



**Moreland**  
City Council

# Place



<https://conversations.moreland.vic.gov.au/imagine-moreland>

# Topic snapshot

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**Moreland has a fast growing and changing population. Council needs to plan where the city's residents will live, what homes, services and infrastructure they need, and how to help them move around the city.**

Place encompasses physical surroundings, neighbourhood heritage and character and the lifestyle that residents can experience living and working within a place. New statistics indicate that population growth may slow as a result of Covid-19, however Moreland's population growth will remain significant.

This means Moreland will need new housing, improved public spaces and community facilities for a larger and more diverse population. The challenge is striking a balance between Moreland's current community needs, preserving the character of a place, and preparing for future growth. The Moreland planning scheme addresses this by encouraging housing and taller buildings to locate in Activity Centres so as many people as possible live where they can walk to local shops and services and are close to public transport so they may have less need for a car. This will create vibrant, active, sustainable Activity Centres, where the community can gather, socialise and enjoy all Moreland has to offer. Council continues to strive for higher design quality, environmental performance and accessibility to cater for all generational needs, while respecting the rich heritage of Moreland.

## The key issues are:

- 1. Creating sustainable neighbourhoods** that provide housing close to jobs, services and transport.
- 2. Housing** Moreland's growing population in quality homes that are affordable and meet their needs.
- 3. Respecting Moreland's heritage and character** and encouraging well-designed buildings and streets.
- 4. Facilities:** Providing access to community facilities and assets that are well maintained and meet the needs of current and future populations.



# Relevant Council services

## Urban design and streetscape improvements

- This involves design and delivery of public realm improvements, including streetscapes and public spaces in urban areas. This program is typically distributed across the three Major Activity Centres and as part of the Shopping Strip Renewal program.

## Parklet Program

- Parklets are re-purposed parking bays which are designed to create spaces for pedestrian activity. Parklet setups could contain things like seating, tables, greenery and bike parking facilities. Although parklets are maintained by hosts, they are public space for the community to enjoy.

## My Virtual Moreland

- This virtual reality tool gives users the ability to view developments proposed within Moreland, in context by placing the proposed developments inside a detailed, 1:1 scale computer generated 3D recreation of Moreland.

## Design excellence scorecard

- The Design Excellence Scorecard encourages good design outcomes in new developments.

## Planning Permit assessment and enforcement

- The Urban Planning Unit manages planning permit applications and enforcement in accordance with our legislated requirements and encourages development in Moreland to strive for better than the 'acceptable' design outcomes required through the Victorian planning system or achievable through VCAT appeals.

## Keeping the Planning Scheme responsive

- Council is always working to ensure the planning scheme, which directs how land is used and developed, delivers sustainable neighbourhoods and places.

## Community Infrastructure Planning

- We are developing a plan to guide our planning and delivery of community infrastructure in Moreland deliver priority community infrastructure based on community benefit, risk and our financial capacity to deliver.

## Affordable Housing Action Plan

- To address the need for 7-10,000 more affordable homes by 2036, Council is committed to actions in planning, use of council land, attracting investment and partnerships and community awareness.

## Design Advice

- Our Urban Designers provide design advice to the Urban Planning Unit in the assessment of planning permit applications.

## Supporting Businesses

- Our Economic Development Branch supports commercial and industrial investment facilitation, business growth and networking initiatives for start-ups and established businesses and a range of marketing and promotion activities.

## Improving cleanliness and presentation of places

- Our Street Cleansing Unit maintains and enhances the cleanliness and presentation of public spaces. This includes graffiti removal, pit and drain cleaning, street sweeping, street and park litter bin collection and removal of illegal dumped rubbish.

## Managing Councils assets

- Our Asset Management Branch provides stewardship of Council's \$1 billion asset base, undertaken through asset management plans and providing asset management data to support informed decision making on assets.

# Data and community feedback

## Community feedback

- The community is often concerned about changing neighbourhood character and overshadowing from residential and commercial development. There is a perception of Moreland being too crowded and having too much housing development. (MCC and Wallis 2020).
- The community has raised concerns about pedestrian safety, lighting, loss of car parking and providing street trees. (MCC 2020c).
- There are concerns with how Council will keep up with the provision of community facilities and other infrastructure sufficient to support population growth (Wallis 2020).
- There is a high level of satisfaction with Council's recreation facilities (for example sports grounds, and pavilions, aquatic centres and playgrounds) (Wallis 2020).



## Independent data

- Over the past 10 years (2009-2019) Moreland's population has increased by nearly 36,000 people (ABS 2020).
- A large part of Moreland's population growth comes from people moving to Moreland from overseas. In recent years migrants have been primarily from Asian countries such as India and Pakistan as well as the UK and New Zealand; 40 – 50 years ago migration groups came from European countries such as Italy and Greece (ABS 2016).
- Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Moreland population was forecast to continue to grow significantly; the pandemic is expected to have a significant impact on Moreland's growth, particularly over the next 2-3 years (id Consulting 2020).
- Over the past 10 years there has been a move to people living together in smaller households (single persons and couples with no children); pre Covid-19 it was forecasted people living alone will replace couples with children as the most common type of household in Moreland by 2036 (id Consulting 2017).
- Around 2,700 babies per year are being born to Moreland families (MCC 2020).
- Moreland's housing stock has been diversifying to meet this growth, with an average of 1,080 dwellings per annum built between 2006 and 2016, (47% townhouses and 44% apartments); 50% of new dwellings have been built close to Activity Centres (DELWP 2018).
- In 2016 55% of Moreland's homes were separate dwellings, 35% were townhouse or units and 9% were apartments (ABS 2016).
- Moreland receives one of the highest numbers of medium density development applications in Victoria each year (DELWP 2020).
- Over 13,000 properties are in a heritage planning overlay in Moreland (MCC 2020a).
- Council owns 168 community facility buildings including libraries, sporting pavilions, Maternal Child Health (MCH) centres, senior citizen centres and swimming pools (MCC 2020b).



## **Key issue 1: Neighbourhoods**

Creating sustainable neighbourhoods that provide housing close to jobs, services and transport

# Key issue 1: Neighbourhoods

## Overview

**Living locally is central to how Moreland's neighbourhoods are designed, enabling residents to be able to meet most of their everyday needs within a 20-minute walk, cycle or short public transport trip from home. This means that more and more residents should be able to live around Activity Centres, helping to create great places and sustainable neighbourhoods.**

A series of differently sized Activity Centres identified across the municipality are central to community activity and the creation of 20-minute neighbourhoods. Activity centres are clusters of shops, businesses and community facilities which, together with public transport, provide for the regular shopping and service needs of the local community. The main Activity Centres in Moreland are the Brunswick, Coburg and Glenroy centres. These public spaces can be used for different types of planned and unplanned community interaction and provide for intrinsic beauty, pleasure and delight.

Council seeks to create vibrant places that can house future populations and provide local employment. When residents have walking access to their everyday needs, it enhances liveability of a place as well as reduces congestion, the need for car travel and improves housing affordability. This approach is also supported through State Government policy which aims to provide jobs, services and transport to people which are close to their home.

Public spaces and the activities that take place in them, provide important opportunity for people to interact and feel included and connected.

## Opportunities

- Consider the changes to how people move within their local areas caused by Covid-19. This will boost understanding of the long-term impact this will have on local service demand, such as shopping locally and having more services available within a walkable distance for residents.
- Encourage taller buildings and more housing to be located near public transport routes and where daily needs like shopping and community services are just a walk away. This enables community infrastructure to be planned so that people have the services they need close to them.
- Encourage the quality of new development is of a higher standard than the planning scheme requires so that people's experience of places in Moreland is positive and so that residents living in new developments live in good quality housing.

## Challenges

- Keeping Activity Centres vibrant by facilitating a range of uses, retaining employment and making sure the right services are in the right spot while also managing amenity impacts and community expectations.
- Finding ways to encourage developers to provide commercial floor space to support local job creation in Activity Centres. Housing is more profitable, so developers are less likely to want to provide commercial floor space in a new development.
- Encouraging smaller houses and taller apartments to accommodate the changing needs of a growing population means the look and feel of some neighbourhoods is going to change and this will concern some in the community.



## **Key issue 2: Housing**

Housing Moreland's growing population in quality homes that are affordable and meet their needs

# Key issue 2: Housing

## Overview

**Moreland needs homes that are well-designed, liveable, affordable and accessible, to suit the changing climate and housing needs of the community. A range of housing that is affordable to all members of the community is also needed, so that living in Moreland is a choice open to everyone. Council can support this by identifying areas for significant, incremental and minimal housing growth, encouraging design that is comfortable in hot and cold weather, reduces the ongoing living costs of housing and increasing housing that is designed to be accessible.**

More people will be living in Moreland in the future, who will all need a place to live. More people will be living on their own and household sizes will decrease. This means a greater need for more smaller, and more affordable homes. By providing a diversity of housing options, Council can facilitate those who live in Moreland, to stay in Moreland as their circumstances change.

## Opportunities

- Continue to encourage medium density housing (unit developments) through planning application processes and development incentives. Medium density developments account for most of all new dwellings built, especially in the central and northern suburbs. Providing medium density homes that look good and offer a high standard of amenity will give Moreland a quality, diverse and more affordable housing stock and meet the needs of a growing and changing population.
- Continue to grow the social and affordable housing numbers through planning agreements with developers, facilitating direct and indirect investment (through community housing and Not For profit entities) from state and federal governments and direct partnership through use of council land and resources (Moreland Affordable Housing Ltd).
- Continue to raise the bar on the quality of development expected in Moreland through further enhancements to the Moreland Planning Scheme.

## Challenges

- More buildings, taller buildings and higher densities mean that the look and feel of Moreland will change. The challenge is to retain what the community loves about Moreland such as heritage buildings and unique shopping strips.
- There are many unknowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic, including potential changes to population forecasts which need to be monitored to ensure the future needs of the community are met.
- Areas outside of Activity Centres will change as new homes, like units and townhouses, are built in established residential areas. There will be changes in neighbourhoods right across Moreland, and the challenge is to balance this change with retaining what we value about the character of our neighbourhoods.
- Facilitating social and affordable housing provision as part of private development in the absence of mandatory requirements to do so.
- The existence of limited residential redevelopment sites in Moreland drives housing markets towards less affordable price points.
- Maximising Council's role in actively delivering affordable housing is difficult given the extensive pressure on Council's land and resources for service delivery.



## **Key issue 3: Preserving Character**

Respecting heritage and character and encouraging well-designed buildings and streets

# Key issue 3: Preserving Character

## Overview

**High-quality, pedestrian-friendly environments are places where people want to meet, play, relax and connect. Conserving Moreland's heritage and character and encouraging well designed buildings, streets and public areas will provide places that are inviting and create a sense of place.**

Places that are attractive, well maintained and vibrant encourage community interaction and a sense of identity and civic pride. Individual buildings and outdoor spaces need to be safe, accessible and attractive places. Providing high quality connections and links to open space and other places in the surrounding area also helps create accessible places.

Celebrating Moreland's history creates a sense of civic pride and place. The southern parts of the municipality reveal the industrial past, with buildings displaying the stone, bricks and timber that local contractors, artisans and labourers used in their trades. In the northern parts of Moreland, farms remained on the larger allotments, whilst in the southern parts, housing and industry increasingly competed for space in a dense urban landscape characterised by factories, belching chimneys, deep clay holes and quarry pits (Moreland Thematic History, 2010 Page 6).

## Opportunities

- Encourage good design and improve the way Moreland's neighbourhoods look by providing urban design expertise to guide the development of quality buildings across the city and incentivise developers to improve the quality of new developments through the Design Excellence Scorecard.
- Encourage more tree planting through the planning approvals process when building new houses.
- Find new creative ways of making public places more attractive, including turning existing parking bays into outdoor communal spaces through Council's Parklet Program, using smart technologies to improve street cleansing management and using tools to help Moreland plan for improved buildings.
- Increase customer service training and resources, which ensures all staff, regardless of their role, understand how to work with customers and the community.
- Improve the quality, clarity and provision of information.

## Challenges

- The Victorian planning system only seeks to deliver acceptable development outcomes. With such significant growth and new development, Council and the community demand better quality development outcomes, better designed buildings and homes that are more liveable.
- Council plays an important role in regulating new development that shapes the city, but is not always the ultimate decision maker. For example, all planning permit applications can be the subject of a Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) review. This can be by permit applicants or objectors. VCAT must make its decision considering the Planning Scheme, which seeks to deliver acceptable rather than optimal outcomes. The consequence is that VCAT may remove permit conditions seeking to deliver height reductions, public space upgrades or higher quality materials.
- Some main streets in Moreland, such as Sydney Road, are owned by the State Government meaning streetscape improvement comes with a much higher cost, longer approval and less innovation opportunity.



## **Key issue 4: Accessing Facilities**

Ensuring community facilities and assets meet the needs of Moreland's current and future populations

# Key issue 4: Accessing Facilities

## Overview

**Council is responsible for maintaining important infrastructure and assets that meet the needs of the community and future population growth.** It's not only housing that creates great places

– it's also infrastructure that surrounds it. Infrastructure includes maintaining assets such as roads, transport, drainage, trees and community facilities. Service planning helps define the asset needs for each service. It helps plan for changes in asset requirements as service demands change to reflect the communities changing needs. This may include difficult decisions to close, demolish, repurpose and/or sell underutilised assets that no longer meet, or sustainably deliver on the needs of the community.

Council is responsible for over \$2.5 billion of assets, including \$1.2 billion of infrastructure assets. Council needs to ensure that its infrastructure, assets and community facilities contribute toward a positive place and support the health and wellbeing of the community. As the Moreland population changes and grows, community facilities must meet community needs. This means not only maintaining the assets that are being used more and more by Moreland's growing population and are therefore wearing out more quickly but considering the need for new assets to adapt to changing needs and a more extreme climate.

## Opportunities

- Establishing multipurpose community hubs provides for the efficient use of resources, increased service integration, continuity and utilisation. The co-location of community facilities in a single building or location can become a focal point for the community and produce positive place identification and urban renewal outcomes. These benefits will be realised through the new Glenroy Community Hub, a model for the preferred approach for delivering community facilities.
- Future proof community our assets by making them multi-purpose and plan for changing community needs.
- Further explore alternate funding, financing and partnership arrangements with different sectors for cost effective and equitable delivery of community facilities. This is because the responsibility of providing community facilities is shared between local government, state government, the not for profit and private sectors.

## Challenges

- Planning appropriately for the increased future demand in community infrastructure for our changing and growing population, in an approach that balances community expectations and desired service standards within Council's financial resources.
- Community facilities need to be well located and connected to the community they serve. Planning for community facilities means locations close to public transport, walking/cycling networks, in Activity Centres and connected with open space. High land costs and the limited availability of open space are challenges for providing affordable, well-located community facilities in Moreland.
- Existing community infrastructure was developed in a different era and does not currently reflect current community facilities and future growth locations. Modifying and improving these facilities to make them usable and more contemporary is challenging.
- Community infrastructure and assets require significant on-going investment in maintenance and renewal activities.

# Current projects and strategies

Project/Strategy	Description	Links
<b>Place Activation program/ guidelines</b>	This program invests in place making through both physical improvements to our public places and programs to enhance connection between people and place. Council works with partners to start, manage and enable improvements within our centres.	<a href="https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/local-laws-and-legislation/moreland-local-laws/">https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/local-laws-and-legislation/moreland-local-laws/</a>
<b>Activity Centre Structure Plans and Place Action Plans</b>	These Plans set out the vision for our Major Centres and actions to deliver on this vision.	<b>Activity Centre Structure Plans for Brunswick, Coburg and Glenroy - </b> <a href="https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/activity-centres/">https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/activity-centres/</a>
<b>The Moreland Planning Scheme</b>	The planning scheme guides land use and development in Moreland	<a href="https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/schemes-and-amendments/browse-planning-scheme/planning-scheme?f">https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/schemes-and-amendments/browse-planning-scheme/planning-scheme?f</a>
<b>Urban Design streetscape improvement program</b>	This involves design and delivery of public realm improvements, including streetscapes and public spaces in urban areas.	<a href="https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/projects/shopping-area-and-streetscape-projects/">https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/projects/shopping-area-and-streetscape-projects/</a>
<b>Heritage Action Plan</b>	We will continue to deliver actions in the Heritage Action Plan 2017 – 2032. These actions will help Council to continue to meet its responsibilities towards identifying and protecting heritage places.	<a href="https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/news-and-publications/policies-and-strategies/">https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/news-and-publications/policies-and-strategies/</a>
<b>Parklet Program</b>	Parklets are re-purposed parking bays which are designed to create spaces for pedestrian activity.	<a href="https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/projects/shopping-area-and-streetscape-projects/parklet-program/">https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/projects/shopping-area-and-streetscape-projects/parklet-program/</a>

# Current projects and strategies

Project/Strategy	Description	Links
<b>My Virtual Moreland</b>	This virtual reality tool gives users the ability to view developments proposed within Moreland, in context by placing the proposed developments inside a detailed, 1:1 scale computer generated 3D recreation of Moreland.	<a href="https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/projects/virtual-moreland/VR/">https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/projects/virtual-moreland/VR/</a>
<b>Design Excellence Scorecard</b>	The Design Excellence Scorecard encourages good design outcomes in new developments.	<a href="https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/planning-building/design-excellence-scorecard/">https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/planning-building/design-excellence-scorecard/</a>
<b>Affordable Housing Action Plan</b>	This plan aims is to increase the provision of affordable housing in Moreland through policy, advocacy, applied skills and investment.	<a href="https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/planning-building/strategic-plans/housing/affordable-housing/">https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/planning-building/strategic-plans/housing/affordable-housing/</a>
<b>Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021</b>	This strategy facilitates the retention of a viable and diverse business community and an increase in sustainable investment and jobs	<a href="https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/globalassets/key-docs/policy-strategy-plan/economic-development-strategy--2016---2021.doc">https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/globalassets/key-docs/policy-strategy-plan/economic-development-strategy--2016---2021.doc</a>



# Attachment 1:

## Place Activation Guidelines 2020 - Short- and Medium-Term Strategic Directions

Brunswick	Coburg	Glenroy
<b>Short term 0-3 years strategic directions for Each Centre</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help the retail, entertainment and cultural sector understand and recover in place from 2020 crisis</li> <li>• Create four new public parks in Central Brunswick (West St, Tinning St, 260 Sydney Rd, Frith St)</li> <li>• Refreshed spaces for community and creative activity (420 Victoria St, 33 Saxon St, Brunswick Town Hall)</li> <li>• Work in partnership to grow cultural and learning activity in Brunswick (Brunswick Design District, 'Space Agents' program, street events).</li> <li>• Improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure along key routes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help the retail sector understand and recover in place from 2020 crisis.</li> <li>• Manage the positive change brought about through delivery of 2km of elevated rail including new stations, walking and bike paths and public spaces.</li> <li>• Bring a new audience of users to central Coburg, particularly early evening users.</li> <li>• Plan and deliver for site redevelopments in central Coburg (Coburg Square, Health Precinct)</li> <li>• Implement the Coburg Streetscape Masterplan, including streetscape upgrades</li> <li>• City Oval and Bridges Reserve Precinct Renewal City Oval Grandstand /</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver and bed down the Wheatsheaf Hub Community facility.</li> <li>• Manage the positive change brought about through delivery of trenched rail, including a new station precinct, walking and bike paths and public spaces</li> <li>• Focus on Wheatsheaf Road as the key connector of two major infrastructure projects via the delivery of the first precinct improvement project</li> <li>• Help the retail sector understand and recover in place from 2020 crisis.</li> <li>• Motivate and prepare the retail and business sector to take advantage of opportunities arising from transformation projects in the centre</li> </ul>
<b>Short term 3-7 years strategic directions for Each Centre</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase no and quality of local jobs in tandem with residential growth</li> <li>• Strongly support growth of Brunswick as a culturally rich and productive place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue regeneration of central Coburg through Development Cluster 1 – Coburg Square</li> <li>• Development Cluster 2 – Attract a Hospital or Major Healthcare Facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on enhancing perceptions of community safety in the centre.</li> <li>• Work with the business community and land owners to grow the attractiveness and experience of visiting the centre</li> </ul>

# References

**Sources:** Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018, Households and Housing 2016, accessed via Table Builder 2020

Department of Environment Land Water and Planning 2020, PPARS Planning Applications Department of Environment Land Water and Planning 2018, Housing Development Data Moreland analysis

Id Consulting 2018, A Home in Moreland

Id Consulting 2017, Moreland Population and Household Forecasts 2017-2036

SGS Consulting 2019, Supplying Homes in Moreland

Moreland City Council 2018, Planning Scheme Review

Moreland City Council 2015a, Activity Centre Framework

Moreland City Council 2015b, Community Infrastructure Framework

Moreland City Council 2020a, Heritage and current property analysis, further information available on request

Moreland City Council 2020b, Birth Notifications, information available on request

Moreland City Council 2020c, Melville Road Streetscape Improvement project consultation

Wallis Group Consulting 2018, 2019 and 2020, Moreland Community Satisfaction Survey

