

## **Coburg health and community services precinct – SALE OF LAND**

### **Themes and Council response to submissions received August/September 2021**

View or Sentiment	Percentage (%) of submitters who raised this issue	Support or opposition to the proposal	Response
<b>Need for additional health services</b>	32%	Support	<p>The need for more services locally was the number one sentiment expressed in the consultation process.</p> <p>Council has carried out a number of pieces of research over the years to understand the gaps in local provision and the plan for a health and community services precinct was developed in response to this research.</p> <p>We first identified that there was a gap in locally available health and community services as part of the precinct structure planning process for Coburg in 2010. More research carried out by Council in 2018 showed this gap has continued to grow, identifying both existing and projected future shortfalls in key service areas such as GPs, aged care, chiropractors, dentists, medical radiation practitioners, occupational therapists, optometrists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, podiatrists and psychologists.</p> <p>Health and community support is a major concern for Moreland residents, according to the recent large-scale engagement for <a href="#">Imagine Moreland</a>.</p>
<b>The bluestone cottage should be retained by Council</b>	12%	Opposition	<p>Following consideration of community feedback, Council decided to remove the bluestone cottage and the area surrounding it from the land that is to be sold and retain it in Council ownership. It also decided to undertake improvements to the cottage, rebuild the storage annex, and create a new historic garden around the cottage.</p>
<b>Council shouldn't sell land to a private entity</b>	10%	Opposition	<p>Council decided to sell the land to a private company in this particular instance because this is the only practical way of realising a health and community services precinct in this area, which Council has long sought. The State Government has consistently advised Council that provision of a public hospital within Moreland cannot be supported, and they do not plan to build one. Therefore, Council must work</p>

			<p>with the private sector to be able to deliver this community benefit.</p> <p>The project involves a projected \$160 million of upfront investment, and complex partnership arrangements with health providers, which is not something that Council would be able to deliver on its own.</p> <p>The land has not been used for any municipal purpose since it was acquired (other than primarily staff car parking), and no other municipal need has been identified for this site.</p> <p>Council acquires far more land than it sells. Due to its many acquisitions, for example for the 'Park Close to Home' program, Council has over 10 hectares more land now than it did a decade ago.</p>
<b>Support for economic outcomes</b>	7%	Support	<p>Health and community services is the biggest growth sector for jobs in Moreland, and this project would provide good jobs close to home for locally skilled people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coburg Health Hub predict the project will create around 1,000 jobs.</li> <li>• Around 350 of these would be in the construction phase.</li> <li>• Over 600 ongoing positions will be created in health and community services such as jobs in primary care, aged care, childcare, management, administration, etc., at a variety of levels.</li> <li>• The health and social services sector employs more Moreland residents than any other sector.</li> <li>• Jobs in this sector tend to particularly benefit women, and part-timers.</li> </ul>
<b>Support for more mental health services</b>	6%	Support	<p>Mental health services are a core component of the health and community services proposal.</p> <p>Mental health is a key challenge for many Moreland residents. The <a href="#">Moreland Health and Wellbeing Profile 2020</a> highlights that over one quarter of Moreland adults are diagnosed with anxiety or depression and that the percentage of people reporting high/very high psychological distress is higher than average.</p>

<b>Support for more aged care services</b>	4%	Support	<p>Moreland, like many areas in Australia, has an ageing population.</p> <p>Research carried out in 2018 to consider the need for a health precinct in Coburg indicated that there will be high population growth of people over the age of 50 in Moreland, and that that will drive need for aged care services locally.</p> <p>Moreland's Health and Wellbeing Profile 2020 highlights that our older residents face particular challenges: the percentage of people aged over 65 years with severe and profound disability living in the community is among the highest in the state.</p>
<b>Making better use of the land</b>	4%	Support	<p>The proposed site for the health and community services precinct currently delivers negligible local benefit. It is primarily used for staff car parking.</p> <p>The high and growing need for health and community services locally has been the key driver for considering this use on the site.</p>
<b>Concerns about overdevelopment</b>	4%	Opposition	<p>A number of planning controls exist on the site.</p> <p>Coburg Health Hub have stated their intention to work well within the limits set out in the planning scheme and indicate that they are not planning a dense development. They will have to demonstrate through the planning process that their development is appropriate for the area and meets or exceeds all requirements.</p>
<b>Objection to private medical services</b>	3%	Opposition	<p>Whilst some private medical services are proposed to be delivered in the precinct, Coburg Health Hub have estimated that not-for-profit and community service uses would make up over half of the precinct, by floorspace.</p> <p>Proposed community health services include not-for-profit allied health services including NDIS services and not-for-profit residential aged care, as well as a bulk-billing GP clinic, not-for-profit childcare and consulting suites.</p> <p>It is a requirement of the sale of the land that over 50% of uses are delivered by not-for-profit and community providers.</p>

<b>Concern about the impact on traffic</b>	3%	Opposition	During the design stage, Coburg Health Hub will be required to undertake detailed traffic management plans to show how this would be managed effectively, as is the process with any large project.
<b>Preference for provision of additional open space</b>	3%	Opposition	<p>Central Coburg is relatively well served for open space, with City Oval and Bridges Reserve directly opposite the site, providing both active and passive open space uses. Moreland has good data and analysis on open space gap areas, and this area is considered a lower priority area.</p> <p>The site would make a contribution to the Open Space Contributions Fund for use elsewhere and would include open spaces open to everyone.</p>
<b>Concern about the future of Coburg Historical Society</b>	2%	Opposition	<p>The cottage is currently leased by Council to the Coburg Historical Society.</p> <p>After considering feedback from the community, and engagement with the Coburg Historical Society, Council decided to subdivide the land to remove the bluestone cottage complex from the sale and retain it in Council ownership, and to start the statutory process of renewing the Coburg Historical Society's lease.</p>
<b>Concern about car parking</b>	2%	Opposition	<p>The site is currently used by Council staff for both formal and informal parking, as well as a small number of public car parking spaces.</p> <p>The terms of the sale and the requirements of the planning scheme mean that Coburg Health Hub will be required to provide adequate public car parking on site for all new facilities they deliver, as well as provide some of the staff car parking that would otherwise be lost.</p> <p>It is intended that any changes to car parking arrangements would prioritise community members using the Town Hall, and particularly those with mobility issues, to ensure they are not disadvantaged.</p>
<b>Preference to lease the site rather than sell it</b>	1%	Opposition	<p>When Council tendered for the opportunity to create a health and community services precinct, the tender process invited bidders interested in either sale or lease models. No respondents ever submitted a proposal for a lease model.</p> <p>The current proponents have confirmed the project would not be feasible for them under a lease model.</p>

			Selling the land is the only viable option available to Council to realise its long-held aspiration to create a health and community services precinct on this site.
<b>Support for more childcare</b>	1%	Support	<p>Projected population growth will lead to an increase in demand for locally available childcare services.</p> <p>The Coburg health and community services precinct is proposed to include a childcare and early learning centre.</p>
<b>View that there are enough health services in the area</b>	1%	Opposition	<p>Moreland has significant gaps in locally available health and community services. These were first identified as part of the precinct structure planning process for Coburg in 2010. More research carried out by Council in 2018 showed this gap has continued to grow, identifying both existing and projected future shortfalls in key service areas such as GPs, aged care, chiropractors, dentists, medical radiation practitioners, occupational therapists, optometrists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, podiatrists and psychologists.</p> <p>The community faces further health challenges as a result of the pandemic which has led to considerable stress on existing health services, with data from the State Government and the Chief Health Officer indicating that mental health conditions and psychological distress have increased significantly, and that there will be long-term challenges due to the deferment of elective surgeries and the impact of long COVID.</p> <p>Council's decision to use its land to facilitate the development of a new health and community services precinct responds directly to this identified need.</p>
<b>Preference for the land to be used for something else, such as public housing</b>	<1%	Opposition	<p>The process of considering an alternate use for this site would involve detailed strategic assessment, project planning, securing funding, securing partners to deliver, and statutory consultation. The investment of time and resource that such an undertaking would involve has not been figured in to the new Council Plan, and even once started would likely take years to complete.</p> <p>The size of this particular site and the fact it needs expensive works such as remediation and creation of new roads, would make it a highly challenging site for a use with no private sector investment.</p> <p>There are no known Council or State Government priorities for new community infrastructure that align</p>

			<p>well with this site. For example, State Government funding for social housing is unlikely to be of sufficient scale to fund a project for a precinct-sized site such as this one.</p> <p>There is demonstrated need and community support for a health precinct in Moreland, and this is the only site in Moreland that can accommodate a health precinct. Council is actively considering how to build in affordable housing (including social housing) into other urban renewal projects in central Coburg.</p>
<b>View that consideration should be given to the fact it's First Peoples land</b>	<1%	Opposition	<p>Council officers met and consulted with First Nations Wurundjeri elders as part of the sale of land engagement program and their views fed into the process. Wurundjeri elders supported new health and community services being delivered at this site.</p> <p>Following this engagement, Council strengthened the following elements of the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The developers must continue to engage with the Wurundjeri throughout the process</li> <li>• An Aboriginal Cultural Management Plan will be completed as part of the planning process</li> <li>• Officers are engaging with local agencies to explore if dedicated Aboriginal health services can be incorporated into the precinct</li> </ul>
<b>Coburg needs investment and improvement</b>	<1%	Support	<p>Coburg Health Hub project that the health and community services precinct will bring \$300 million of projected benefit to the local Moreland economy, from a direct investment of \$160 million.</p>
<b>Support for new health and community services</b>	<1%	Support	<p>High population growth is projected which will lead to an increase in the number of people over the age of 50 in Moreland will drive need for aged care services, as well as increased need for childcare, and other services.</p> <p>A key benefit of this project is the campus style approach, which caters for people from the very young to the very old, all of whom will be able to access health and community services in one place.</p>
<b>Support for a better use for the land</b>	<1%	Support	<p>The use of the land since Council acquired it, as a Council car park primarily for staff, has only ever been considered a temporary use. It has delivered negligible community benefit in this time for Council's investment.</p>

			<p>The health and community services precinct will deliver a raft of benefits to the broadest range of people in the community, at all ages and at all income levels.</p>
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