

Greater Dandenong City Council

Key Advocacy Issues – 2017



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Greater Dandenong: An Overview

The City of Greater Dandenong is a dynamic and progressive Council located approximately 35km south east of Melbourne's central business district. Financial backing from the State Government to support its Victoria-wide planning strategy marks the region as a key activity centre, and Central Dandenong is fast becoming a residential city of national significance offering a flexible approach to development and providing high quality urban landscape.

Greater Dandenong's role in providing the employment, business, transport and education infrastructure for the south-east region of Melbourne will become even more important as the population of Melbourne's south-east expands significantly over the next 20 years.

The municipality has recently undergone a significant transition with a number of major projects either completed or underway. It boasts welcoming neighbourhoods and enjoyable leisure environments, based on strong partnerships and supported by well planned, integrated and sustainable service networks.

The population is currently 156,000, serving a regional catchment area with a projected growth of 21 per cent by 2030. Greater Dandenong is the most multicultural municipality in Victoria. Over half the city's residents are born overseas, 56 per cent from non-English speaking countries and representing more than 156 nations. The city is a shining example of how harmony can exist in diversity.

Council is working closely with all stakeholders, including the State Government, local businesses, organisations and various government departments based in our city. Greater Dandenong is a great place to live, work, invest and raise a family; truly a *City of Opportunity*.



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Team 11

The Cities of Greater Dandenong, Casey and the Shire of Cardinia have taken a lead in harnessing the interest in the south east of Melbourne for an A-League / W-League football (soccer) team.

Whilst there is increasing speculation in relation to the imminent expansion of Australia's elite level competition, the A-League, a formal announcement and process for the expansion has yet to be made. The combined Councils believe that working together to position the region creates an ideal opportunity for Melbourne's third team, alongside Melbourne Victory and Melbourne City.

Football is one of the most popular participation sports in Australia. Within the south east of Melbourne it has 89 clubs, with approximately 12,000 registered participants. The sport is growing significantly in popularity and facility demands are continuing to increase across the region.

Council officers from the Cities of Greater Dandenong and Casey and the Shire of Cardinia have undertaken a number of activities to progress a coordinated position in relation to a potential A-League / W-League team. It has been agreed that the establishment of an elite team in this region would represent several positive community and economic outcomes through the localisation of elite sport in the growth suburbs of Melbourne's south east and provide investment attraction and job creation.

The three Councils commitment to the proposal through a signed MoU and steering committee is supported by a high level advocacy approach to enable a coordinated pursuit.

The overall vision is the establishment of a stadium within Dandenong, supported by an administration and training facility at Casey Fields, Cranbourne East. This aligns with the Victorian State Government's established strategy of revitalising the Dandenong Activity Centre, as well as Casey's Leisure Facilities Development Plan 2014 which identifies Casey Fields as the location of a future soccer centre of excellence.

The formal vision of the initiative is to:

Make south-east Melbourne the destination for a new A-League, W-League and National Youth League Club within a restructured/expanded football system with the aim of becoming Australia's largest football heartland.

This is supported by the following combined values:

1. *Community First*
2. *Respect and Recognition*
3. *Diversity and Inclusion*
4. *Growth and Sustainability*
5. *Industry Leading*

Four weeks after the MoU signing and community event, *Team11* was officially launched at a cocktail function hosted by Greater Dandenong. The launch was attended by more than 150 people, including the Premier of Victoria Daniel Andrews and local MPs Gabrielle Williams and Inga Peulich. The event was also attended by representatives from more than 40 local soccer clubs and many prominent local businesses and community groups.

Simultaneous to the official launch event, the campaign website and social media accounts were activated. The website includes information on the campaign and links to a launch video, stadium plans and several video interviews with former Socceroo and project advocate, Vince Grella, and current Socceroos Jackson Irvine and Bailey Wright. The website also features a sign up form for community members to register their interest in supporting the team and receiving news and information.

What we are seeking:

- Recognition of the need for a Stadium in Dandenong as part of the Victorian Major Stadia Strategy.
- Commitment of significant funding support towards the development of a Stadium in Dandenong to cater for the needs of the south east region.

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Artists impression only. Stadium concept plan underway.

Community Safety

Background – Family Violence

Family violence is a critical and widespread public health issue, with national surveys revealing that one in four Australian women is assaulted by a current or former partner in her lifetime, and on average, one woman murdered each week by a partner or former partner.

Family violence is also the principal cause of homelessness and the major cause of preventable death and disability among women aged 15 to 44 years.

Its consequences are enduring and traumatic, with children also affected, either as witnesses to such behaviour or as victims of violence themselves.

Greater Dandenong faces particular challenges in relation to family violence. In 2015/16, the rate of family-related offences recorded by police in this community rose to a level 34% greater than the State average and the highest in Melbourne. Recorded rates of family violence in this municipality have more than doubled in the past five years.

Greater Dandenong Council seeks to raise the profile of family violence and gender equity, support community-based initiatives to advance these objectives, and advocate for further resources to support to local families, women and young people at risk of, or experiencing, violence.

What we are seeking:

- Support for community-based prevention programs that promote gender equity and respect toward women and extend equal opportunities for girls and women.
- The establishment of a support and safety hub in the region, under the State Government plan 'Ending Family Violence: Victoria's Plan for Change'.
- Further funding for specialist services such as 'In Touch', to address family violence among culturally diverse communities.
- Additional support, in accord with the recommendations of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, for crisis accommodation, refuges and public housing for women and children, and specialist family violence services in the region.

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Background – Drug and Alcohol Misuse

Harm associated with the misuse of alcohol and other drugs is an enduring concern in the City of Greater Dandenong, owing to its contribution to violent crime and property damage, family violence, drink driving offences, road injuries and fatalities, and ill-health.

In 2015-16, the rate of violent offences in Greater Dandenong was nearly double the metropolitan average, the highest rate in Melbourne outside the CBD, with Victoria

Police reporting that alcohol is implicated in more than half of all arrests

In relation to planning, recent research reveals a direct connection between the density of liquor outlets and the incidence of violence on the streets and in the home. Accordingly, Council's Alcohol Management Plan provides a framework and process for the assessment and management of liquor licenses, packaged liquor outlets and venues.

What we are seeking:

- Collaboration across all levels of government to enable effective identification, monitoring and management of alcohol related harms.
- Funding for community-based initiatives to address the impacts of alcohol
- Expansion of flexible treatment alternatives, including rehabilitation services
- Access to improved alcohol sales and crime data for local governments to assist in identifying local solutions to alcohol-related harm

TO SAY NO
TO VIOLENCE
I BELONG TO
FAMILY
TO



Background – Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour is a result of circumstances such as isolation, lack of a sense of belonging, experiences of trauma, limited education, financial hardship, unemployment or absence of meaningful activity, the influence of alcohol or other drugs, and mental health issues.

Such conditions are widespread in Greater Dandenong, where they contribute to high rates of violent crime and anti-social behaviour, coupled with the highest level of public concern for personal safety in the State.

The City of Greater Dandenong addresses violent and anti-social behaviour with collaborative local efforts to enhance

community safety outcomes so that all residents may feel safe in public.

These include preventative programs and social cohesion activities to foster respect and connection in the community, deterrence through safer design, implementation of the CCTV Safe City Program, and efforts to enhance response capability and law enforcement visibility.

These measures are implemented in partnership with Government agencies, community organisations, law enforcement, the local business community and residents.

What we are seeking:

- An increase in the levels of police officers permanently allocated in Greater Dandenong
- Funding to enable continued investment in infrastructure, such as lighting in public places, that supports crime prevention through environmental design.
- Increased financial support for prevention and inclusion programs that address underlying social, economic and cultural causes of violence and anti-social behaviour.

Background – Social Cohesion and Radicalisation

Violent extremism, youth radicalisation and racism jeopardise community harmony and social cohesion.

Evidence suggests that the root causes of violent extremism are complex and include social isolation, family breakdown, lack of a sense of identity and belonging, and racism – all of which provide fertile ground for radicalisation.

As Victoria's most multicultural municipality Greater Dandenong has lead a number of initiatives to foster social cohesion and prevent radicalisation, in partnership with other stakeholders. Such initiatives include:

- professional development with Council staff, frontline workers and community service providers on identifying early indicators of vulnerability to youth radicalisation
- high-profile community awareness campaigns to reject racism and violence
- youth-specific social cohesion projects which seek to instil a sense of pride and purpose in young people, including the Creating Change Program which promotes their understanding of differing faiths and cultures
- strategic policy responses that promote community harmony and respect for all.

Council remains committed to sustained efforts to build social cohesion, promote understanding and foster respect for diversity.

What we are seeking:

- An increase in the levels of police officers permanently allocated in Greater Dandenong
- Funding to enable continued investment in infrastructure, such as lighting in public places, that supports crime prevention through environmental design.
- Increased financial support for prevention and inclusion programs that address underlying social, economic and cultural causes of violence and anti-social behaviour.

Background – Sport and Recreation

The City of Greater Dandenong recognises the benefit for residents to participate in physical activities.

Council places a high value upon sport, recreation and leisure in maintaining health and wellbeing, and fostering connections among the community.

To this end, Council maintains well-planned, affordable and suitable facilities to meet the evolving and diverse needs of this community.

Among them is the Dandenong Oasis. Once Greater Dandenong's premier indoor aquatic facility, this facility is now approaching the end of its service life, with ageing infrastructure, escalating operational costs and declining attendance.

To plan for, and establish, a new aquatic and recreational centre, Council has commenced a detailed feasibility study to determine the preferred option, site and features of its replacement.

What we are seeking:

- Council is seeking a major funding commitment from the State Government to share the cost of building a new aquatic and leisure centre for the Greater Dandenong community and surrounding region.

Vulnerability

Background – Material Aid

Unemployment levels in Greater Dandenong are the highest in Victoria, while incomes are the lowest in Melbourne.

In addition, local refugees face extensive language and other barriers to securing employment, while asylum-seekers, numbering over 3,000 in this community, often face formal restrictions upon their access to paid work.

For some families, the resulting financial hardship is transmitted to succeeding generations, trapping many children in a

cycle of entrenched, intergenerational poverty.

These conditions have resulted in high levels of local financial hardship, resulting in acute shortages of food and other basic material necessities for many individuals and families.

Community service and volunteer agencies, which provide material aid to struggling local residents, report a level of demand for food, clothing, basic medicines and other material assistance which exceeds their capacity.

What we are seeking:

- Additional resourcing to assist with the coordination of local services.
- Increase in support for organisations providing material aid.
- Further funding and resources to support volunteer agencies and volunteer engagement.

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Background – Youth Employment

Young people in Greater Dandenong experience high rates of youth disengagement and unemployment, with 13% leaving school before completing Year 11, and 16% of young adults not engaged in employment or enrolled in education or training – among the highest rates in Melbourne.

Half of all young people in Greater Dandenong were born overseas, many facing additional barriers to accessing education and employment. Young migrants, refugees and recent humanitarian settlers, are particularly at risk of early school leaving and unemployment.

Compounding this situation is a rapidly changing labour market which increasingly marginalises people with limited formal education and vocational skills. Such trends present a very real risk that already disadvantaged young people will be left further behind.

Council has appointed a Mayoral Youth Employment Taskforce to engage key stakeholders from education, employment, government, community and business sectors. This group has been mobilised in an effort to improve local employment and training opportunities for young people.

What we are seeking:

- Greater transparency of outcomes from government funded employment services, to improve assessment of successful models and programs.
- Prioritisation of employment service models which provide intensive and ongoing support following a young person's placement into employment.
- Enhancement of links between secondary and tertiary education providers and local industry, to address skill shortages.
- Sustained investment in targeted programs such as Navigator, which seek to provide training or employment opportunities for disengaged students.
- Improvement in careers guidance services and support, to help prepare and educate young people for the jobs of the future.

Background - Gambling Reform

Greater Dandenong has the highest rate of gaming losses in Victoria and second largest number of gaming machines in the State.

In 2016/17, \$118 million was lost to gaming machines in Greater Dandenong, equivalent to \$956 per adult – the highest rate of losses per adult in Victoria, nearly twice the metropolitan level.

The highest gambling losses are largely incurred by those individuals and communities which can least afford them, with these high rates of gaming losses and gaming machines are borne by residents of

one of the most socio-economically disadvantaged communities in Victoria.

956 gaming machines operate at venues within Greater Dandenong – the second highest number of EGMs in any Melbourne municipality.

Council therefore seeks reforms to the regulation of gaming in Victoria to ease the burden of gambling losses upon its residents and other vulnerable communities

What we are seeking:

- The introduction of \$1 bet limit on all gaming machines.
- Prohibition of EFTPOS facilities in gaming venues.
- Implementation of compulsory pre-commitment.
- Increased financial support for programs that prevent harms associated with problem gambling.
- Removal of deceptive features of gaming machine design.
- A greater say for local communities about applications for gaming machines or venues.
- A reduction in the caps, or municipal limits, upon gaming machine numbers in vulnerable communities.



Background – Housing Affordability

During the past thirty years, the cost of purchasing accommodation in Greater Dandenong has trebled in real terms.

Lower income earners have been most acutely affected by these developments, with the proportion of local rental accommodation affordable to families on Centrelink benefits plunging from 81% in 2001, to 4% by 2016. Government-subsidized options are few, as public housing is increasingly confined to people with complex needs and waiting periods typically exceed a decade. The prevalence of overcrowding in private homes in Greater Dandenong is the highest in Melbourne.

Surging housing rental costs, coupled with limited government-subsidized housing, have aggravated financial hardship, particularly for older people and sole parents in rental accommodation, families with low-paying jobs or no employment, refugees and asylum-seekers. Many residents have sought alternatives, such as caravan parks, informal rooming house arrangements, temporary housing with friends and overcrowded multi-family dwellings.

The lack of affordable housing with the rise in population exposes low-income earners in Greater Dandenong to financial hardship, instability, displacement from their neighbourhoods or homelessness.

What we are seeking

- Increased crisis and medium-term housing to support an under-resourced housing sector.
- Enhanced housing support for local refugees and asylum-seekers.
- Funding for further programs to assist lower income-earners to access the private rental market.
- Improved housing services for people at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness.
- Review of rooming house regulations to improve safety, amenity and viability.

Springvale Community and Learning Hub

The Springvale Community and Learning Hub will consist of an integrated, state-of-the-art library, community meeting spaces, customer service centre, civic plaza and green, outdoor recreation areas and supporting infrastructure.

The Hub will provide a civic heart and landmark destination for the Springvale region, and will include a broad range of services, events and activities and provide opportunities for stakeholders to work in partnership to address the region's high level

of disadvantage; with a focus on community engagement and education.

The Hub will revitalise the precinct, lead to a significant increase in community activity and provide an iconic gateway to the Springvale Activity Centre.

The total cost of the project is \$41 million, for which Council is seeking Commonwealth funding support under the National Stronger Regions Fund.



Social and economic benefits

The development of the Springvale Community and Learning Hub will have a direct and significant impact on the region's high level of socioeconomic disadvantage by:

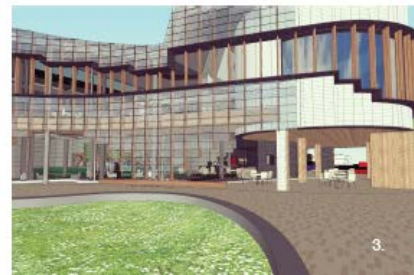
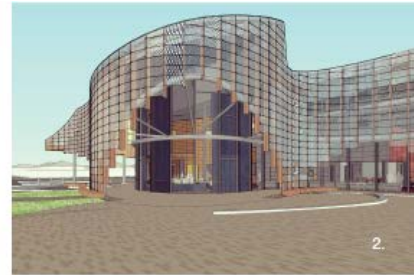
- Improving education and literacy outcomes, helping residents to seek meaningful employment.
- Attracting in excess of 768,300 visitations to the precinct each year (+426,555 new visitations to the library service, meeting / training spaces, customer service and events / festivals)
- Generating a return of \$6.29 for every \$1 invested.
- Increasing use of the library service by 80% (+273,458 visits pa) making it one of the busiest in Victoria.
- Creating employment – up to 178 jobs during construction (40 direct and 138 indirect).
- Generating a total output of \$77.19 million during construction and ongoing output effect of \$2.016 million per annum.
- Providing greater access to support services, by providing integrated spaces for service providers to work in collaboration.
- Building social connections and social capital by providing a central civic meeting place.
- Providing a gateway to the neighbouring Springvale Activity Centre.
- Supporting local business through increased access to programs, meeting spaces and resources.

What we are seeking

- Council has lodged a funding submission under the National Stronger Regions Fund, which proposes the following funding contribution:
Council: \$30 million
Commonwealth: \$10 million
- Council has undertaken extensive planning and design work to enable this project to commence in late 2017

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Productivity through Transport Infrastructure

Background – Transport challenges for Dandenong South

Dandenong South is a major manufacturing, warehousing and distribution and employment powerhouse in Victoria. It is home to 12,500 businesses providing jobs for 38,000 people within the fast growing south east growth corridor. Planned growth will see employment levels reaching around 77,000.

Dandenong South is home to major industries such as Bombardier, Volgren, Iveco, Visy, Nissan, Kraft, Pilkington and Jayco as well as numerous warehousing and transport companies.

Designated as a *National Employment Cluster* in the Victorian Government's metropolitan planning strategy *Plan Melbourne*, it contributed \$2.2billion in value added in 2011. Reflecting a requirement to be more knowledge based, it is home to Victoria's first eco-industrial park, LOGIS which includes a 74 hectare Innovation Park.

The Salta Group is establishing a major intermodal terminal including a rail siding. This facility can operate as a regional hub that can receive and distribute containers direct from the docks noting that Dandenong South is the largest single destination in Victoria for imported containers.

This area is a key destination for workers in Melbourne's south east growth corridor, particularly the adjoining City of Casey, which has a net shortage of jobs. Its industries are of critical importance to regional employment and implementation of the "20 minute city" concept in *Plan Melbourne*.

While Dandenong South has a surrounding freeway and arterial road network that provides excellent access to the Port of Melbourne and the broader metropolitan area, it faces a range of short and long term transport problems. These include:

- Increasing peak-hours congestion which constrains economic activity, as well as access to jobs and services.
- Lack of road network capacity and connectivity which constrains new investment resulting in parts of Dandenong South effectively gridlocked in the PM peak period.
- Lack of alternative transport options such as good public transport which limits its potential to fully contribute to the region's liveability and social inclusion, effectively locking out a proportion of the potential workforce.



Fixing issues in Dandenong South

With expert help Council prepared a Transport Plan that proposes a range of infrastructure projects to fix existing problems and build for the future. Many of these are beyond the resources of Council to fund but are critical in ensuring that the **National Employment Cluster** fulfils its role as an employment and economic powerhouse.

Short term fixes include a new crossing of the

Cranbourne rail (Pound Road West to Remington Drive), a new bridge crossing Eumemmerring Creek and land purchase to enable development of Glasscocks Road.

In the longer term it is proposed to establish another connection to EastLink, to extend the Dandenong bypass to the South Gippsland freeway and to duplicate arterial roads where required.

Improving external connections

While the above improvements are essential so called 'last mile issues', there are a number of major freight access routes serving Dandenong South that are now under pressure and impact on the productivity of Dandenong South and the \$63 billion output from the broader region.

A recently prepared Freight Strategy for the region cites some of these existing and future regional issues as:

- Capacity on the Monash Freeway given its role as the region's key network spine
- Connectivity of the existing arterial links back to the Monash Freeway
- Provision of more efficient access to the Port of Melbourne to reduce transportation costs
- Connectivity to the north of Melbourne providing options to reduce costs by avoiding inner Melbourne and potentially higher congestion
- Maintaining connectivity to the west of Melbourne, its storage and distribution areas and any possible future port in the west.

To address some of the shortfalls the strategy recommends a number of critical improvements:

- South East rail network: Port of Melbourne to Dandenong South intermodal terminal
- North East Link: Metropolitan Ring Road to Eastern Freeway - constructing the missing metropolitan orbital link between the end of the Metropolitan Ring Road and the Eastern Freeway
- Westall Road: Monash Freeway to Princes Highway – constructing an extension of Westall Road to the Monash Freeway resulting in better connectivity for traffic including freight
- Port of Melbourne Webb Dock: Webb Dock rail connection to metropolitan rail network - constructing a rail link to the Port of Melbourne's Webb Dock container terminals and connecting this to a metropolitan freight rail network to allow port rail shuttles to operate between metropolitan intermodal terminals, including at Dandenong South.

What we are seeking

- Council's aim is to provide improved access to and within the Dandenong South **National Employment Cluster** and support productivity and employment in this vital economic powerhouse.
- We seek support from the Federal Government to help fund transport infrastructure on the national road network such as the Monash Freeway together with more localised 'last mile' projects within Dandenong South.

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Manufacturing Connectivity Centre Development

Background

Approximately 94 per cent of the region's manufacturers are SMEs with limited resources. The *Manufacturing Connectivity Centre* Development will provide a single facility for SME manufacturers to access information on assistance programs, emerging technologies, research, skills development and training, support for exports and import replacement.

The facility will also:

- House representatives from Government Departments and Authorities to provide assistance/support for manufacturers (Federal, State and Local Governments)

- Offer space for service providers to display their offerings (such as R&D and ICT)
- Be in a visible and easily accessible location within the heart of industry
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement by promoting innovation, creativity, networking, collaboration and new technologies

Benefits:

- One location to access information, collaborate, network, and exhibit
- Access to a wide range of departments/agencies
- Access to current and future technology (a kick-start to innovation)
- A central repository of shared knowledge

What we are seeking

Required funding: \$2 million to develop the facility

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Smart Manufacturing Investment Attraction Initiative

Background

A new investment attraction and promotional initiative is needed to bring together Victorian businesses, governments and community to enhance the profile and status of manufacturing in Melbourne's South East.

The objectives of this initiative are to create and support diversity, jobs, innovation, leadership, economic/social resilience, and success; promote Dandenong and South East Melbourne manufacturing strengths; dispel continuing negative perceptions of manufacturing; and attract investment to the manufacturing zone.

The initiative will directly support the Victorian Government's Advanced Manufacturing strategy, which aims to strengthen Victoria's manufacturing industry to secure jobs and grow business investment, and expand grass roots engagement with Victorian manufacturers.

It will incorporate and join-up investment attraction programs currently operating or planned at local, state, national and regional levels. Promotional activity will involve branding, advertising, stakeholder engagement, digital communications, social media and media publicity.

Benefits

- Attract additional investment to the region
- Establish South East Melbourne manufacturing as a brand and destination of local, national, and global significance
- Amplify the achievements, efforts and benefits of local manufacturing to promote the region as a truly great place to work, invest, make and buy
- Spearhead lobbying efforts, link-up related activities and promote greater collaboration and connectivity within the sector and across the region

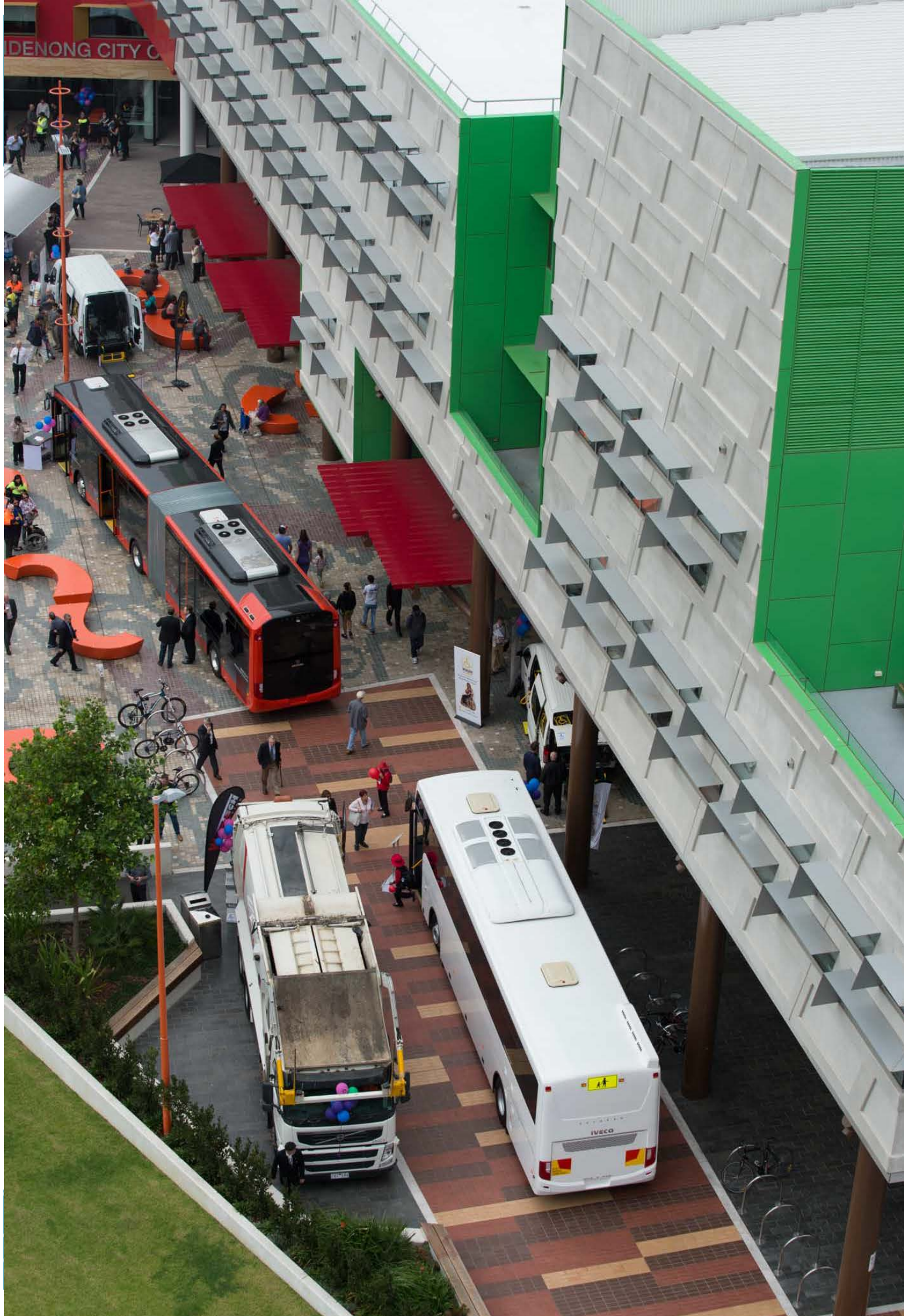
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What we are seeking

Required funding: \$500,000 per annum over three years

DENONG CITY C



Dandenong By-Pass Completion

Background

The existing Dandenong bypass finishes at the South Gippsland Highway. The remaining section should be completed eastwards to connect with the South Gippsland Freeway near the former General Motors plant.

Benefits

- Provide an arterial link between the South Gippsland Freeway and the Dandenong bypass to help service (mainly) regional traffic
- Provide a high quality parallel route to the M1 helping relieve traffic congestion in the region generally
- Provide an alternative route to the Port of Melbourne and regional and intraregional markets when combined with the western extension of the Dingley arterial and the proposed northern extension of Westall Road
- Improve traffic flows in the vicinity of the South Gippsland Highway by diverting through traffic to the surrounding
- Improve access to and within Dandenong South by encouraging through traffic to use regional rather than local access roads

What we are seeking

Required funding: \$250 million

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Dandenong South Inland Port

The Dandenong South Inland Port will directly connect the Port of Melbourne by rail along with other suburban inland ports located at Altona and Somerton.

The Dandenong South Inland Port is by far the largest of the planned inland ports at 185 hectares. Its onsite full and empty container storage areas will provide clients both on the terminal and in the adjoining hinterland with improved efficiencies and cost benefits. With a capacity for over 500,000 square metres of purpose-built warehousing, containers can be delivered direct from the train terminal to the warehouse dock. Its onsite rail facility allows four metropolitan rail shuttles to be serviced at any one time. The Dandenong South Inland Port will also provide high performance road links to the Port of Melbourne and proposed future Port of Hastings.

Benefits

As one of three planned suburban inland ports, Dandenong South can have access to the most modern and efficient container logistics system in Australia within 12 to 24 months. The Dandenong South Inland Port will connect to a state-of-the-art rail-based container logistics network, which will deliver jobs and growth to Dandenong and Melbourne's South East.

Based on modelling work undertaken by the Port of Melbourne Corporation for the Melbourne Port System, the project is estimated to deliver the following benefits to the region:

- Reduction in truck distance travelled by up to 35 per cent
- Reduction in diesel fuel use by up to 17 per cent
- Reduction in carbon emissions by up to 17 per cent
- Increase in the average number of containers per truck entering/exiting the Port from 1.2 to approximately 2.
- Job creation in Dandenong South during the construction phase of the project is estimated at 1,000 direct and 1,800 indirect FTE jobs for 18 months. The operations phase will see approximately 1,600 direct and 4,500 indirect FTE jobs on an ongoing basis (Essential Economics).
- South East based exporters currently spend 80 per cent of the cost of getting goods to market within Australia.
- It is forecasted that port transport costs for South East based exporters will be reduced by approximately 40 per cent by this project (GHD, 2015).

What we are seeking

Required funding: \$15 million

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Noble Park Level Crossing Removals - Grade Separations

Commitment to local project investment and delivery

Background

The City of Greater Dandenong will benefit from the grade separations at Corrigan Rd, Heatherton Rd and at Chandler Rd intersections, and is appreciative of being nominated in the first round of funded grade separations.

The Council has built a strong and collaborative working relationship with the State Government and the Level Crossing Removal Authority and that working relationship has sought to maximise benefits to all stakeholders involved.

Council believes the process of engagement by the LXRA with the community should be honest to the highly engaged consultative

program in respecting its input into local issues, solution preferences, design preferences and deliverables.

A number of working groups established between the LXRA/ Alliance and Council officers have already had regular input into a range of issues such as urban design, landscaping, parking, traffic management and public transport coordination, in particular with buses. Council officers will maintain high levels of input in achieving as part of the project the maximum benefit to the community and the best possible outcomes over and above the essential rail infrastructure.

Investment in local facilities and infrastructure- benefits to the local communities and economy

Projects such as this can be transformational in their outcomes and it is imperative that these be positive and add value to the host environment. The retail village that is Noble Park activity centre can reasonably expect more than just a new elevated station and some seating in new open space beneath the viaducts. Investment in the immediate precinct of the station and the adjacent Ross Reserve can be delivered in a true partnership between State Government and the City of Greater Dandenong. Noble Park deserves as much as part of the delivery of this project.

The above is not inconsistent with the approach brought by the level crossing

removal works to revitalise Carrum, as announced by the Premier on 6 August 2017. In the Premier's release an investment of \$50m will see the extension of McLeod Rd all the way down to the beach, plus a brand new promenade and creation of new parkland and picnic areas. The Premier is quoted as saying *"We're getting on with revitalising Carrum- we're not only getting rid of dangerous and congested level crossings-"* This Council has a position which it deems a reasonable entitlement to expect that there is complementary investment by the LXRA/ Alliance project in adjacent engineering and social infrastructure. Focus of that reasonable entitlement assists revitalising Noble Park activity centre and Ross Reserve, sitting

either side of the Heatherton Rd grade separation.

It is imperative that integrated design outcomes interface with council priority projects including the Ross Reserve masterplan to ensure future use, maintenance and joint objectives are met. Resources must be allocated to ensure seamless design outcomes so that spaces are not designed in isolation of the LXRA project boundary lines. Key park projects include the expanded Urban Park; implementing the new park road; car parking and supporting infrastructure that aligns with the rail corridor.

Noble Park Activity Centre is the priority for investment where the focus continues to build on its unique characteristic as a 'village', with a strong sense of community. Combined, the park and activity centre must respond to the forecast increase of 66% in young people aged 5-9 years over the next 8 years.

Investment in the following local projects should be included as part of the delivery of the Grade Separation Project:

1. Ross Reserve Masterplan Integration and Urban Park a Focal Point for Leisure and Recreation

Activity Investment, which includes

- a. An all abilities playground (\$1m part contribution by the LXRA project)
 - b. Undercroft and adjacent Ross Reserve open space amenities and facilities including a fenced dog-off-leash park; playground; parkour course; picnic facilities, and outdoor gym equipment (fully funded by the LXRA project)
2. Improvements to the Noble Park activity centre civic space (\$1m part contribution by the LXRA project)
 3. Relocation of the existing Noble Park civic space artwork (\$100k fully funded by the LXRA project)

Council has shown and demonstrated its cooperation to the project from day one and has assisted and facilitated it by way of example by even agreeing to the use of adjacent prime sporting field in Ross Reserve as a laydown area and project works depot for the LXRA/ Alliance. It has placed a great deal of effort and commitment in its participation in forums such as COSEP and the urban design workshops and the opportunity of now delivering the station forecourt as an urban plaza and vibrant community space. That vision has been well embraced by all participants without exception.

Investment in local facilities and infrastructure- benefits to the State Government

Council is so committed to the value of this urban open space that it has even indicated its preparedness to discuss taking on the ongoing maintenance of the non-Council areas, at Council's cost, a significant departure from other Councils seeking to obtain long term State Government commitment to providing them with maintenance guarantees. The dollar value to the State Government of the City of Greater Dandenong taking on that long term responsibility cannot be under-estimated. It is fair to state that the above consideration would need to be revisited depending on the success of advocacy for investment in the local projects outlined above.

Unless the above local projects are delivered within the scope of the LXRA/ Alliance project, the LXRA media and public releases on the project will be seen as deliberately misleading at the very least by the disingenuous use of many of its artist impressions.

What we are seeking

Commitment by the LXRA/ Alliance/ State Government that it will invest in the vicinity of \$5m in the local community by the very least in the list of local projects outlined above to the benefit of those local communities which are adjoining or adjacent to the new infrastructure works being delivered as part of the Government's grade separation projects and its promise to communities that they will benefit socially from this project as well.

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Lyndhurst Landfill

For over 20 years the City of Greater Dandenong and its community have been expressing their grave concerns about and opposition to the depositing of contaminated waste at the Lyndhurst Landfill facility and seeking its earliest possible closure. The facility commenced operations under permits granted in the early 1990s by the then Shire of Cranbourne.

Following Council amalgamations in the mid 1990s the landfill operates within the municipal boundary of Greater Dandenong Council. The City of Greater Dandenong held concerns regarding the non-compliance with Planning Permits in terms of the receipt of hazardous waste. In June of 2004 VCAT issued an order to enforce this non-compliance. That order was deferred pending an application to vary the permits. VCAT upheld the application and permitted receipt of prescribed industrial wastes at the site.

The State Government, in abandoning the proposal of a site containment facility at Nowingi in north western Victoria, determined that the Lyndhurst landfill would accommodate prescribed industrial wastes until 2020. On 26 February 2007 Council passed an 8-point resolution based on both Council and community opposition and expectations, even at that stage long held by both. That resolution noted a number of dissatisfactions and disagreements with decisions taken by State Government and by VCAT, which have given effect to the longevity of the site and its operations, in particular with regard to Prescribed Industrial Waste (PIW) and the acceptance of and use of contaminated soils at the site. The resolution again reinforced key expectations relating to the earliest possible closure of Lyndhurst, potential health risks, and the development by the State Government of a state wide strategy for the proper operation and management of waste.

The above resolution was conveyed in letters of February 2007 to the Hon John Thwaites, Deputy Premier and Minister for Water, Environment and Climate Change, as well as to the Hon Justin Madden, Minister for Planning.

In the ensuing years there have been a number of communications with Ministers and with members of Parliament as well as with senior officers in a number of State Government departments and agencies. Unfortunately not much has changed over the last number of years and there has been no satisfactory response to Council's advocacy in seeing the activities on the site curtailed or in committing to an early closure of the facility.

Despite Council's highly visible opposition to the ongoing acceptance of PIW and its processing of contaminated soils at the facility, in August 2013 EPA granted SITA approval to conduct a trial use of Category C contaminated soil as an alternative daily cover at the Taylors Road Lyndhurst Landfill site. An Environmental Management Plan was submitted to EPA. At that stage this proposed trial was agreed to be postponed until further discussions and consultation occurred between SITA, EPA and the Taylors Road Community Reference Group (CRG), of which CGD is a member.

The matter has remained one of significant concern to the community of the City of Greater Dandenong and on 24 March 2014 Council passed a resolution that:

- 1) Council reaffirms its long held objective that the Lyndhurst Landfill Facility – and in particular, the Prescribed Waste Facility – be closed at the earliest possible date
- 2) Advice be sought from the Premier of Victoria on his Government's position, and the status of any work, on the development of an alternate State wide Strategy that would see the closure of the Lyndhurst site arising from the

introduction of other disposal solutions elsewhere – a key element of Council's 2007 position

- 3) It be noted the numerous other facilities and actions have reportedly reduced demand for the Prescribed Waste Facility including modern, high technology soil facilities; and, State based landfill levies that have had a desired effect of redirecting waste from landfill and that these changes in direction, serve as a catalyst for State action to confirm an alternate State wide Strategy and close the current Lyndhurst facility and
- 4) The leaders of major parties in the (then) forthcoming State election; all candidates in the vicinity – deemed to include communities with a direct interest in the facility – publicly declare –
 - o their position on the Lyndhurst Prescribed Waste Facility
 - o action they will take to ensure the earliest closure of the facility and
 - o a date by which they will seek to ensure that closure will occur and, for which they will be publicly accountable.

Notwithstanding all of the above, in July 2014 the EPA decided to allow a trial of using restricted Category C soil as daily cover until 31 January 2015 considering the proposal to be in order from an environmental safety point of view.

Council remains committed to supporting the local community and the Community Reference Group, and continue to actively hold SITA and the process to account. Twenty years on, this

Council remains firmly committed to the earliest possible closure of the landfill site and part of this advocacy on 3 June 2014 the then Mayor, Cr Jim Memeti wrote to the Premier of Victoria expressing this Council's (and it's community's) concerns with its ongoing operation and seeking its early closure. A response dated 22 July 2014 was received from the Hon Ryan Smith, Minister for Environment and Climate Change which in essence justified the ongoing use of the landfill site and gave no comfort at all to the concerns of the Council nor its community.

On 6 December 2013 Council made a submission on *Plan Melbourne*, drawing attention to that strategy's lack of attention to the important issue of landfill planning and policy development. Unfortunately the final version of *Plan Melbourne* failed to address this major concern.

On 17 December 2015 Council made a submission on the draft '*Victorian Government's Statewide Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan 2015*' using that opportunity to again raise the matter and drawing attention to the statement by former Premier Steve Bracks that on this issue "***We should have determined exactly what we wanted to do and the reasons why we had to do it, then tied down the details. As it now stands, toxic waste continues to be stored at Lyndhurst, one of Melbourne's outer suburbs, which is a far-from-satisfactory outcome.***" - [Bracks, S, 2012, *A Premier's State*, pg 165, Melbourne University Press].

The above concerns have been consistently and vigorously conveyed to both State and Federal politicians over the last 10 years in particular, with this topic appearing in each of the Council's advocacy documents produced prior to the respective elections. In May 2016 it was a high priority listing again in its Federal Election Advocacy Document.

As recently as April 2017 a presentation and advocacy was made by CGD officers and councillors to an assembly of State and Federal politicians and their representatives on this matter. There can be no doubt that the message of frustration felt by Council and its community was clearly conveyed.

What we are seeking

Over the last 12 years, the Greater Dandenong community has told Council loudly and clearly that it wishes to see this facility, the only licensed Prescribed Industrial Waste facility in Victoria, to be closed at the earliest possible time. Our community believes that the facility presents an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of both Greater Dandenong and neighbouring Casey residents.

Council seeks support from Federal candidates to advocate for state wide policy to recognise the role and need for landfills which receive solid Prescribed Industrial Waste and to provide options to facilitate unknown requirements which eventuate in the future, taking into account the very legitimate concerns of this Council and its community that a Prescribed Industrial Waste continues to operate in a location relatively close to its residential areas.

Council has concerns that in the absence of State policy, the use of the Lyndhurst landfill facility may continue to have its life extended as has been the demonstrated case to date. We seek support to advocate that the State Government commit to a process of planning and policy development which will address the matter of future land use and location of landfill sites, particularly in respect of Prescribed Industrial Waste, ultimately ensuring the earliest possible closure of this site.

Council also seeks support to advocate that the State Government could resource this work in part from the accumulated funds of waste levies for the identification of a suitable Prescribed Industrial Waste site for Melbourne in the decades ahead.

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