptops in the last financial year.
Total		\$4,212.00	

4. Note that should the recommended Minor Grants be approved by Council, the remaining budget for 2025-26 will be \$76,671.53 after GST adjustments.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Background

The Minor Grants Program provides a pool of grant funding that can respond monthly to requests for small amounts of funding to assist with short term, one-off projects or initiatives that are relatively minor in nature.

The objective of the Minor Grants Program is to be an accessible and responsive funding source to assist a wide range of community led activities across the municipality and support volunteer effort and civic participation.

It operates under the principles of other Knox Council grants programs to ensure:

- Funded projects will provide benefit to the Knox community and help meet Council objectives;
- Co-operation and collaboration between groups will be encouraged;
- The grant process will be consistent, equitable and transparent; and
- The grant process will support and strengthen community groups in developing local solutions to local needs.

Applications are assessed against criteria specified in the Community Grants Guidelines (approved in May 2025), to determine the eligibility of the applicant organisation and the eligibility of the grant application.

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

In accordance with the Guidelines, applications for funding have been assessed by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, for Council's approval.

This report presents to Council the recommendations for recent Minor Grant applications in accordance with the Guidelines.

1.2 Applications Recommended for Approval

Eleven applications have been assessed this month, requesting grants totaling \$23,138.25 (including GST). Of the eleven applications, seven are recommended for approval. A summary of the projects recommended is in Attachment 1.

1.3 Applications Recommended for Deferral

Two applications are recommended for deferral to the April 2026 Mid-Month Meeting of Council as we await further information regarding their application:

- Wantirna Retirement Village, Resident Entertainment 2026; and
- Forest Road MCHC Playgroup Inc.

These groups will be encouraged to provide the additional information prior to the deadline for the April 2026 Mid-Month Meeting of Council.

1.4 Applications Recommended for Refusal

Two applications are recommended for refusal, requesting grants totaling \$4,212.00:

- Mother's Day Classic – Lysterfield, Mother's Day Classic – Lysterfield
The project's start date has already occurred, and Council does not provide funding for sponsorship under the current guidelines.
- Knox and District Over 50s Inc – Purchase of two laptop computers
Recurring applications as per our guidelines are not supported. The group has already received two laptops in the last financial year.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Engagement is undertaken with organisations in relation to their grant applications whenever possible and if necessary, to clarify details regarding their applications prior to Council's consideration.

Advice or information may be sought from Officers across Council in relation to either the applying organisation or the proposed project, or both, if considered necessary.

The Guidelines specify assessment can occur by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, and make recommendation for Council's determination.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Minor Grants Program allows Council to respond promptly to requests from Knox- based community groups for small amounts of funding to assist a variety of community-based programs, projects or activities. Council's Minor Grants are a simple and streamlined source of funding that can make a significant difference for local community organisations in need of short-term, specific purpose assistance.

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 CONSIDERATIONS

There are no environmental considerations associated with this report.

6. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The approval of Minor Grants is managed within Council's adopted budget. The 2025-26 budget provides \$156,696.00 for the Minor Grants Program, plus returned grants of \$3,218.20 which increased the budget to \$159,914.20.

Funding commitments to date are summarised below:

Yearly Summary 2025-26	Total Amount Approved at Council Meeting (Excluding GST)
July	\$13,039.83
August	\$14,174.01
September	\$12,606.00
October	\$14,830.55
November	\$2,203.23
December	\$7,356.00
January	Grants Closed for January
February	\$4,956.47
March	\$
April	\$
May	\$
Totals (Year to Date)	\$69,166.09

Recommended applications for the March period total \$14,076.58 (excluding GST).

If approved as recommended, the remaining Minor Grants budget for 2025-26 will total \$76,671.53 (excluding GST).

7. RISKS

Any risks associated with administering the Minor Grant Program are managed through the implementation of Council's Grant Framework Policy and the Guidelines. All Minor Grants must be acquitted, and evidence of expenditure must be provided by the organisation.

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

In accordance with the Guidelines, applications for funding have been assessed by the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate, for Council or delegate approval as appropriate.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Strategy 1.2 - Our community can access diverse training and life-long learning opportunities through delivery, promotion and partnerships with relevant organisations.

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.

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

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 2.4 - There are opportunities for social connection and active living through planning, provision of facilities, program delivery and support for local groups.

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 - Minor Grants Program Application Extraction March 2026 [5.1.1 - 14 pages]

Minor Grant Program Applications
 March 2026

2526-MGP080

U3A Knox Inc.

Application ID	2526-MGP080
Organisation Name	U3A Knox Inc.
Grant Program	Minor Grants Program

Project Title	U3A Knox, New Horizon Concert Band Weekend Workshop
Project Start Date	27/03/2026
Project End Date	29/03/2026

Request Details	U3A Knox New Horizons Concert Band is requesting financial support to assist with: * Payment of six experienced, qualified music teachers to further develop the music skills of the band members over an intense period of instruction. * Purchase of suitable new concert band scores for the weekend sessions.		
Community Benefit	The band will improve music knowledge and abilities in ensemble playing and will increase confidence when performing in front of an audience. Band members will strengthen existing friendships and make new friends. Skills of cooperation, teamwork, support and understanding will be a focus. The community will benefit as the band regularly plays at events for the U3A Knox organisation (approximately 1500 seniors), as well as the wider community – concerts in Seniors Month and in Retirement Villages, Aged Care facilities, charity fund-raising events, Christmas concerts and schools. New members are welcome in the main band and in the beginners’ music group. The band provides a friendly and supportive social environment for members, visitors and audiences. The band members benefit directly from the opportunity to be involved in life-long learning and to remain active and connected in the community. Whenever they play concerts, they demonstrate these values to others.		
Total Beneficiaries	40	Total Project Cost	\$ 3,912.50
Knox Beneficiaries	36	Total Amount Requested	\$ 2,200.00

Total Project Income

Income Description	Income Amount
Council Grant	\$ 2,200.00
U3A /New Horizons Band	\$ 1,712.50
Total Income	\$ 3,912.50

Minor Grant Program Applications
March 2026

Total Project Expenditure

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount
4 Music Tutors @ \$250 each	\$ 1,000.00
Guest Conductor	\$ 1,000.00
Resident Conductor part payment	\$ 200.00
Resident Conductor part payment	\$ 550.00
Hire costs of Tecoma Uniting Church	\$ 527.50
Music Scores x 4	\$ 635.00
Total Expenditure	\$ 3,912.50

What specifically the grant is funding

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount	10% Co-Contribution Requirement (only if requesting equipment)	Co-Contribution Reflected in Project Income?
Music Scores x4	\$ 635.00	N/A	N/A
Music Tutors & Conductors (contribution towards)	\$ 1,565.00	N/A	N/A
Total Grant Amount	\$ 2,200.00	N/A	N/A

Minor Grant Program Applications
 March 2026

2526-MGP103

Eildon Park Cricket Club

Application ID	2526-MGP103
Organisation Name	Eildon Park Cricket Club
Grant Program	Minor Grants Program

Project Title	Dishwasher
Project Start Date	01/05/2026
Project End Date	01/10/2026

Request Details	<p>The project is to seek funding for a dishwasher in the kitchen at Eildon Park. The kitchen is utilised by both the Eildon Park Cricket Club and the Rowville Junior Football Club and provides significant revenue to both clubs through canteen sales and social events held in the pavilion.</p> <p>The dishwasher will enable faster clean-ups and reduce the burden on those volunteers</p>		
Community Benefit	<p>Installing a dishwasher in the kitchen at Eildon Park will deliver community benefit to two major local sporting clubs — the Eildon Park Cricket Club and the Rowville Junior Football Club. The shared kitchen underpins canteen revenue and social events that fund the two clubs grassroots sport, junior development, and community programs.</p> <p>With volunteer numbers steadily declining, the current manual cleaning workload places significant strain on remaining members and risks volunteer burnout. A dishwasher will substantially reduce clean-up time and assists in maintaining hygiene standards.</p> <p>By easing the pressure on club volunteers, this project helps retain, and assists in attracting members, making the pavilion, kitchen/canteen a vibrant, financially sustainable hub for local families. Council support will directly strengthen volunteer capacity, and the viability of community sport at Eildon Park.</p>		
Total Beneficiaries	147	Total Project Cost	\$ 2,474.25
Knox Beneficiaries	104	Total Amount Requested	\$ 2,227.25

Total Project Income

Income Description	Income Amount
Council Grant	\$ 2,227.25
Club contribution	\$ 247.00
Total Income	\$ 2,474.25

Minor Grant Program Applications
March 2026

Total Project Expenditure

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount
Miele Dishwasher	\$ 2,474.25
Total Expenditure	\$ 2,474.25

What specifically the grant is funding

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount	10% Co-Contribution Requirement (only if requesting equipment)	Co-Contribution Reflected in Project Income?
Miele Dishwasher (contribution towards)	\$ 2,227.25	\$247.00	Yes
Total Grant Amount	\$ 2,227.25	\$247.00 - minimum amount required	\$247.00 - meets minimum required

Minor Grant Program Applications
March 2026

2526-MGP108

Ferntree Gully Eagles Football Netball Club

Application ID	2526-MGP108
Organisation Name	Ferntree Gully Eagles Football Netball Club
Grant Program	Minor Grants Program

Project Title	Line Marker Machine Replacement
Project Start Date	17/03/2026
Project End Date	24/03/2026

Request Details	<p>Ferntree Gully Eagles Football Netball Club Juniors is seeking funding of up to \$2,500 through the Knox City Council Minor Grants Program to assist with the replacement of our football ground line marker. During the previous season, our existing line marker became unreliable, creating ongoing challenges in preparing compliant playing surfaces for weekend matches. On several occasions, the club was required to borrow equipment from neighbouring clubs, placing additional pressure on volunteers and causing logistical difficulties.</p> <p>To address this issue, the club proposes to purchase an iGO Deluxe Line Marker. This equipment will allow the club to independently and consistently prepare playing fields each week, improving safety, presentation, and reliability for players and the wider community. The new line marker supports sustainable practices through reduced water usage, efficient paint application, and long-term durability, while also reducing volunteer labour time and physical strain. This investment will support sustainable community sport participation.</p>		
Community Benefit	<p>This project provides clear community benefit by ensuring football grounds are prepared to a safe, reliable, and high-quality standard for all users. Clearly marked fields improve safety for junior players, officials, and volunteers, reducing the risk of injury during training sessions and weekend matches.</p> <p>The project supports ongoing participation in community sport by creating a positive, professional, and welcoming environment for local families, spectators, and visiting clubs. Reliable equipment reduces pressure on volunteers, helping retain and support people who play a vital role in delivering junior sport within the community.</p> <p>The new line marker promotes environmentally sustainable practices through reduced water usage and efficient paint application, aligning with Knox City Council sustainability objectives and broader environmental goals.</p> <p>Overall, this project strengthens the club’s operational capacity and ensures safe, inclusive, and sustainable sporting opportunities for children and families across the Knox community. This investment supports long-term participation across local junior sport.</p>		
Total Beneficiaries	460	Total Project Cost	\$ 2,926.00
Knox Beneficiaries	460	Total Amount Requested	\$ 2,299.00

Minor Grant Program Applications
March 2026

Total Project Income

Income Description	Income Amount
Council Grant	\$ 2,299.00
FTG Eagles contribution	\$ 627.00
Total Income	\$ 2,926.00

Total Project Expenditure

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount
Line Marker machine	\$ 2,926.00
Total Expenditure	\$ 2,926.00

What specifically the grant is funding

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount	10% Co-Contribution Requirement (only if requesting equipment)	Co-Contribution Reflected in Project Income?
Line Marker Machine (contribution towards)	\$ 2,299.00	\$292.60	Yes
Total Grant Amount	\$ 2,299.00	\$292.60 - minimum amount required	\$627.00 – exceeds minimum required

Minor Grant Program Applications
 March 2026

2526-MGP109

Temple Society Australia

Application ID	2526-MGP109
Organisation Name	Temple Society Australia
Grant Program	Minor Grants Program

Project Title	Replacement Freezer - Food Relief pantry
Project Start Date	13/03/2026
Project End Date	27/03/2026

Request Details	<p>CHAMPION is a community food relief program operated by Temple Society Australia in Bayswater, supporting individuals and families experiencing food insecurity, short-term financial stress and social isolation. A core part of this support is the provision of frozen, nutritionally balanced meals that enable people to maintain dignity and food security during difficult periods.</p> <p>Following a summer of extreme heat, CHAMPION’s existing stainless steel freezer suffered catastrophic compressor failure and is no longer operational. As a result, all frozen food stored in the unit was lost, significantly impacting the program’s capacity to provide meals. Due to current financial constraints, CHAMPION is not in a position to replace this essential equipment without external funding support.</p> <p>This project addresses the urgent need to restore safe, reliable frozen food storage so CHAMPION can continue delivering food relief to vulnerable community members and respond effectively to ongoing cost-of-living pressures.</p>		
Community Benefit	<p>This project restores CHAMPION’s ability to provide safe, reliable frozen meals to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity, ensuring continued access to nutritious food during times of financial stress, illness or social isolation. Reliable cold storage directly supports food safety, dignity and choice, allowing people to maintain independence rather than relying on emergency-only support.</p> <p>Replacing the failed freezer also strengthens the program’s resilience to extreme weather events, reducing the risk of future food loss and service disruption. This ensures consistent service delivery during periods of high demand, including heatwaves and cost-of-living pressures.</p> <p>The project benefits the wider community by reducing food waste, supporting volunteer-led food relief, and enabling CHAMPION to continue partnering with donors and local services to deliver practical, short-term support to vulnerable residents in a safe and sustainable way.</p>		
Total Beneficiaries	2500	Total Project Cost	\$ 2,864.00
Knox Beneficiaries	2250	Total Amount Requested	\$ 2,500.00

Minor Grant Program Applications
March 2026

Total Project Income

Income Description	Income Amount
Council grant	\$ 2,500.00
TSA Cash contribution	\$ 364.00
Total Income	\$ 2,864.00

Total Project Expenditure

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount
Purchase of freezer incl delivery	\$ 2,500.00
Contribution to purchase of freezer	\$ 364.00
Total Expenditure	\$ 2,864.00

What specifically the grant is funding

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount	10% Co-Contribution Requirement (only if requesting equipment)	Co-Contribution Reflected in Project Income?
650lt upright commercial freezer (contribution towards)	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 250.00	Yes
Total Grant Expenditure	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 250.00 - minimum amount required	\$ 364.00 – exceeds minimum required

Minor Grant Program Applications
March 2026

2526-MGP111

Rowville Knights Community Football Club

Application ID	2526-MGP111
Organisation Name	Rowville Knights Community Football Club
Grant Program	Minor Grants Program

Project Title	Rowville Knights - Portable PA System
Project Start Date	30/03/2026
Project End Date	30/04/2026

Request Details	The clubs portable PA system has been stolen over the summer. The club relies heavily on this system for all club/community functions such as family nights, jumper presentation, knox festival to name just a few. Without this system it will prove extremely difficult to communicate effectively to club and community members.		
Community Benefit	The PA system can/will be used by the tenants of the Liberty Oval pavilion. The system is used for community events such as Jumper Presentations, awards nights, community gatherings. Without the PA system this becomes extremely difficult process to manage. The previous system at Liberty Oval has been stolen over the summer period.		
Total Beneficiaries	500	Total Project Cost	\$ 2,150.00
Knox Beneficiaries	457	Total Amount Requested	\$ 1,935.00

Total Project Income

Income Description	Income Amount
Council Grant	\$ 1,935.00
Club Contribution	\$ 215.00
Total Income	\$ 2,150.00

Total Project Expenditure

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount
PA System	\$ 2,150.00
Total Expenditure	\$ 2,150.00

Minor Grant Program Applications
March 2026

What specifically the grant is funding

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount	10% Co-Contribution Requirement (only if requesting equipment)	Co-Contribution Reflected in Project Income?
PA System (contribution towards)	\$ 1,935.00	\$ 215.00	Yes
Total Grant Amount	\$ 1,935.00	\$ 215.00 - minimum amount required	\$ 215.00 – exceeds minimum required

Minor Grant Program Applications
March 2026

2526-MGP090

Melbourne Chinese Arts & Theatre Inc.

Application ID	2526-MGP090
Organisation Name	Melbourne Chinese Arts & Theatre Inc.
Grant Program	Minor Grants Program

Project Title	Knox Chinese Community Cultural Event
Project Start Date	01/07/2026
Project End Date	31/08/2026

Request Details	<p>We are delivering a one-off Knox Chinese Community Cultural Event designed to bring together local Chinese residents and the broader Knox community through arts and cultural sharing.</p> <p>The event will be held as a single, stand-alone activity in Knox and will include a short live performance, cultural presentations, and informal community interaction. It aims to strengthen social connections, encourage cultural understanding, and provide an accessible multicultural experience for Knox residents.</p> <p>Funding will be used to support venue hire, basic event materials, and light refreshments to ensure the event is welcoming and accessible to the local community.</p>		
Community Benefit	<p>This one-off community cultural event will provide Knox residents with an opportunity to connect through shared cultural experiences, strengthening social cohesion and encouraging community participation.</p> <p>The event will support cultural inclusion by showcasing Chinese arts and traditions in an accessible, welcoming environment, helping to build understanding and connections between the local Chinese community and the broader Knox community.</p> <p>By offering a free or low-cost cultural event held locally in Knox, the project will help reduce social isolation, support community wellbeing, and encourage residents to engage with one another across cultural backgrounds.</p>		
Total Beneficiaries	50	Total Project Cost	\$ 3,000.00
Knox Beneficiaries	38	Total Amount Requested	\$ 2,000.00

Total Project Income

Income Description	Income Amount
council grant	\$ 2,000.00
in kind	\$ 1,000.00
Total Income	\$ 3,000.00

Minor Grant Program Applications
 March 2026

Total Project Expenditure

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount
Venue hire	\$ 180.00
Artistic & Creative Costs	\$ 800.00
Refreshments / catering	\$ 400.00
Equipment & Resources	\$ 620.00
Volunteer time, projector, lighting, promotion	\$ 1,000.00
Total Expenditure	\$ 3,000.00

What specifically the grant is funding

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount	10% Co-Contribution Requirement (only if requesting equipment)	Co-Contribution Reflected in Project Income?
Knox Community Arts Centre venue hire	\$ 180.00	N/A	N/A
Artistic & Creative Costs	\$ 800.00		
Refreshments / catering (20% of grant total)	\$ 196.00		
Total Grant Amount	\$ 1,176.00	N/A	N/A

Minor Grant Program Applications
March 2026

2526-MGP106

We Are One Club Inc

Application ID	2526-MGP106
Organisation Name	We Are One Club Inc
Grant Program	Minor Grants Program

Project Title	Culture Connects Us All
Project Start Date	28/03/2026
Project End Date	28/03/2026

Request Details	<p>Culture Connects Us All is a vibrant community celebration proudly supporting the Victorian Multicultural Commission’s Multicultural Week (21–28 March 2026). This event is a collaboration between We Are One Club Inc. and Hello Zindagi Inc., bringing together Australian Chinese, Indian, and Greek communities to honour the richness and diversity of our shared cultural life.</p> <p>Participants can enjoy traditional Indian yoga, Chinese Tai Chi, and friendly cultural games, including Greek Tavli, Chinese Mahjong, and Indian Ludo. The celebration also features shared cultural food, music, and dance, creating a lively and welcoming space for connection, learning, and joy.</p> <p>By bringing these communities together, the event strengthens cross-cultural friendship, understanding, and participation, showcasing the harmony that makes multicultural Victoria so special.</p>		
Community Benefit	<p>This project delivers significant community benefit by creating an inclusive space where people from diverse cultural backgrounds can connect, learn, and celebrate together.</p> <p>Through shared activities, participants build mutual understanding and appreciation for one another’s traditions.</p> <p>The event strengthens social cohesion by encouraging interaction between communities, including Indian, Chinese, Greek, and broader local residents, helping reduce social isolation and fostering a sense of belonging. It also promotes physical and mental well-being through gentle movement practices and relaxed social engagement.</p> <p>By supporting the Victorian Multicultural Commission’s Multicultural Week, the project amplifies multicultural pride and demonstrates how cultural exchange enriches the whole community. The outcome is a more connected, harmonious, and vibrant local community where diversity is celebrated as a shared strength.</p>		
Total Beneficiaries	120	Total Project Cost	\$ 3,000.00
Knox Beneficiaries	108	Total Amount Requested	\$ 2,500.00

Minor Grant Program Applications
March 2026

Total Project Income

Income Description	Income Amount
Grant	\$ 2,500.00
In-kind	\$ 500.00
Total Income	\$ 3,000.00

Total Project Expenditure

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount
Venue Hire	\$ 380.00
Food 20% of grant	\$ 500.00
Indian Performers	\$ 250.00
Chinese, Greek, Taichi	\$ 700.00
Promotion material	\$ 250.00
Certificates and event momentum materials	\$ 362.00
Carrum Boards 2 Junior \$99, senior \$259	\$ 358.00
Indian Yoga	\$ 200.00
Total Expenditure	\$ 3,000.00

What specifically the grant is funding

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount	10% Co-Contribution Requirement (only if requesting equipment)	Co-Contribution Reflected in Project Income?
Knox Garden hall (contribution towards)	\$ 305.00		
Catering (20% of grant total)	\$ 362.60		
\$250 for Indian Dance	\$ 250.00		
Chinese, Greek, Taichi	\$ 700.00		
Indian Boards	\$ 358.00	\$ 35.80	Yes
Indian Yoga Instructor	\$ 200.00		
Total Grant Amount	\$ 2,175.60	\$ 35.80 - minimum amount required	\$500.00 – exceeds minimum required

5.2 Combined Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee 2025 Report and Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee 2025 Report

Final Report Destination:	Mid Month
Paper Type:	For Noting
Author:	Multicultural Partnerships Officer, Elena Charalambous and Health Promotion Officer, Casey Dykes
Manager:	Manager Community Strengthening, Kerryn Jansons
Executive:	Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

SUMMARY

This report provides Council with an overview of meetings and the achievements for both the Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee (KMAC) and the Knox Community Safety Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee for March 2025 to December 2025.

The KMAC was established in March 2009 to provide Council with advice on multicultural issues and promote greater awareness and understanding in the local community of cultural diversity in Knox.

The Knox Community Safety Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee was established in December 2018. This initiative followed a Council decision to merge the previously separate Community Safety Advisory Committee and the Knox Community Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to receive and note this report on the Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee and Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee achievements from March 2025 to January 2026.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee Achievements: March 2025 to December 2025

The Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee (KMAC) provides Council with advice on multicultural issues and supports greater awareness and understanding of cultural diversity in Knox. The Committee strengthens stakeholder engagement and contributes to the delivery of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

The purpose of KMAC is to provide informed advice on emerging multicultural issues, identify opportunities to strengthen inclusion, and support Council's policy and advocacy efforts. KMAC enhances Council's engagement with multicultural communities and contributes to the implementation and monitoring of the Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022–2027, as well as the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029.

KMAC meets bi-monthly and includes up to 14 members, representing local organisations (Victoria Police, the Knox Interfaith Network, the Migrant Information Centre) Councillors, and community members with interest in and knowledge of multiculturalism.

KMAC meetings are structured to include presentations and facilitated discussions that draw on community perspectives, professional expertise, and Council insights to inform advice on multicultural issues relevant to Knox. Meetings are designed to identify issues and opportunities affecting multicultural communities, build shared understanding, and strengthen Council's capacity to respond through policy, strategy, advocacy, and engagement. Through this structure, the Committee is supported to provide informed guidance and recommendations aligned with the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029 and relevant Council strategies.

The following table provides an overview of each of the Committee meetings in 2025, including summary of agenda, outcomes and contribution to key Council projects from March 2025 through December 2025.

Meeting	Outcome
18 February 2025	<p>February Meeting Summary</p> <p>The Committee noted key multicultural issues affecting the local community, including emerging settlement challenges, family and elder abuse concerns, and the importance of culturally responsive policy and education. Updates were provided on upcoming Cultural Diversity Week and Refugee Week initiatives, Committee recruitment, and member transitions. The meeting also included discussions on reducing gambling harm across diverse communities and improving waste education through accessible, multilingual engagement methods.</p> <p>One consultation was conducted at the February meeting:</p> <p>Knox Gambling Policy</p> <p>A gambling prevention project was presented to the Committee to seek feedback on gambling-related harms within multicultural communities. Members shared observations on the impacts of gambling and discussed potential improvements to reduce harm, including prevention, education, and support approaches.</p>
15 April 2025	<p>April Meeting Summary</p> <p>The Committee shared updates on community representation, settlement services, civic participation initiatives and interfaith activities, alongside officer updates on Committee recruitment and recent Cultural Diversity Week celebrations. Presentations highlighted the importance of building digital resilience within multicultural communities and improving awareness and responses to elder abuse through culturally appropriate education. The meeting also acknowledged the contributions of retiring Committee members.</p> <p>Two presentations were shared at the April meeting:</p> <p>University of Melbourne: Building Digital Resilience Among Older CALD Australians</p> <p>A former KMAC member presented research on building digital confidence among older CALD communities, sharing practical guides and policy recommendations to support digital inclusion.</p>

Meeting	Outcome
	<p>Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC): Elder Abuse and Response Services ECLC provided an overview of elder abuse, noting culturally related misunderstandings and the need for clear, translated information on topics such as wills and powers of attorney. Members emphasised the importance of accessible resources for community education.</p>
17 June 2025	<p>June Meeting Summary The Committee shared a wide range of updates on multicultural initiatives supporting health, wellbeing, settlement, community safety and social connection across Knox. Members discussed accessibility of community spaces, anti-racism efforts, storytelling and food as tools for inclusion, and priorities for future collaboration, including planning for Cultural Diversity Week 2026. Officer updates were also provided on Refugee Week activities, Committee recruitment, and available Community Grants.</p> <p>One consultation was conducted at the June meeting:</p> <p>Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) Review Council officers shared key community themes: dog waste, off-leash behaviour, cat containment and responsible pet ownership, and sought KMAC feedback on communication strategies. Members highlighted the need for multilingual information, greater awareness of registration requirements, and community understanding of animal management responsibilities.</p>
19 August 2025	<p>August Meeting Summary The Committee shared updates on a wide range of multicultural initiatives supporting digital inclusion, health and wellbeing, social connection, youth engagement and cultural celebration across Knox. Members discussed accessibility and transport barriers, community safety, and opportunities to strengthen collaboration through festivals, interfaith activity, and shared community spaces. Officer updates highlighted upcoming Council-led events and opportunities for community participation, including Cultural Diversity Week, Neighbour Day and Refugee Week. It is important to note that the Committee met at the Temple, receiving a tour and a presentation on its programs, multicultural membership and community activities. Members acknowledged the Temple's strong role in fostering cohesion and discussed challenges such as cultural misunderstandings and representation.</p> <p>One presentation was shared at the August meeting:</p> <p>Mid-Term Review of the Knox Climate Response Plan An update was provided on progress and outstanding actions in the Climate Response Plan 2021–2031, with a focus on improving communication with multicultural communities. Members contributed feedback to support next steps.</p>
21 October 2025	<p>October Meeting Summary The Committee shared updates on a range of multicultural initiatives supporting legal access, health and wellbeing, interfaith engagement, social connection and community-led programs across Knox. Members contributed to planning for a</p>

Meeting	Outcome
	<p>combined International Women’s Day and Cultural Diversity Week 2026 event and discussed opportunities to strengthen youth wellbeing, neighbourhood connection and inclusive community participation. The meeting also included discussion on future community engagement priorities.</p> <p>This meeting involved planning for upcoming Council events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for International Women’s Day and Cultural Diversity Week 2026: KMAC members shared ideas and were invited to join a working group to shape the program and engagement activities. • Planning for Neighbour Day 2026: Members discussed ways to activate cultural hubs and places of worship for Neighbour Day and were invited to support the program development. <p>One consultation was conducted at the October meeting:</p> <p>Proposed Open Space Strategy Strategic Infrastructure provided an overview of the draft long-term Open Space Strategy. Members participated in an activity and offered feedback on community use of parks, cultural practices and future consultation.</p>
25 November 2025	<p>November Meeting Summary The Committee reflected on community highlights from across the year, sharing updates on multicultural initiatives supporting mental health, digital literacy, ageing well, interfaith engagement and social connection. Members discussed opportunities to strengthen collaboration through upcoming festivals, Neighbour Day and a combined International Women’s Day and Cultural Diversity Week event. The meeting also included discussion on community-engaged arts projects planned for 2026 and acknowledged the contributions of members and officers over the year.</p> <p>One presentation was shared at the November meeting:</p> <p>Immerse 2026 The Creative Placemaking team presented early concepts for two community-engaged art projects for Immerse in July 2026. Artists will work with cultural communities to co-create artworks, exploring identity and storytelling. Members were invited to participate or recommend other multicultural groups.</p>

In addition to the regular KMAC meetings, members participated in several Council initiatives throughout 2025 that supported multicultural inclusion and strengthened community connections.

- **Cultural Diversity Week Intergenerational Community Celebration – March 2025**
Council, in partnership with KMAC, Knox Library and the Knox Interfaith Network, hosted an intergenerational community celebration at the Basin Community House. The event featured an Acknowledgement of Country and Smoking Ceremony, cultural performances, cooking demonstrations, bilingual Storytime, cultural games and children’s activities. The

celebration showcased the cultural richness of the Knox community and promoted cross-cultural connection.

- **KMAC Recruitment – June 2025**

Council completed the recruitment process for the Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee, appointing four community representatives and four professional industry representatives. The new members bring diverse cultural backgrounds and expertise to support the Committee’s ongoing work.

- **Refugee Week Staff Capacity-Building Session – June 2025**

Council delivered an internal capacity-building session featuring professional representatives and a guest speaker from the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. The session strengthened staff understanding of refugee and asylum seeker experiences and informed Council’s work in supporting these communities. KMAC members attended to observe Council’s programs and deepen their understanding of Council initiatives.

1.2 Knox Community Safety Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee: March 2025 to December 2025

The Knox Community Safety Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee (the Committee) plays a crucial role in advising Council on the development and implementation of activities relating to the Health and Wellbeing priorities in Knox’s Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

The purpose of the Committee is to support the development and implementation of the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan by offering expert advice on community safety, health and wellbeing priorities. It plays a key role in keeping Council informed of stakeholder activities to strengthen alignment, foster partnerships, and enhance collective impact. The Committee contributes to the annual review of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, identifies emerging issues through evidence-based research, and advocating for appropriate action within the Knox community. Additionally, it supports advocacy efforts, builds organisational partnerships around shared priorities, and explores opportunities for Council-led initiatives in priority community settings in collaboration with partner organisations.

The Committee meets four times per year and current members include representatives from a variety of organisations including, EACH, Victoria Police, Women’s Health East, Knox Infolink, The Department of Family, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), The Knox Learning Alliance, Uniting, Outer Eastern Local Learning Network (OELLEN), Knox Leisureworks, Your Library, Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC), Free From Family Violence (FVREE), and Council Officers from Community Strengthening and Youth Services.

Meetings are designed to include presentations that provide advice and subject matter expertise on priority areas outlined in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. They also serve to build knowledge and capacity in key areas of health and wellbeing. Through these sessions, the Committee receives the information it needs to offer guidance and direction on relevant strategic priorities.

The following table provides an overview of each of the Committee meetings in 2025, including summary of agenda, outcomes and contribution to key Council projects from March 2025 through December 2025.

Meeting	Outcome
13 March 2025	<p>The Committee met for the first meeting of the year. There were several new members, including then Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glen Atwell. Members introduced themselves, and their roles and spoke about what they were looking forward to for the year.</p> <p>Key agenda items included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joanna Mithen, the Population Health Team Lead at North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU) gave an update regarding their work in their catchment which includes Knox, Yarra Ranges and Maroondah, and their upcoming plan which they were in the process of consulting with Councils on. • Committee members gave an update on the work they are delivering in 2025 that aligned with the Knox Council Plan 2021-2025. • The Committee had a presentation from Anika from Explicability who spoke to Knox crime statistics and perception of safety. Data was presented which compared Knox to the Victorian rates on issues such as alleged offender rates, family violence rates, and media representation. A representative from Victoria Police, and the Safer Communities Officer at Council then gave local context.
12 June 2025	<p>The Committee met for its second 2025 meeting and discussed the following key agenda items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee members gave their feedback on the draft Climate Response Plan following a presentation from the Senior Project Manager – Climate Response, at Council. Committee members had a number of questions about the draft Plan which helped inform its actions and future direction. • In line with the upcoming Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 being endorsed, the Committee contributed their feedback to the wrap up of the previous Council Plan 2021-2025. • Members contributed to wrapping up the Knox Mental Health Action Plan 2021-2025 by providing local context and achievements of the group to be highlighted in the report. • The Committee contributed to the development of the Year 1 Actions of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, as well as planning for Year 2 Actions. <p>The meeting was closed with a mapping activity for partners working in the alcohol harm-minimisation space, with the aim of increasing collaborative efforts.</p>
11 September 2025	<p>In the third meeting of the year, the Committee gave organisational updates regarding current and future initiatives and opportunities for collaboration and partnership.</p> <p>Key agenda items included:</p>

Meeting	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates and collaboration opportunities from various Council officers, including a community safety update, Library update, including the new and improved Bayswater Library space, and a presentation on the Youth Services project, “The Forge”. • The Committee then heard from Penny Robinson, Centre Manager at Knox Infolink, about the important work they do, and data about those who access the service. • The meeting was closed with a discussion about advocacy efforts across the Committee with the purpose of identifying priorities and alignment between agencies, and the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. Some outcomes of the discussion included sharing funding opportunities, and shared data and outcomes to support grant applications and other opportunities for increased funding.
<p>11 December 2025</p>	<p>The Committee met for the final time in 2025. Councillor Lisa Cooper was appointed as Chair of the committee at a recent Council meeting, however conveyed her apologies for being unable to attend the meeting.</p> <p>Key agenda items included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee heard from Council Senior Landscape Architect from the Strategic Open Space Planning team about the “Open Spaces Strategy” and its upcoming community consultation period. Committee members were given the opportunity to provide feedback on what they would like to see included in the plan. • The Committee then heard an update from the Coordinator Community Partnerships and Inclusion about the newly established “Local Safety Committee” and its alignment with the Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee. • The Committee heard from the Health Promotion Officer at Yarra Ranges Council about their work within leading a Local Drug Action Team (LDAT), funded by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF), which Knox will be leading in 2026, led by the Gender Equality and Health Promotion Officer. The Committee gave feedback on how the Knox LDAT should be approached and identified potential partners to inform early stage planning in 2026. <p>The Committee then shared updates and what they are looking forward to in 2026, as well as feedback on what they would like to see included in 2026 Committee meetings. The Committee was thanked for their time and contribution in 2025 and wished a happy holiday period.</p>

2. ENGAGEMENT

During 2025, various Council Officers consulted with the Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee (KMAC) and the Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee on key community safety, health and wellbeing topics and issues, and informed the review and development of Strategies, Policy’s and Plans, as noted in Section 1.1 and 1.2 of this report.

KMAC recruitment was conducted in June 2025, appointing four community representatives and four professional industry representatives.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Knox is a culturally diverse municipality, with the 2021 Census showing that just over one-third of residents were born overseas and nearly one-third of households speak a language other than English at home.

Data from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2023 indicates that 25% of Knox residents reported low to medium life satisfaction, the second highest result in the North East region. In addition, 20% of Knox residents sought professional help for a mental health-related issue in the past year.

Further community need is outlined in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and associated Health and Wellbeing Profile.

Advice provided to Council by the Advisory Committees on plans, policies and programs reflects the needs and experiences of the community and provides a key mechanism for identifying issues affecting Knox residents, including people from multicultural communities.

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

There are no financial or resource implications associated with this report. The Advisory Committees are supported by existing resources within the Community Strengthening Department.

7. RISKS

A potential risk to Council is the misalignment of community organisation representatives with Council's health and wellbeing priorities and the broader objectives of the Knox Council Plan. Misalignment may limit the effectiveness of advice provided to Council on plans, policies and programs.

There is also a risk of reduced continuity and community and service provider representation where meeting attendance is low, particularly in instances where member organisations do not nominate an alternative representative. This can impact quorum, diversity of perspectives, and the ability of the Advisory Committees to provide timely and informed advice.

To mitigate these risks, the Terms of Reference are reviewed regularly, and recruitment processes are carefully targeted to support alignment with Council's strategic priorities. Ongoing

engagement with member organisations and clear expectations around attendance and alternate representation also supports appropriate representation on the Advisory Committees.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Strategy 1.2 - Our community can access diverse training and life-long learning opportunities through delivery, promotion and partnerships with relevant organisations.

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.

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

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.

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

Nil

5.3 Talaskia Childcare Centre - Future Options

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For Decision
Author:	Coordinator Property Management, Flora Westcott
Manager:	Manager Strategic Property & Procurement, Tim Lawson
Executive:	Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin

SUMMARY

Following the April 2016 Council resolution to build two new Early Years hubs, Council resolved in November 2018 to declare five sites, including the Talaskia Reserve (1A Edward Street, Upper Ferntree Gully) site as surplus to Council's requirements. These buildings were identified as surplus due to the consolidation and co-location of services at more accessible locations, with the intention that the sale of these sites would help offset the cost of constructing the two hubs.

The Talaskia site is on a land area of approximately 1,280 sqm and is in the south-eastern corner of the Knox City Council-owned Talaskia Reserve, opposite the expanding Angliss Hospital. There is on-site parking, limited to 2 hours, next to the building. Further parking is available within Talaskia Reserve and the surrounding streets, but due to the hospital there is high and growing parking demand throughout the area. The site is within the Dandenong Foothills and zoned Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) with numerous overlays impacting the land including Design Development Overlay 1, Environmental Significance Overlay 3, Significant Landscape Overlay 2 and Vegetation Protection Overlay 2. There are 28 trees on site, a mix of exotic and native.

The Talaskia building has been vacant for over 6 years and is a 1970s constructed single level brick building in average dated condition. The building was purpose built for early learning services and is no longer appropriate, nor needed, for this use. As a surplus asset, there has been no ongoing investment in maintaining the building beyond a bare minimum, meaning the building is also not appropriate for any use without significant unbudgeted remediation and renovation works.

Further work undertaken in reviewing the site using Council's Strategic Property Prioritisation Framework has identified a number of complexities and high risks involved in rezoning and subdividing the site from the main Talaskia Reserve for divestment purposes. Given the costs involved, there is no realistic prospect of a financial return for Council.

A number of options have been considered and are presented in this report. The officer recommendation is that the Talaskia Family and Children's Centre be demolished and the building footprint area (approx. 430 sqm) be converted into additional car parking in response to local demand. The remaining balance of the site (approx. 850 sqm) is proposed to be consolidated back into the greater Talaskia Reserve as open space for community and public use. This would ensure the retention of all but one exotic, low retention value tree on site, and a minimum of intrusive works being required. This option is consistent with the existing planning protections in place with minimal impact to landscaping, environmental or native vegetation overlays anticipated.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves to:

1. Note that 1A Edwards Street, Upper Ferntree Gully has been declared surplus to Council's requirements.
2. Note the complexities and estimated costs associated with the potential sale, or leasing out, of 1A Edwards Street, Upper Ferntree Gully.
3. Subject to the allocation of funding through the 2026/27 Budget process:
 - a. demolish the Talaskia Family and Children's Centre located at 1A Edwards Street; and
 - b. remove the fencing surrounding the currently enclosed rear yard associated with the Talaskia Family and Children's Centre at 1A Edwards Street, and return that area to open space.
4. Approve officers to progress investigations into the installation of car parking within the remaining footprint of the Talaskia Family and Children's Centre at 1A Edwards Street, with a further report to be presented to Council outlining a proposed way forward for the installation of car parking on the former building site.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Declaration as Surplus

In November 2018 officers presented a report for Council consideration, discussing the strategic review of several Early Years building assets in the context of the construction of two new Early Years hubs. Recommendations to Council were established following a review and presentation of a plan to consider the future purpose of various Early Years sites and impacts to service delivery with the implementation of the two new Early Years hubs.

Council resolved to declare five sites surplus to Council's requirements, including the site at Talaskia Reserve, given these assets would be replaced by the Early Years Hubs, which are modern, flexible, and provide co-located, integrated services to improve the overall experience for residents utilising these services. The sites were intended to be sold to assist with offsetting the project costs for the construction of the two hubs (completed in 2019), in Bayswater and Wantirna South. Four of the five sites have been disposed of, with this site at Talaskia the last remaining one.

The November 2018 report noted the strategic review for the Talaskia site had determined that 'the site is not required for Council's existing and future requirements and can be divested. The future use and planning for the site is yet to be confirmed, however it is noted that the Centre will need to be subdivided from the larger park area, and a rezoning will be required prior to divestment as Council cannot sell land into private ownership when it is in a PPRZ (zone)'. The November 2018 Council resolution noted that a further report would be presented to Council regarding the future planning and actions in relation to the Talaskia site.

1.2 Talaskia Family and Children's Centre Facility

The Talaskia Family and Children's Centre occupies a fenced 1,280 sqm area in the south-eastern corner of the Council-owned Talaskia Reserve. The site is located within the Dandenong Foothills and is subject to multiple planning controls, including the Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ),

Design and Development Overlay 1 (DDO1), Environmental Significance Overlay 3 (ESO3), Significant Landscape Overlay 2 (SLO2), and Vegetation Protection Overlay 2 (VPO2).

The site is positioned opposite the expanding Angliss Hospital and adjoining established residential properties. Within the fenced boundary are two vegetated green spaces (one at the front of the building and a larger area at the rear) that could be reintegrated into the broader reserve with minimal intervention. The rear area is located on a gentle slope and contains several large, mature gum trees alongside smaller scrub vegetation. The front space is flatter, smaller in size, and currently contains a shade sail. An independent arboricultural assessment was undertaken by Melbourne Tree Care in January 2026; detailed findings are provided in section 1.3 of this report and at Attachment 1.

The site, along with four others, was previously declared surplus by Council, with an intention to sell it to offset construction costs associated with the Bayswater and Wantirna early years hubs. The other sites have been disposed, this site has additional complexities, as any sale would require it to be excised from the Talaskia Reserve through subdivision. The building is no longer required in Council's asset portfolio for delivering early years services and the cost of renewing the building to make it suitable for use for another purpose is significant and unbudgeted.

Originally constructed as a purpose-built early learning centre, the building includes a kitchen, children's bathrooms and several playrooms. Its internal layout was designed to meet historic early years regulatory requirements and features elements such as open sightlines and non-private children's bathrooms. These characteristics make the building unsuitable for most alternative community uses without substantial redevelopment.

Relicensing the facility as a kindergarten or childcare centre is not feasible given significant regulatory changes since the building's construction. Furthermore, the recent Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (endorsed by Council at its mid-month meeting of September 2025) indicates that early years' service supply in the area is sufficient through to 2035, removing any strategic need to reactivate the building for this purpose.

A recent condition audit found the structure to be fundamentally sound but significantly dated. Major renovation and refurbishment of works would be required for any reactivation. Interior finishes are in poor condition including some internal ceiling sections constructed from thatching, and more extensive issues are likely to emerge should works commence, increasing overall cost. Limited foot traffic in the area, combined with an inflexible floorplan, also reduces the attractiveness of the site for potential commercial tenants. Transitioning the site for use as additional clubrooms would also require significant investment to support reactivation and to address amenity requirements, noting the site is currently configured for children's services, including associated facilities and fit-out.

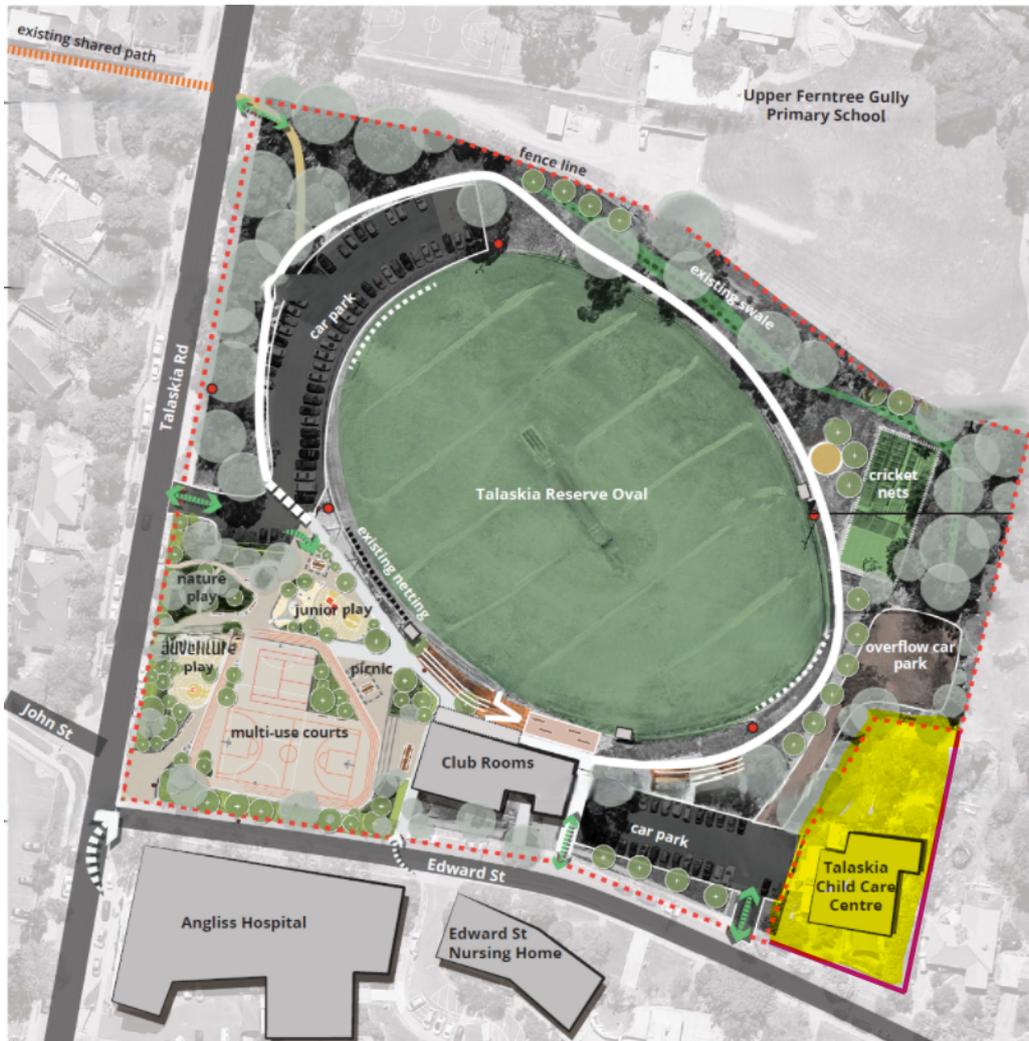
The building is not suitable for other uses such as for changerooms without significant investment. As the buildings function was as change rooms areas are designed in the early years context. Reactivating the building even in its current state would

Council has received requests from local clubs to use the site as a changing room. The original purpose as an early learning center makes the facility unsuitable for this use in its current condition; in particular:

- 1) very limited opportunities for privacy - the building has been designed
 - a. to ensure lines of site throughout
 - b. With extensive public facing windows
- 2) toileting facilities are sized for preschoolers

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the facility and its broader context.

Figure 1: Talaskia Reserve Overview



Behind the facility is an area currently being used as informal parking. This is not a designated car park, rather its intended purpose was to allow the cricket club to drop off and collect equipment. The surface is uneven gravel, with no line-marking, signage or formal layout. Use as an informal car park creates several risks and operational challenges, including:

- uncontrolled vehicle movements and poor traffic flow and
- trip, fall and vehicle damage hazards.

It also creates challenges in enforcing the 2 hour limits in the car park above. Because vehicles can park informally without time controls or monitoring, users may avoid regulated parking areas altogether. This reduces turnover, undermines the intent of the time restrictions, and complicates compliance activities.

Figure 2: An aerial view of the Talaskia Family and Children’s Centre with current fencing/boundaries.

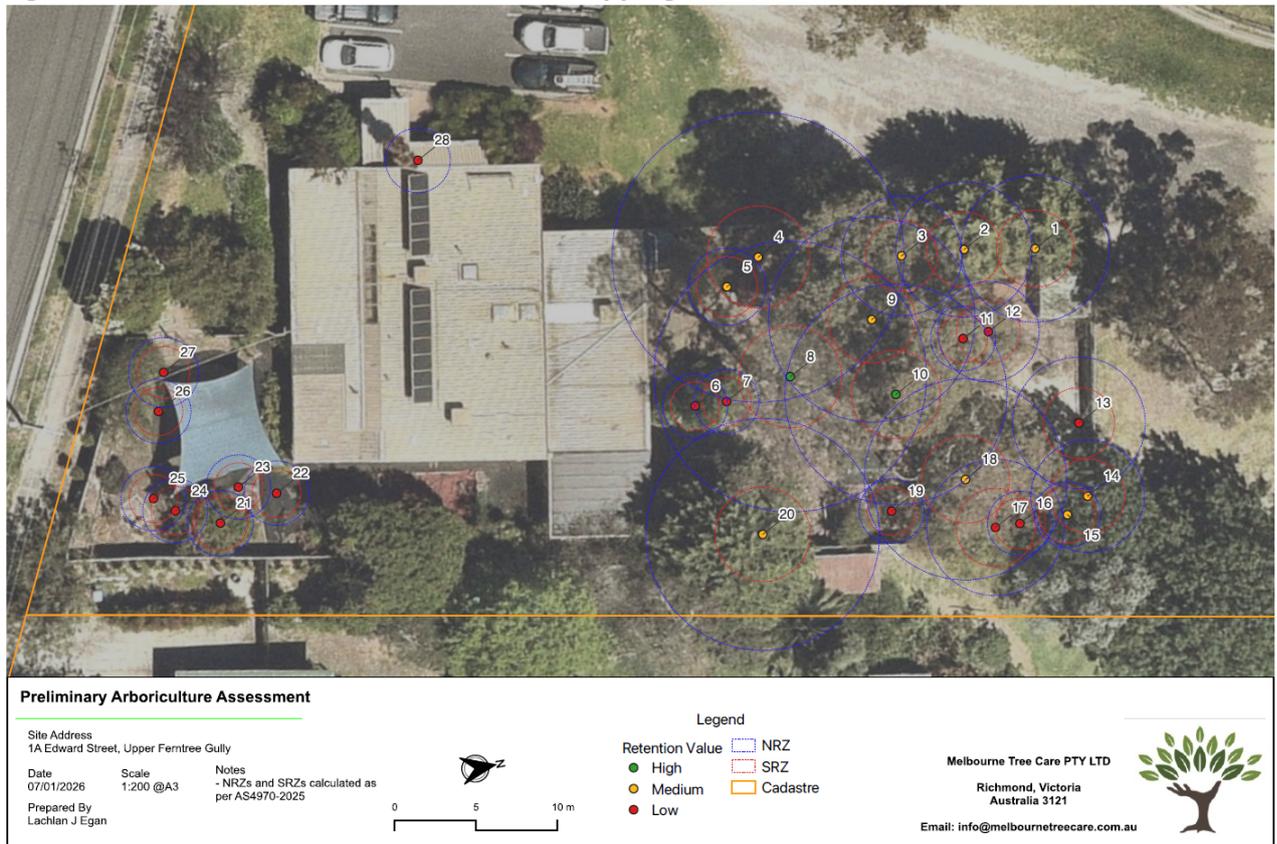


1.3 Arboricultural assessment

An independent arboricultural assessment was undertaken in early January 2026 by Melbourne Tree Care in accordance with Australian Standard 4970-2025 (the Australian Standard for trees on development site). Such assessments are undertaken to

- identify trees that may be affected by future development,
- outline permit requirements,
- provide retention values and
- provide root protection zone calculations.

A total of 28 trees were assessed using ground-based Visual Tree Assessment (refer to figure 3 below).

Figure 3 – Arboricultural Assessment tree mapping

The site contains a mix of exotic (54%), Australian native (25%), and Victorian native (21%) species, with most trees being semi-mature or juvenile. Tree health on the site was predominantly assessed as fair (61%), with 21% rated good and a small proportion poor (4%) or dead (tree number 13, an exotic *Fraxinus excelsior*). Structural conditions were also mostly fair (61%) or good (21%), with 18% presenting as poor.

Two trees (Tree 8, *Corymbia citriodora* or Lemon-scented gum and Tree 10, *Scorymbia maculata* or Spotted gum) have high retention value, defined as trees that should be considered for retention wherever possible. Ten trees have medium retention value (should be considered for retention wherever possible but should not pose a material constraint to site development). Some 16 trees were assessed as low retention values, defined as trees that should be removed. This was largely due to the species type (weeds or exotic), poor structure, clear ongoing decline, or low life expectancy.

Tree 28, a *Cordyline australis* 'Purpurea' or purple cordyline is located near the front entrance of the facility (see figure 4 below). It is an exotic species, and likely not deliberately planted in this location. It has a short useful life expectancy, likely retainable for only 5 – 15 years. Given this information, the report assesses the tree as being of low retention value (defined as trees that should be removed). Given its location, renovation or demolition of the building is unlikely without removal.

Figure 4 – purple cordyline located at the front of the facility.



1.4 The Strategic Property Prioritisation Framework (SPPF)

The Strategic Property Prioritisation Framework (SPPF) was endorsed by Council in 2024 as a defined way of considering potential land divestment against the strategic priorities of Council and community uses. Broadly, the SPPF considers current strategies, service demands, community usage, asset lifecycle stages, financial implications, risk approach, land use impacts and the occupation of the asset. These are considered within an overarching context including site specific matters, location and anticipated future use. The SPPF aims to bring together significant objectives and decisions into a consistent, qualitative, and considered approach.

An assessment of the Talaskia Family and Children’s Centre was undertaken utilising the SPPF. This has revealed several challenges, costs, opportunities and risks associated with the divestment of this site as outlined in the following sections.

1.4.1 Rezoning Requirements

Council must comply with the *Local Government Act (2020)* and is guided by Council policies in making decisions regarding the retention or disposal of land. Under Council’s “Sale of Land and Building Policy”, Council also follows the “*Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale, Exchange & Transfer of Land*” (the Guidelines). The Guidelines require that land is rezoned prior to disposal, if that rezoning is required to ensure the highest and best use of the site.

Talaskia Family and Children’s Centre is currently zoned as Public Park and Recreation (PPRZ). Given the location within the Dandenong Foothills and the zoning of the neighbouring properties, the most likely future zone would be Neighbourhood Residential Zone 1 (NRZ1). NRZ1 allows for low density, single dwelling, with a minimum sub-division size of 1,000sqm. If subdivided it would require an open space replacement and proceeds from that sale to be used to buy replacement land or improve open space land in accordance with Section 20 of the *Subdivision Act 1988* (see section 1.4.3 below for further detail).

Further requirements of the applicable overlays include:

- Design and Development Overlay (DDO1) – subdivide into minimum 1,000sqm lots with buildings not exceeding 40% of the land area
- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO3) – The area covered by this schedule is identified in *Sites of Biological Significance in Knox - 2nd Edition, 2010*. A permit would be required for vegetation removal.
- Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO2) – Development would be subject to decision guidelines that protect and enhance the visual, natural and cultural heritage values of the foothills landscape.
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO2) – A permit is required to remove, destroy or lop vegetation listed in this schedule. Note none of the vegetation on site is identified in this schedule.

1.4.2 Windfall Gains Tax

Rezoning the site would trigger the State Government’s windfall gains tax. When land is rezoned and subsequently sold, the Valuer-General Victoria assesses the difference between the pre-rezoning and post-rezoning values of the property. Council is required to pay tax on this uplift in value. This process assumes the land remains in the same physical condition, with the zoning change alone driving the increase. Tax rates upon rezoning-based uplift:

- \$100K – \$500K uplift: 62.5% on the amount exceeding \$100K
- \$500K+ uplift: 50% on the entire uplift

Land previously zoned for public use typically experiences a significant uplift because such zoning restricts development potential and market value. Once rezoned to a more flexible or commercially viable designation, the land can be developed for residential, commercial, or mixed-use purposes, dramatically expanding its utility and profitability. As a result, the transition from public use zoning to a development-friendly zone often produces some of the largest windfall gains, triggering substantial tax liabilities under the Windfall Gains Tax framework for Council.

1.4.3 Open Space requirements and implications of subdivision

If subdivided, 1,000sqm would be removed from the reserve. As this is currently part of the reserve, it qualifies as Public Open Space under the *Subdivision Act 1988*. As such, in accordance with Section 20 of the *Subdivision Act 1988*, Council would be required to:

- Allocate the proceeds from the sale of the area to the purchase of replacement open space; and
- Provided for replacement public open space.
-

1.5 Recommended option

Given the context provided by the SPFF analysis, officers examined four scenarios for the future of the former Talaskia Family and Children’s Centre, including sale (requiring subdivision and excise from the reserve), commercial leasing, and demolition with full or part reintegration into the reserve. Options were assessed against their financial impact, community and reputational implications, and process complexity.

From the analysis undertaken, officers consider the most appropriate outcome is demolishing the building, creating approximately 20 formal car parking spaces on the former building footprint (around 430sqm), and returning the remaining 850sqm of land to Talaskia Reserve as open space. This approach avoids impacts to medium or high-retention value trees, does not require intrusive works, and is consistent with existing planning controls, with minimal expected effects on landscaping, environmental values or native vegetation overlays.

Overall this approach provides community benefits by increasing accessible open space, providing additional parking in a high-demand precinct, and supporting the broader objectives of the Bayswater and Wantirna hub developments. It also enables Council to retire an ageing facility which has been deemed surplus to requirements, and avoid ongoing maintenance and unbudgeted renewal costs.

Overall, officers consider this option offers a balanced and sustainable long-term solution.

1.5.1 Analysis of recommended option

The option to demolish the building, reintegrate open space and construct approximately 20 formal car parks represents a balanced and sustainable outcome. This option provides:

- Community benefit, through increased availability of both open space and parking in a high-demand precinct.
- Moderate financial impact, with the potential for future income generation through additional parking sensors or potentially a metered parking trial.
- Low process complexity, avoiding rezoning, Windfalls Gains Tax and requirements to replace lost open space
- Alignment with Council's asset and service strategies, allowing retirement of an aged asset and reducing long term risk and liability.
- Delivery efficiencies, with the potential to concurrently deliver works with the 2027/28 Talaskia Reserve car park renewal, improving efficiency and minimizing disruption.
- Offers potential opportunity to trial paid parking, for the new or whole car park.

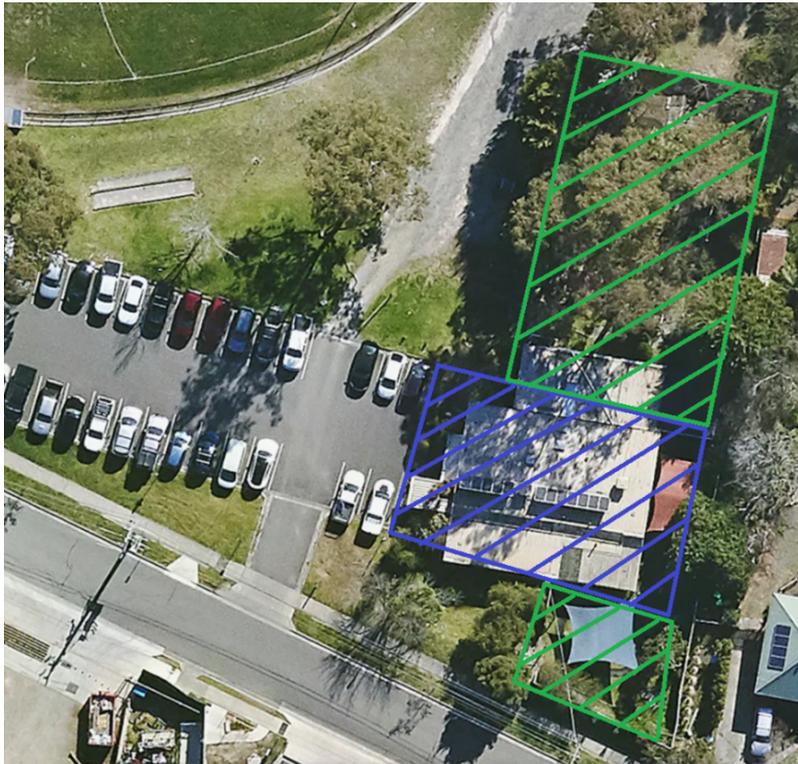
Figure 5 below is an aerial view showing approximately the area for additional car parking (blue) and area returned to green space (green)

The costs of delivering this option are estimated at:

- \$120,000 demolition of the building
- \$15,000 park reintegration works
- \$100,000 for implementing additional parking (circa 20 extra car parking spaces @ \$5,000 per space including parking sensors).

Should Council determine to proceed with this option, an indicative timeline could see the building demolished in 2026/27, with the additional car parks asphalted in 2027/28 to align with other planned works at the reserve. Undertaking this work would be subject to Council allocating budget funding through its 2026/27 capital works program. Noting that the area to be paved and the exact number of car parks will be confirmed and presented to Council in a future report.

Figure 5 – Arial View of Option



1.6 Options not recommended

1 – Demolish, Rezone, sell.

The land is subdivided from the reserve, rezoned and sold on the open market.

Rationale – High cost, high risk.

- Total estimated cost to Council \$673,000 - \$923,000
- Significant financial impact due to the:
 - o costs associated with subdivision and rezoning,
 - o Windfall Gains Tax and
 - o required purchase of replacement open space.
- Long complex statutory process
- Loss of open space

2 – Renovate and Lease

The facility is extensively renovated to suit other uses and offered to the market for lease.

Rationale - High cost, high risk

- Total estimated cost to Council \$640,000 to \$850,000
- Significant refurbishment costs with no guaranteed tenant and low market confidence.
- Long payback period (approx 13 years) with ongoing maintenance obligations for council
- Retains an asset previously planned for retirement and declared surplus to requirements

3 – Full Open Space Integration

The facility is demolished and the whole area reintegrated into the reserve as open space

Rationale - Lost opportunity to delivery on community needs

- Total estimated cost to Council of approximately \$170,000
- Lower cost but does not address the demand for additional formal parking in the area.
- Demolished area likely to still be used as informal carparking unless it was fenced off.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Teams across Council have been consulted in the assessment of the future use for the Talaskia Family and Children’s Centre site suitability, including but not limited to the Facilities and Traffic and Transport teams. External experts have also been consulted, including real estate agendas specializing in leasing commercial properties.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Repurposing the site for open space and car parking is anticipated to have a positive social impact, increasing the open space available to local residents and meeting a community need for additional car parking.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation of the emerging recommendation Scenario C 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

The recommended option for demolishing and repurposing the site would have marginally positive environmental impacts, by increasing open space, continuing to retain high retention trees and reducing electricity and gas usage within the existing dated building. The removal of one low retention value tree would be required.

There are numerous planning overlays on Talaskia Reserve including Design Development Overlay 1 (DDO1), Environmental Significance Overlay 3 (ESO3), Significant Landscape Overlay 2 (SLO2) and Vegetation Protection Overlay 2 (VPO2).

These overlays have significant environmental protection implications for the site and there are many mature trees within the Reserve on which the Talaskia Family and Children’s Centre is situated. Addressing DDO1, ESO3, SLO2 and VPO2 requirements significantly limits any future subdivision or development potential of the Talaskia Family and Children’s Centre footprint site.

Repurposing the site to partial open space and additional carparking assumes no removal of mature trees or significant intrusive works being required. This option is consistent with the existing planning protection overlays in place with minimal to no impacts to landscaping, environmental factors or native vegetation anticipated (the tree requiring removal is an exotic species). The additional carparking spaces are assumed to be overlaid onto the future demolished building footprint area.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost for implementing the recommended option is \$120,000 for the demolition of the building, \$15,000 for park reintegration works, and \$100,000 to install 20 additional carparking spaces. Should it be feasible to provide additional parking spaces, the overall cost would increase proportionally with the number of carparks.

7. RISKS

Risk	Description	Controls
Community Resistance to Demolition	Community members, including some sporting clubs, may oppose demolition of the building or advocate for alternative uses such as changing rooms, despite the building's unsuitability without major renovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform reserve stakeholders of outcomes and next steps.
Planning and Environmental Compliance	Repurposing the site could pose planning or environmental risks if inconsistent with zoning or overlay requirements, or if landscaping or native vegetation were impacted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proceeding with repurposing in ways consistent with existing zoning and planning protection overlays. • Confirmation that the proposed partial open space and carparking works are expected to have minimal or no impact on environmental factors or native vegetation.
Latent Conditions Discovered During Demolition	Demolition activities may uncover unknown latent conditions that could affect cost or timelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference to previous asbestos assessments (CETEC, 2015; ARD review) confirming no asbestos identified. • Completion of a Division 6 Asbestos Audit prior to demolition to validate findings and mitigate risk. • Inclusion of contingencies within demolition planning and procurement processes.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Caring for and enhancing our environment

Strategy 3.2 - Green spaces and waterways are protected, enhanced and enjoyed through planning, promotion and maintenance of our built and natural environment.

Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Strategy 4.5 - Council is financially sustainable through long-term strategic, financial and asset planning, and the responsible prioritisation, allocation and use of resources.

Planning our future city

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.

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 - Aborigicultural Assessment - Talaskia Center - January 2026 [5.3.1 - 28 pages]

Preliminary Arboricultural Assessment

Site Address:
1A Edward Street, Upper Ferntree Gully

Prepared for:
Knox City Council

Prepared by:
Lachlan J Egan
DipArb

Submitted: 15/01/2026

Melbourne
TREE CARE



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Document Control

Table 1. Document Control

Version	Author	Date	Amendment
1	Lachlan J Egan	08/01/2026	Null
2	Lachlan J Egan	15/01/2026	Appendix B Correction

Introduction

Melbourne Tree Care was contracted by Knox City Council to undertake a preliminary arboricultural assessment for trees located within subject site that may be impacted by future development.

Aim of report

The intention of this report is to:

- Assess trees that may be impacted by future development.
- State the permit requirements for tree removal.
- State the retention value for each tree assessed.
- State the notional root zone (NRZ) and structural root zone (SRZ) of all trees assessed.

Methodology

- Lachlan J Egan of Melbourne Tree Care attended site on the 5th of January 2026.
- Data acquired is based on a Visual Tree Inspection (VTA) from the ground (Mattheck and Breloer, 1994).
- All trees within the subject site with a mature height greater than five metres were assessed.
- Trees were grouped where they are densely planted and are of the same species and/or are of similar size.
- Data collected for each tree was their current size (DSH, DaB, crown spread, height), condition (health and structure), ULE (useful life expectancy), retention value, NRZ, and SRZ.
- DSH (Diameter at Standard Height) was measured at 1.4 metres using a diameter tape.
- DaB (Diameter at Base) was measure above the root flare using a diameter tape.
- Tree height and canopy spread were estimated.
- Tree locations are estimates based on aerial imagery.
- Data was recorded using Tree Plotter.



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- NRZs and SRZs were calculated in accordance with Australian Standard 4970-2025 Protection of trees on development sites.

Planning Controls

The subject site is located in Knox City Council Public Park and Recreation Zone – (PPRZ). Three planning overlays are present:

- Significant Landscape Overlay – Schedule 2 (SLO2)
- Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 3 (ESO3)
- Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1 (DDO1)

Vegetation Controls

SLO2

As stated in the SLO 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. This does not apply to a tree that is:

- Listed in Table 1 of this schedule.
 - *Hakea salicifolia*
 - *Viburnum tinus*.
- Dead. This exemption does not apply to standing dead tree with a trunk girth of 0.4 metre or more at a height of 1.3 metres above ground level.

ESO3

The ESO states that a permit is not required to remove, destroy or lop vegetation that is:

- Not indigenous within Knox (e.g. Victorian species of *Boronia* or *Grevillea*).
- Dead. This exemption does not apply to standing dead trees with a trunk diameter of 40 centimetres or more at a height of 1.3 metres above ground level.

Table 2. Individual Tree Permit Requirements

Location	Tree Id	Botanical Name	Origin	Circ.(cm)	Height (m)	Spread (m)	Permit Required SLO2	Permit Required ESO4
Onsite	1	<i>Hesperocyparis macrocarpa</i>	Exotic	119	9	5	Yes	No
Onsite	2	<i>Hesperocyparis macrocarpa</i>	Exotic	110	9	5	Yes	No
Onsite	3	<i>Hesperocyparis macrocarpa</i>	Exotic	97	8	5	Yes	No

email: info@melbournetreecare.com.au
web: www.melbournetreecare.com.au

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Location	Tree Id	Botanical Name	Origin	Circ.(cm)	Height (m)	Spread (m)	Permit Required SLO2	Permit Required ESO4
Onsite	4	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	Aus. Native	236	4	1	Yes	No
Onsite	5	<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	Vic. Native	63	8	3	Yes	No
Onsite	6	<i>Platycladus orientalis</i>	Exotic	31	3	1	No	No
Onsite	7	<i>Viburnum tinus</i>	Exotic	25	3	2	No	No
Onsite	8	<i>Corymbia citriodora</i>	Aus. Native	220	17	13	Yes	No
Onsite	9	<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	Vic. Native	167	14	9	Yes	No
Onsite	10	<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	Vic. Native	179	20	10	Yes	No
Onsite	11	<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	Vic. Native	16	3	1	No	No
Onsite	12	<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Vic. Native	82	6	5	Yes	No
Onsite	13	<i>Fraxinus sp.</i>	Exotic	107	4	2	No (dead)	No
Onsite	14	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Exotic	91	7	4	Yes	No
Onsite	15	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Exotic	53	7	3	Yes	No
Onsite	16	<i>Hakea salicifolia</i>	Aus. Native	47	4	3	No	No
Onsite	17	<i>Hakea salicifolia</i>	Aus. Native	111	4	5	No	No
Onsite	18	<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	Vic. Native	163	17	7	Yes	No
Onsite	19	<i>Hakea salicifolia</i>	Aus. Native	16	3	2	No	No
Onsite	20	<i>Hesperocyparis macrocarpa</i>	Exotic	188	10	6	Yes	No
Onsite	21	<i>Photinia Xfraseri 'Robusta'</i>	Exotic	53	5	3	Yes	No
Onsite	22	<i>Photinia Xfraseri 'Robusta'</i>	Exotic	0	1	1	No	No
Onsite	23	<i>Photinia Xfraseri 'Robusta'</i>	Exotic	0	1	1	No	No
Onsite	24	<i>Photinia Xfraseri 'Robusta'</i>	Exotic	0	1	1	No	No
Onsite	25	<i>Photinia Xfraseri 'Robusta'</i>	Exotic	0	1	1	No	No
Onsite	26	<i>Callistemon sp.</i>	Aus. Native	25	4	2	No	No
Onsite	27	<i>Melaleuca hypericifolia</i>	Aus. Native	57	3	3	Yes	No
Onsite	28	<i>Cordyline australis 'Purpurea'</i>	Exotic	47	6	3	Yes	No



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Observations

A total of 28 individual trees or groups of trees were assessed for this report. (Figure 1). See **Appendix A** for tree locations. Detailed observations for individual trees are listed in **Appendix B** and see **Appendix C** for glossary of terms.



Figure 1. Site overview and tree locations

Tree Population Overview

The trees assessed are semi mature (54%), juvenile (25%), and mature (21%) in age. The trees are a mix of exotic (54%), Australian native (25%), and Victorian native (21%) species. The population is comprised of over ten different species with *Photinia Xfraseri Robusta* (Chinese Hawthorne) and *Corymbia maculata* (Spotted Gum) the most common planted species assessed. A number of trees could only be identified to a genus level due to a lack of identifiable features (leaves, flowers, fruit).



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Health

The health of the trees is assessed as fair (68%), good (21%), dead (7%), and poor (4%). Most trees are presenting with good leaf size and colour, crown density, and branch elongation; all of which are indicators of good vigour and vitality.

Structure

The structure of the trees is assessed as fair (61%), good (21%), and poor (18%). Most trees present with strong and open branch attachments and are generally free of above ground defects.

Tree Retention Value

Two trees have been assessed as having a high retention value, ten trees have a medium retention value, and 16 trees have a low retention value. See **Table 3** below for individual tree retention values.

Table 3. Individual Tree Retention Values

Retention Value	Tree Id
High	8, 10
Medium	1-5, 9, 14, 15, 18, 20
Low	6, 7, 11-13, 16, 17, 19, 21-28





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Notional Root Zones

A Notional Root Zone (NRZ), as stated by the Australian Standard AS4970-2025, Protection of trees on development sites, is the principal means of protection of trees on development site. The NRZ is a combination of the root area and crown area requiring protection. It is an area isolated from construction disturbance, so that the tree remains viable.

The Australian Standard AS4970-2025 is being used in assessing the protection areas for each tree as it describes the best practices for the planning and protection of trees on development sites.

Table 4. Individual NRZs and SRZs

Location	Tree Id	Botanical Name	NRZ Radius (m)	SRZ Radius (m)
Onsite	1	<i>Hesperocyparis macrocarpa</i>	4.56	2.39
Onsite	2	<i>Hesperocyparis macrocarpa</i>	4.2	2.32
Onsite	3	<i>Hesperocyparis macrocarpa</i>	3.72	2.2
Onsite	4	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	9	3.17
Onsite	5	<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	2.4	1.88
Onsite	6	<i>Platyclusus orientalis</i>	2	1.5
Onsite	7	<i>Viburnum tinus</i>	2	1.5
Onsite	8	<i>Corymbia citriodora</i>	8.4	3.17
Onsite	9	<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	6.36	2.69
Onsite	10	<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	6.84	2.74
Onsite	11	<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	2	1.5
Onsite	12	<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	3.12	1.97
Onsite	13	<i>Fraxinus sp.</i>	4.08	2.2
Onsite	14	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	3.49	2.3
Onsite	15	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	2.04	1.75
Onsite	16	<i>Hakea salicifolia</i>	2	1.57
Onsite	17	<i>Hakea salicifolia</i>	4.23	2.43
Onsite	18	<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	6.24	2.71
Onsite	19	<i>Hakea salicifolia</i>	2	1.5
Onsite	20	<i>Hesperocyparis macrocarpa</i>	7.2	2.93
Onsite	21	<i>Photinia Xfraseri 'Robusta'</i>	2.04	1.68
Onsite	22	<i>Photinia Xfraseri 'Robusta'</i>	2	1.5
Onsite	23	<i>Photinia Xfraseri 'Robusta'</i>	2	1.5
Onsite	24	<i>Photinia Xfraseri 'Robusta'</i>	2	1.5
Onsite	25	<i>Photinia Xfraseri 'Robusta'</i>	2	1.5
Onsite	26	<i>Callistemon sp.</i>	2	1.5
Onsite	27	<i>Melaleuca hypericifolia</i>	2.16	1.61
Onsite	28	<i>Cordyline australis 'Purpurea'</i>	2	N/A

m – metres; * SRZ not calculated for Palms



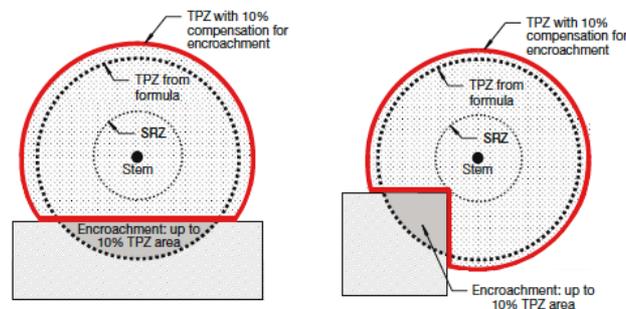
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In calculating the radius for the Notional Root (NRZ), the DSH, measured at 1.4m from the ground, is multiplied by 12. The NRZ requirements are as follows:

- If the NRZ is encroached by less than 10%, the Australian Standard AS4970-2025 states this unlikely that there will be a significant impact to tree health or longevity.
- If the NRZ is encroached by 10-20%, the Australian Standard AS4970-20025 states the project Arborist is to demonstrate that the tree(s) would remain viable.
- If the NRZ is encroached by greater than 20% the Australian Standard AS4970-20025 states a more detailed investigation is to be undertaken.



The Structural Root Zone (SRZ) is the area around the base of the tree required for stability in the ground. These roots are fundamental for the trees structure and health. The standard states:

“The area around the base of a tree required for the tree’s stability in the ground. The woody root growth and soil cohesion in this area are necessary to hold the tree upright. The SRZ is nominally circular with the trunk at its centre and is expressed by its radius in metres. This zone considers a tree’s structural stability only, not the root zone required for a tree’s vigour and long-term viability, which will usually be a much larger area.” (AS4970)

To calculate the SRZ, the equation is $(D \times 50)^{0.42} \times 0.64$, where D is the Diameter at Base (DAB).

The effects of root loss or damage by any means could include:

- Loss of stability if structural woody roots or even lower order woody roots are cut
- Reduction in water and nutrient uptake
- An eventual loss of leaves, reduced photosynthesis and thus sugar production
- Decay as a result of wounding



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Conclusion

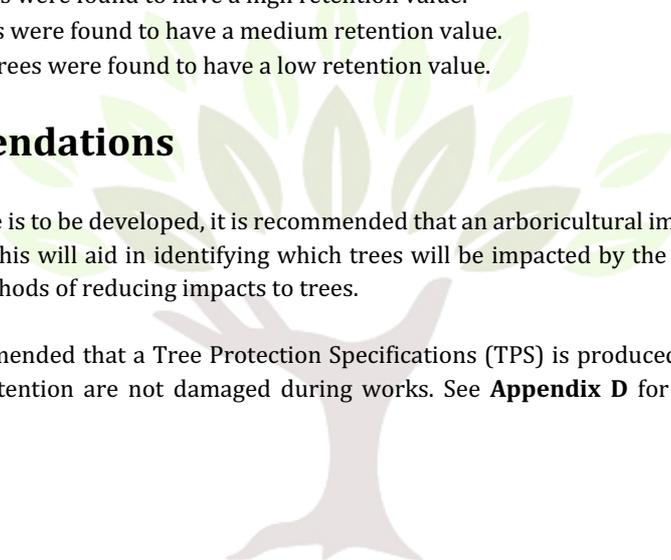
A total of 28 individual trees or groups of trees were assessed for this report. The main findings of the assessment were:

- Sixteen trees within the subject site require a permit under SLO2, and no trees within the subject site require a permit ESO4.
- The trees are generally in fair health, with no significant pest or disease observed.
- The structure of the trees is generally fair, with most trees presenting with strong and open branch and stem attachments.
- Two trees were found to have a high retention value.
- Ten trees were found to have a medium retention value.
- Sixteen trees were found to have a low retention value.

Recommendations

If the subject site is to be developed, it is recommended that an arboricultural impact assessment is undertaken. This will aid in identifying which trees will be impacted by the proposed works and provide methods of reducing impacts to trees.

It is also recommended that a Tree Protection Specifications (TPS) is produced to ensure trees proposed for retention are not damaged during works. See **Appendix D** for Tree Protection Measures.



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Preliminary Arboriculture Assessment

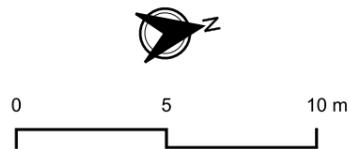
Site Address
1A Edward Street, Upper Ferntree Gully

Date
07/01/2026

Scale
1:200 @A3

Notes
- NRZs and SRZs calculated as per AS4970-2025

Prepared By
Lachlan J Egan



Legend

- | | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Retention Value | NRZ |
| ● High | SRZ |
| ● Medium | Cadastre |
| ● Low | |

Melbourne Tree Care PTY LTD

Richmond, Victoria
Australia 3121

Email: info@melbournetreecare.com.au





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Tree Id: 28

Location: Onsite

Botanical Name: *Cordyline australis* 'Purpurea' **DBH (cm):** 15

Common Name: Purple Cordyline **DaB (cm):** 20

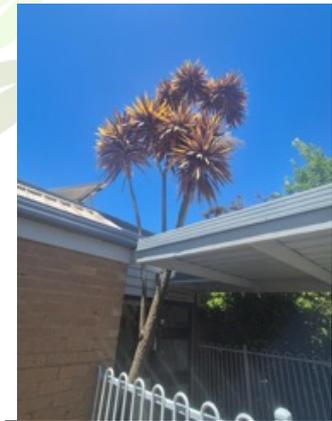
Tree Height (m): 6 **Canopy Spread (m):** 3

Health: Good **Structure:** Fair

Origin: Exotic **Age:** Semi mature **ULE:** Short

Retention Value: Low **TPZ (m):** 2 **SRZ (m):** N/A

Observations: Assessed from distance



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Appendix C: Glossary of Terms

Age

Juvenile	Juvenile or recently planted approximately 1-7 years.
Semi Mature	Tree actively growing.
Mature	Tree has reached expected size in situation.
Senescent	Tree is over mature and has started to decline.

Origin

Indigenous	Trees that are naturally occurring within a subject site or within the municipality of the subject area
Victorian native	Trees that are naturally occurring within Victoria
Australian native	Trees that are naturally occurring within Australia
Exotic	Trees that are not naturally occurring to any part of Australia

USEFUL LIFE EXPECTANCY – ULE

The useful life of a tree is an estimate of how long a tree is likely to remain in the landscape based on health, amenity and risk.

Long ULE Trees that appear to be retainable with an acceptable level of risk for more than 40 years.

1. Structurally sound trees located in positions that can accommodate future growth.
2. Storm damaged or defective trees that could be made suitable for retention in the long term by remedial tree surgery.
3. Trees of special significance for historical, commemorative or rarity reasons that would warrant extraordinary efforts to secure their long-term retention.

Medium ULE Trees that appear to be retainable with an acceptable level of risk for 15 to 40 years.

1. Trees that may only live between 15 and 40 years.
2. Trees that may live for more than 40 years but would be removed to allow the safe development of more suitable individuals.
3. Trees that may live for more than 40 years but would be removed during the course of normal management for safety and nuisance reasons.
4. Storm damage or defective trees that can be made suitable for retention in the medium term by remedial work.

Short ULE Trees that appear to be retainable with an acceptable level of risk for 5 to 15 years.



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1. Trees that may live for 5 to 15 years.
2. Trees that may live for more than 15 years but would be removed to allow the safe development of more suitable individuals.
3. Trees that may live for more than 15 years but would be removed during the course of normal management for safety and nuisance reasons.
4. Storm damaged or defective trees that require substantial remedial work to make safe and are only suitable for retention in the short term.

0-5 Years Trees with a high level of risk that would need removal within the next 5 years.

1. Dead trees.
2. Dying or suppressed and declining trees through disease or inhospitable conditions.
3. Dangerous trees through instability or recent loss of adjacent trees.
4. Dangerous trees through structural defects including cavities, decay, included bark, wounds or poor form.
5. Damaged trees that are considered unsafe to retain.
6. Trees that will become dangerous after removal of other trees for the above reasons.

Condition

This is a combined indicator of 'health' and 'structure' based on the following descriptors:

Health

Good	Foliage of tree is entire, with good colour, very little sign of pathogens and of good density. Growth indicators are good ie. Extension growth of twigs and wound wood development. Minimal or no canopy die back (deadwood).
Fair	Tree is showing one or more of the following symptoms; < 25% dead wood, minor canopy die back, foliage generally with good colour though some imperfections may be present. Minor pathogen damage present, with growth indicators such as leaf size, canopy density and twig extension growth typical for the species in this location.
Poor	Tree is showing one or more of the following symptoms of tree decline; > 25% deadwood, canopy die back is observable, discoloured or distorted leaves. Pathogens present, stress



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symptoms are observable as reduced leaf size, extension growth and canopy density.

Dead Structure

No vascular function.

Good

Trunk and scaffold branches show good taper and attachment with minor or no structural defects. Tree is a good example of the species with a well-developed form showing no obvious root problems or pests and diseases.

Fair

Tree shows some minor structural defects or minor damage to trunk eg. bark missing, there could be cavities present. Minimal damage to structural roots. Tree could be seen as typical for this species.

Poor

There are major structural defects, damage to trunk or bark missing. Co-dominant stems could be present or poor structure with likely points of failure. Girdling or damaged roots obvious. Tree is structurally problematic.

Retention Value

- **Exceptional** - trees must be retained at all costs
 - A tree has horticultural, social, historical or cultural value.
 - A tree that has outstanding habitat value.
 - A tree that is an outstanding size for the species.
 - A tree that is remnant.
 - A tree species that is endangered.
- **High** - trees should be considered for retention wherever possible
 - A tree that is in good-fair health and structure with a long ULE.
 - A tree that is in good health, with good structure, is semi mature or mature, and with a medium ULE.
 - A tree that has cultural, botanical, or landscape significance.
- **Medium** - trees should be considered for retention wherever possible but should not pose a material constraint to site development
 - A tree that is in fair health and structure, is semi mature, and with a medium ULE.
 - A tree that is in poor health or poor structure, is mature, and with a medium or short ULE.



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- **Low** - trees should be removed
 - A tree that is in poor health and structure with a short ULE.
 - Weed species.
- **Third Party** – trees are third party assets and must be retained at all costs.
 - A tree that is located on adjoining properties.

Appendix D: Tree Protection Measures

- Signs identifying the TPZ should be placed around the edge of the TPZ and be visible from within the development site.
- Fencing should be erected before any machinery or materials are brought onto the site and before the commencement of works including demolition. Once erected, protective fencing must not be removed or altered without approval by the project arborist. The TPZ should be secured to restrict access.



LEGEND:

- 1 Chain wire mesh panels with shade cloth (if required) attached, held in place with concrete feet.
- 2 Alternative plywood or wooden paling fence panels. This fencing material also prevents building materials or soil entering the TPZ.
- 3 Mulch installation across surface of TPZ (at the discretion of the project arborist). No excavation, construction activity, grade changes, surface treatment or storage of materials of any kind is permitted within the TPZ.
- 4 Bracing is permissible within the TPZ. Installation of supports should avoid damaging roots.

Example of fencing (AS4970: 2025)

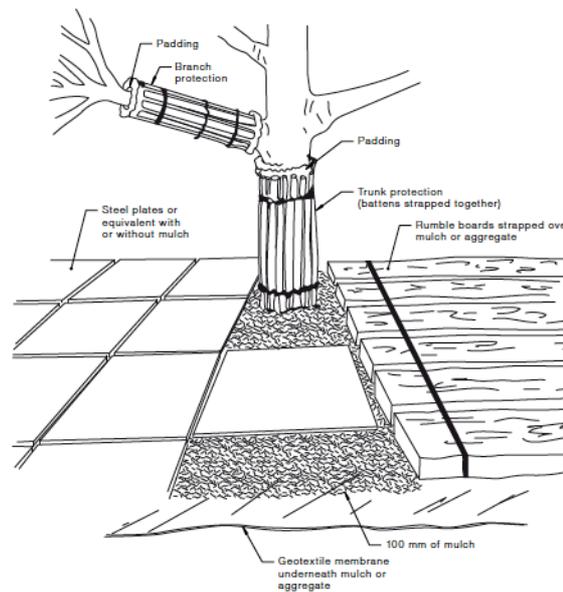


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- If the TPZ is to be encroached by construction, manual excavation of the roots is to be carried out under the supervision of the project arborist to identify roots critical to tree stability.
- No roots greater than 25mm are to be cut unless supervised by the project arborist.
- Roots should be pruned with sharp tools such as secateurs, handsaws or chainsaws.
- No roots within the TPZ are to be cut with machinery such as backhoes or excavators.
- Where roots are exposed, temporary root protection should be installed to prevent them drying out. Hessian sheeting as multiple layers on exposed roots would reduce the loss of moisture.
- All services should be routed outside the TPZ. If underground services are to be routed through the TPZ, they should be installed by directional drilling or manually excavated trenches. Directional boring should be at least 600mm deep.
- If temporary access for machinery is required within the TPZ ground protection measures will be required. The purpose of ground protection is to prevent root damage and soil compaction within the TPZ. Measures may include a permeable membrane such as geotextile fabric beneath a layer of mulch or crushed rock below rumble board.



Ground Protection (AS4970: 2025)

- Activities generally excluded from the TPZ include but are not limited to:
 - Machine excavation including trenching
 - Excavation for silt fencing



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- Storage
- Preparation of chemicals, including preparation of cement products
- Parking of vehicles and plant
- Refueling
- Dumping of waste
- Wash down and cleaning of equipment
- Placement of fill

Appendix E: References

- Mattheck, C. and Breleor, H., (1994), *The body language of trees*, The Stationery Office, London, UK.
- Standards Australia 2025 SAI Global - *AS4970 Protection of Trees on Development Sites*

Appendix F: Qualifications and Experience

Lachlan J Egan has the following qualifications and experience:

Diploma of Arboriculture

QTRA (Quantified Risk Assessment) registered user

10+ Years industry experience



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Appendix G: Report Limitations and Constraints

- The report is limited to the time of inspection.
- The report reflects the trees as found on the days of inspection. Any changes to site conditions or surroundings, such as construction works or landscape works may alter the findings of the report subject to conditions and recommendations as set out within the report.
- The report is based on the inspection and the material available at the time of inspection or that information further to the inspection found within the report.
- No soil samples were taken for laboratory analysis.
- Tree roots were not inspected below ground except where previously exposed and/or where otherwise stated within the report.
- Measurements may be approximates only and generally not to scale.
- All images supplied are interpretations only and should not be taken as true at time of inspection or indicative of tree condition or status at time of inspection or time of report release, inclusive of Google images if applicable

Appendix H: Disclaimer

Although MELBOURNE TREE CARE P.L. uses all due care and skill in providing you the information made available in this report, to the extent permitted by law MELBOURNE TREE CARE P.L. otherwise excludes all warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied. To the extent permitted by law, you agree that MELBOURNE TREE CARE P.L. is not liable to you or any other person or entity for any loss or damage caused or alleged to have been caused (including loss or damage resulting from negligence), either directly or indirectly, by your use of the information (including by way of example, Arboricultural advice) made available to you in this report. Without limiting this disclaimer, in no event will MELBOURNE TREE CARE P.L. be liable to you for any lost revenue or profits, or for special, indirect, consequential or incidental damage (however caused and regardless of the theory of liability) arising out of or related to your use of that information, even if MELBOURNE TREE CARE P.L. has been advised of the possibility of such loss or damage.

6 Notices Of Motion

7 Supplementary Items

8 Urgent Business

9 Confidential Items