

Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting

to be held virtually on Tuesday 14 September 2021 commencing at 7:00pm.

Attachments

Carl Cowie
Chief Executive Officer

Thursday 17 September 2021 (amended)

Distribution: Public

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Nillumbik Shire Council

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Council Plan 2021-2025

DRAFT



Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Nillumbik Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which Nillumbik is located, and we value the significance of the Wurundjeri people's history as essential to the unique character of the Shire. We pay tribute to all First Nations People living in Nillumbik, give respect to Elders both past and present and future, and extend that respect to all First Nations People.

We recognise that Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people hold a deep and ongoing connection to this place. We value the distinctive place of our First Nations people in both Nillumbik's and Australia's identity; from their cultural heritage and care of the land, to their ongoing contributions in many fields including academia, agriculture, art, economics, law, sport and politics.

We recognise and value the distinctive and special spiritual and material relationship that First Nations people have with the land and the water, including trees, rocks, hills and valleys, creeks, rivers and flood plains in our Shire.



Image: Moor-rul Viewing Platform in Kangaroo Ground

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Image: An event at the Eltham Town Square

Our Council Plan

A Council Plan plays a key role in setting the strategic direction of Council for the four year Council term.

The **draft** Council Plan 2021-2025 is Council's commitment to delivering on the community's aspirations outlined in our draft Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 over the next four years. It will guide the organisation's work to deliver on the priorities of the Council and the community, and to manage and deliver services for the Nillumbik community during this Council's term.

This **draft** Council Plan will be supported by ongoing community engagement, the review, development and implementation of other key Council strategic plans and policies, and the Financial Plan 2021-2031 which describes the financial resources that will be required to deliver the Council Plan and other strategic plans.

Structure of the Council Plan 2021-2025

This **draft** Council Plan includes:

- Four themes, all of which are aligned to the **draft** Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040;
- Four objectives which define the outcomes that Council wants to achieve through this plan;
- Strategies which outline how Council will achieve the objectives; and
- Strategic indicators which will measure how progress towards the objectives will be evaluated.

Our **draft** Council Plan 2021-2025 is divided into the following four thematic areas:

- Community and connection
- Place and space
- Sustainable and resilient
- Responsible and accountable.

Each theme has its own objective and set of strategies that support the community vision, and achieve our priorities. The strategies are sufficiently agile to adapt to the evolving needs of our community over the next four years.

Strategies determine how Council will address our community's priorities, wellbeing and services, both now and into the future. The strategic indicators are aligned to the strategies, which will measure our performance.

Some of the strategic indicators in the Council Plan 2021-2025 are also made available on the Know Your Council website (www.knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au) through the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF).

Annual Action Plan

Council operationalises the Council Plan annually through an Annual Action Plan, which will detail the specific actions we commit to delivering each year to achieve the objectives and strategies across the four years. A progress report will be presented to Council and the community quarterly and in the Annual Report at the end of the financial year.

Budget

Council prepares an annual budget each financial year which seeks to balance the demand for services and infrastructure with the community's capacity to pay. The budget includes information about the rates and charges to be levied, new initiative funding, borrowing, operating results, cash and investments, capital works, financial position and financial sustainability. It is generally prepared alongside the Annual Action Plan with specific project and service delivery requirements balanced against available resources.

The **draft** Council Plan can be viewed on Council's website www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au.

Our Councillors

Council's role is to provide good governance and leadership for the Nillumbik community through advocacy, decision-making and action. The Council has an obligation to achieve maximum benefit from its available resources for its community.

Councillors are elected by residents and ratepayers to govern the municipality. Nillumbik is divided into seven wards and one Councillor is elected to represent each ward. The seven Councillors for the 2020-2024 term of Council are:



Cr Richard Stockman

Blue Lake Ward

Telephone: 0438 143 678

Email: richard.stockman@nillumbik.vic.gov.au



Cr Karen Egan

Bunjil Ward

Telephone: 0438 341 595

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Cr Natalie Duffy

Edendale Ward

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Cr Peter Perkins

Ellis Ward

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Cr Ben Ramcharan

Sugarloaf Ward

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Cr Frances Eyre

Swipers Gully Ward

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Cr Geoff Paine

Wingrove Ward

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Ward Structure

KEY

-  Blue Lake Ward
-  Bunjil Ward
-  Edendale Ward
-  Ellis Ward
-  Sugarloaf Ward
-  Swipers Gully Ward
-  Wingrove Ward

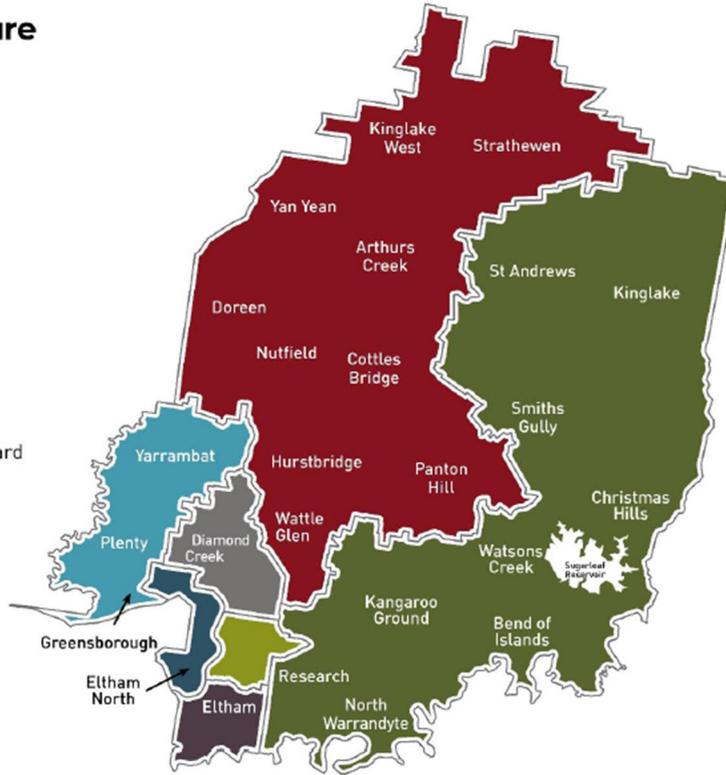


Image: View from Kangaroo Ground War Memorial Park

Message from the Council



Image: Message from our 2020-2024 elected Councillors, from left to right – Cr Richard Stockman, Cr Natalie Duffy, Cr Ben Ramcharan, Cr Karen Egan, Cr Peter Perkins, Cr Frances Eyre, Cr Geoff Paine

We are pleased to present the draft Council Plan 2021-2025 for your review and feedback.

The draft Council Plan 2021-2025 has been developed following the election of a new Council in November 2020. This plan outlines how Council will work with our community over the next four years to achieve the community's and Council's aspirations, priorities and service delivery for now and in the future.

What we have heard...

- Our annual community surveys continually tell us that delivery of Council's core services is of most importance to the community. As such, we want to improve service delivery and get better at 'delivering the basics'.
- The Our People Our Place Our Future community engagement, where we heard from more than 2,000 community members, has helped shape this plan. The community has identified a number of key short term priorities, including action on climate change, responsible urban housing development, protection of the green wedge, reducing waste, greater recycling and community consultation and leadership.
- Our community wants Council to operate both effectively, maintaining current service levels, and be fiscally responsible.

What we've done...

We have developed the [draft Council Plan 2021-2025](#) capturing what we have heard.

We have developed four themes underpinned by objectives and strategies that capture the essence of the things you have told us are important to you. These themes align to the four key themes of our draft Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040.

What we will do...

As the Council Plan is a summary of our priorities, it will be used by Councillors and Council staff to guide our work, decisions and efforts.

In order for this Council to play an effective role both now and into the future, we will:

- Focus on delivering Council services in line with transparent service level standards
- Deepen our understanding of Nillumbik's communities, listening and engaging in different ways to reflect community diversity
- Have the courage to embrace future challenges to take informed risks and embrace better ways of working
- Empower Council and our communities to make decisions through greater access to information
- Promote local networks, businesses, goods and services to enhance economic sustainability
- Promote local and regional partnerships that address local issues at a local, state and federal level.

We are committed to being adaptive to new ways, and working closely with our community to maximise the value we create for our community. Given the current COVID-19 pandemic, and the social, environmental and financial uncertainty it presents, we aim to be agile, re-prioritising our commitments and actions if and when we need to.

As your elective representatives, we will continue to engage with you and ensure transparency and accountability in implementing this plan.

We look forward to [receiving your feedback on our draft Council Plan for 2021-2025](#), and working with you to make our Shire an even better place to live, work and visit.



Image: Rainbow lorikeets at Diamond Creek

Structure of the plan and alignment to the Community Vision

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Council Plan must align with a community vision, which is an aspirational description of what a community values and wants for the future.

Our **draft** Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 is representative of feedback received from over 2,000 community participants in the Our People, Our Place, Our Future community engagement program undertaken in early 2021. Our Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 contains aspirations that are categorised under the following four themes:



Reflecting our community's priorities and needs in the shorter term, the above themes from the Community Vision have been translated into our four year **draft** Council Plan through using the following four themes:



Each Council Plan theme contains an objective and a series of strategies which will support the achievement of the objective in the short term and contribute to the realisation of our community vision in the longer term. The success of objectives and strategies will be measured regularly against a range of strategic indicators.

Community and connection



Image: Members of our new Nillumbik Youth Council

Community and connection

Objective

To encourage inclusion and participation to support health and wellbeing and ensure that all our residents have equitable access to services, programs, events and initiatives.

Strategies

Equity and inclusion

- We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds
- We actively work towards reconciliation and the process of healing with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and recognise them as the Traditional Owners of the land and waterways of Nillumbik
- We protect Aboriginal cultural heritage, and through building trust, education and celebration, we respect all First Nations people
- We aim to make Council's programs, services, processes and information accessible and inclusive
- We encourage and support volunteering to enable community participation opportunities and actively celebrate these contributions.

Health and wellbeing

- We address the social, environmental and economic factors of health to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for our communities
- We work with our local partners, government and non-government agencies to respond to health and wellbeing priorities in Nillumbik.

Ages and stages

- We work towards creating an age-friendly community where all people regardless of their age or ability can live a good quality of life
- We actively engage people of all ages and stages in decisions that affect them, ensuring that initiatives meet current and emerging needs
- We ensure people of all ages and stages have access to inclusive services that respond to their individual needs
- We focus on lifelong learning as a way to support our residents through key life stages.

Strategic indicators

- Percentage of people who think multiculturalism makes life in their area better (acceptance of diverse cultures)
(Source: Victorian Population Health Survey – Nillumbik Local Government Area; Target = ↑)

- **Percentage of people who say it is important for Council to address the needs of LGBTIQA+ residents**
 (Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- **Percentage of people that say they feel valued by society**
 (Source: Victorian Population Health Survey – Nillumbik Local Government Area; Target = ↑)
- **Number of Council volunteers**
 (Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- **Percentage of people engaged in assisting/helping a local group (volunteering)**
 (Source: Victorian Population Health Survey – Nillumbik Local Government Area; Target = ↑)
- **Proportion of the municipal population that are active library members**
 (Source: LGPRF; Target = ↑)
- **Community satisfaction with community services**
 (Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- **Annual immunisation coverage rate for children aged 0 to 5**
 (Source: LGPRF; Target = ↑)
- **Participation in the maternal and child health service**
 (Source: LGPRF; Target = ↑)
- **Total enrolments in programs at Living and Learning Nillumbik**
 (Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- **Number of meals on wheels program meals delivered**
 (Source: Council records; Target = ↑)

Supporting strategies, policies and plans

- Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Disability Action Plan
- Early Years Community Infrastructure Plan
- Gender Equality Action Plan
- Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Reconciliation Charter and Reconciliation Action Plan
- Youth Strategy

Aligned services we provide

<p>Community support services</p> <p>Promotes and support Nillumbik’s ageing community with a focus on the overall health, wellbeing and independence of individuals, families and community groups.</p>
<p>Community development</p> <p>Provides services for the whole community, such as festivals and events, grants for community groups, services and programs for youth, and community development.</p>
<p>Disability inclusion and volunteering</p> <p>Drives systemic change, advocates, educates, and raises awareness about inclusion so that the needs of people with a disability, volunteers and their families/carers are considered across all Council activities. Also supports Council’s volunteer program managers and their volunteers.</p>
<p>Early years</p> <p>Provides support and training to families with young children and services delivering early years’ education and care programs.</p>

Libraries and community education

Provides facilities and programs for the whole community, including libraries, Living & Learning Nillumbik and Edendale Community Environment Farm.

Maternal and child health services

Provides services and programs for new babies and parents in the Shire, including maternal and child health and immunisation services.

School crossings

Provision of school crossing supervisors for school children across the Shire.



Image: Art for Health group course at Living and Learning Nillumbik

Place and space



Image: One of our many recreation spaces

Place and space

Objective

To plan, design and maintain places and spaces that strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility, encourage social connection and respect the environment.

Strategies

Identity

- We celebrate and prioritise the protection of our heritage, arts and culture, places and spaces by focusing on the diversity of experiences that have shaped our shared history
- We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance
- We recognise and celebrate our community's significant contributions to art and culture.

Neighbourhood character

- We respect and enhance the unique neighbourhood character in our communities to ensure a considered approach to planning and development
- We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character
- We value everyday arts and cultural experiences through the development of public art
- We champion good design in our public buildings and developments that is consistent with local character.

Open spaces

- We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife
- We carefully protect, plan, maintain and improve open spaces, streetscapes and places to ensure that they are safe, accessible and enjoyable
- We continue to enhance the Shire's shared trail network, working proactively to improve connectivity
- We facilitate participation in sports, leisure and recreational activities.

Movement and place

- We work to understand what residents, businesses and visitors need from modes of transport, to ensure that getting around is easy, accessible, safe and sustainable
- We champion the notion of living locally; making it easier for people to meet most of their daily needs within the Shire
- We continue to deliver on our road management responsibilities; working to enhance infrastructure that aligns with the character of the neighbourhood
- We prioritise and actively advocate for new and better public transport options and a reduction of private car use and dependence

- We work with our community, neighbouring councils and transport and planning agencies to advocate for improved transport solutions.

Strategic indicators

- Total number of participants in arts and cultural programs and activities
(Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with arts and cultural programs, activities and events
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with the appearance and quality of newly constructed developments
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Percentage of VCAT decisions upholding Council's determined position
(Source: LGPRF; Target = ↑)
- Percentage of planning applications determined within required timeframes
(Source: LGPRF; Target = ↑)
- Percentage of capital works program delivered
(Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with the design of public spaces
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with provision and maintenance of parks and gardens
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Number of trees planted in streets and parks to maintain tree canopy
(Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- Number of infringements issued following investigation of littering or rubbish dumping
(Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- Number of Land Management Incentive Program grants provided to the community for control of noxious and environmental weeds
(Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- Community perception of public safety during day and night
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with aquatic and leisure facilities
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Attendance at leisure and aquatic facilities
(Source: LGPRF; Target = ↑)
- Number of dead animals collected by Council
(Source: Council records; Target = ↓)
- Community satisfaction with local traffic management
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards
(Source: LGPRF; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with grading of unsealed roads
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)

Supporting strategies, policies and plans

- Arts and Culture Strategy
- Biodiversity Strategy
- Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre Structure Plan
- Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan

- Equine in Nillumbik Plan
- Green Wedge Management Plan
- Housing Strategy
- Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy
- Municipal Planning Strategy
- Neighbourhood Character Strategy
- Open Space Strategy
- Recreation and Leisure Strategy
- Roadside Management Plan

Aligned services we provide

<p>Arts and culture</p> <p>Responsible for the cultural vitality and community engagement in the arts across the Shire and to enable participation in the cultural life of the community and enjoyment of the arts by providing diverse and innovative opportunities for active lifestyles and artistic expression.</p>
<p>Building safety and regulation</p> <p>Responsible for administration and enforcement of certain parts of the <i>Building Act 1993</i> and Regulations.</p>
<p>Infrastructure design, construction and transport</p> <p>Provides services for the whole community including: design for capital works projects; roads; bridges; drainage; landscape; traffic management; coordination of capital works; procurement and construction; engineering assessment of planning applications and approval of subdivision works; traffic control; road safety; advocacy on public transport and main roads and street lighting.</p>
<p>Leisure facilities and services</p> <p>Responsible for the provision of leisure facilities and services for the whole community, including leisure centres, sportsgrounds, recreation trails and playgrounds.</p>
<p>Local laws and parking</p> <p>Administers local laws, car parking regulation and amenity protection for the whole community.</p>
<p>Parks and reserves maintenance</p> <p>Maintains parks, sportsgrounds, conservation reserves, street trees and roadsides across the Shire.</p>
<p>Property and asset management</p> <p>Provides infrastructure asset management and planning, building maintenance and fencing, and property, fleet, community centres and halls network management.</p>
<p>Road and drainage maintenance</p> <p>Provides maintenance of local roads and bridges, pedestrian bridges, bus shelters, footpaths, trails and drains for the whole community. This service also incorporates Council's response to deceased animal collection, street cleaning and roadside litter collection.</p>
<p>Statutory planning</p> <p>Responsible for processing of planning applications and subdivision applications, conducts planning investigations and promotes compliance with the Nillumbik Planning Scheme and permit conditions.</p>
<p>Strategic planning</p> <p>Provides land use planning and policy, planning scheme management, activity centre planning and heritage protection across the Shire.</p>



Image: A family enjoying one of our many shared recreation trails



Image: A business in Pantan Hill

Sustainable and resilient



Image: A school group learning at Edendale Community and Environment Farm

Sustainable and resilient

Objective

To ensure that we are able to meet the present needs of our community without compromising its future needs.

Strategies

Climate action

- We take decisive action on climate change
- We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Sustainability

- We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal
- We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change
- We favour sustainable and innovative investment; focussing on renewable energy initiatives
- We seek to embed sustainability initiatives in the planning scheme
- We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and government agencies to promote sustainability.

Business and tourism

- We promote Nillumbik's unique offerings; supporting a vibrant local economy and encouraging tourism
- We support businesses, industries and events, and encourage investment within Nillumbik
- We support sustainable agricultural pursuits and their contribution to Nillumbik and the broader community
- We provide spaces, places and opportunities that develop, and actively support our creative industries.

Resilience and recovery

- We support individuals, families and the community to be mentally and physically healthy, safe and enabled to participate in relief and recovery processes arising from crisis or emergency
- We strengthen emergency preparedness, prevention, response and recovery through the sharing of emergency management information and capabilities
- We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and government agencies to develop processes that are flexible, tailored, relevant and adaptive to the changing needs of the community.

Strategic indicators

- Community satisfaction with Council meeting its responsibilities towards the environment
 (Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with environmental programs and facilities
 (Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Number of participants in environmental programs and events
 (Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- Number of program participants and visitors at Edendale Community and Environment Farm
 (Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with regular waste collections
 (Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Percentage of kerbside waste collections diverted from landfill
 (Source: LGPRF; Target = ↑)
- Percentage of contamination in kerbside waste bins
 (Source: Council records; Target = ↓)
- Community satisfaction with Council's support for local business
 (Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Number of jobs available in the Shire
 (Source: REMPLAN; Target = ↑)
- Number of local residents who work within the Shire
 (Source: REMPLAN; Target = ↑)
- Gross Regional Product (\$)
 (Source: REMPLAN; Target = ↑)

Supporting strategies, plans and policies

- Climate Action Plan
- Economic Development Strategy
- Integrated Water Management Plan
- Pandemic Recovery Plan

Aligned services we provide

<p>Environment and conservation</p> <p>Provides environment and conservation services and programs for the whole Nillumbik community, such as environmental planning and policy; education and events; water quality and conservation; biodiversity protection; land management advice and energy efficiency programs.</p>
<p>Recycling and waste services</p> <p>Provides collection of household waste, recycling, green waste, hard waste, waste education and landfill rehabilitation for the whole Nillumbik community.</p>
<p>Tourism and business support</p> <p>Focuses on growing the local economy through providing support to local business networks, traders associations and individual businesses; delivering business events and training and supporting tourism development and promotion for the Nillumbik region.</p>

Responsible and accountable



Image: Road grading in one of our rural areas

Responsible and accountable

Objective

To facilitate the best possible outcomes for our community, by demonstrating strong leadership and working actively to achieve the community's objectives.

Strategies

Good governance

- We act in the best interests of our community
- We continue to exercise sustainable and responsible financial management
- We maintain good governance and transparency; clearly defining and communicating the role of Councillors and Council
- We are forward-thinking, data-driven and evidence-led in our decision making, always looking to identify new opportunities
- We will continue to be an employer of choice
- We foster a positive organisational culture, from the top down.

Risk management

- We continue to meet Council's responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire
- We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement
- We acknowledge our role in managing the significance of global risks.

Services and programs

- We aim to ensure that Council's service delivery is equitable, accessible and inclusive
- We enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our services, prioritising a great customer experience
- We communicate clearly and regularly, taking the time to listen and engage with our community
- We source alternative and innovative funding sources to support and complement Council services and infrastructure
- We partner with state and federal governments to advocate in our community's best interests
- We work with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung to develop strategies and projects that deliver meaningful acknowledgement as Traditional Owners.

Strategic indicators

- Community satisfaction with Council making decisions in the best interests of the community (Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)

- Community satisfaction with Council's consultation and engagement
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Percentage of people feeling they have the opportunity to have their say
(Source: Victorian Population Health Survey – Nillumbik Local Government Area; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with Council's responsiveness to local community needs
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with fire prevention works
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Percentage of fire prevention notices that resulted in compliance
(Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- Time taken to action food complaints
(Source: LGPRF; Target = ↑)
- Percentage of animals reclaimed from the regional pound
(Source: LGPRF; Target = ↑)
- Percentage of issued infringement notices expiated
(Source: Council reporting to Fines Victoria; Target = ↑)
- Community satisfaction with customer service
(Source: Annual Community Survey; Target = ↑)
- Customer satisfaction score from direct customers
(Source: Biannual Customer Experience Survey; Target = ↑)
- Satisfaction score of customer visits to Council's website
(Source: Biannual Customer Experience Survey; Target = ↑)
- Number of visitors to Council's website
(Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- Total number of participants on Council's social media channels
(Source: Council records; Target = ↑)
- Percentage of successful grant applications applied for by Council
(Source: Council records; Target = ↑)

Supporting strategies, policies and plans

- Advocacy Plan
- Bushfire Mitigation Strategy
- Communications Strategy
- Community Engagement Policy
- Domestic Animal Management Plan
- Domestic Wastewater Management Plan
- Nillumbik Customer First Strategy

Aligned services we provide

Animal management
Works under the required legislative framework to protect the welfare of animals and the community. Manages animal regulation and municipal pound.
Business transformation and performance
Provides internal service delivery in performance reporting, strategy and planning expertise, occupational health and safety, risk management and insurance, and business transformation projects and initiatives.

Communications Assists Council and staff to communicate its decisions, services, activities and events to Nillumbik residents and the wider community through print and electronic communication channels, and to promote local government sector, local and regional advocacy.
Customer service Provides frontline customer service and reception services for the benefit of all residents, ratepayers and visitors, and is responsible for driving key changes in behaviour and delivering programs of value to the community in achieving customer experience improvements.
Emergency management Working in partnership with stakeholders and the community, contribute to the development of a disaster resilient community that is better able to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency events.
Food safety and public health Provides services to the community in food safety and health premises regulation, septic tank regulation, public health protection and amenity and noise regulation.
Finance Provides internal service delivery in finance, budgeting and procurement services, rates and property valuations.
Governance Manages Council's overall governance matters, including coordination of council meetings, elections, civic functions and legislative requirements; legal services; records management; and Mayor and Councillor resources and support services.
Human resources Provides internal service delivery in the areas of recruitment and selection, staff learning and development and employee and industrial relations.
Information technology Provides internal service delivery in information technology services and solutions, on-line services and telecommunications.



Image: Diamond Creek Regional Playspace

Implementation and reporting

Council is committed to regularly monitoring and reporting progress on the Council Plan 2021-2025 to the Nillumbik community.

A progress report against key deliverables in the Annual Action Plan aligned to the Council Plan will be prepared and reported to a Council Meeting each quarter, and progress against the Council Plan will be reported annually through the Annual Report.

Outcomes from the Council Plan 2021-2025 will also align with and be actioned through other Council strategy documents and plans, and reported to a Council Meeting periodically, in accordance with Council's Strategic Planning Framework. This framework is consistent with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and aligns to the four themes of the Council Plan.

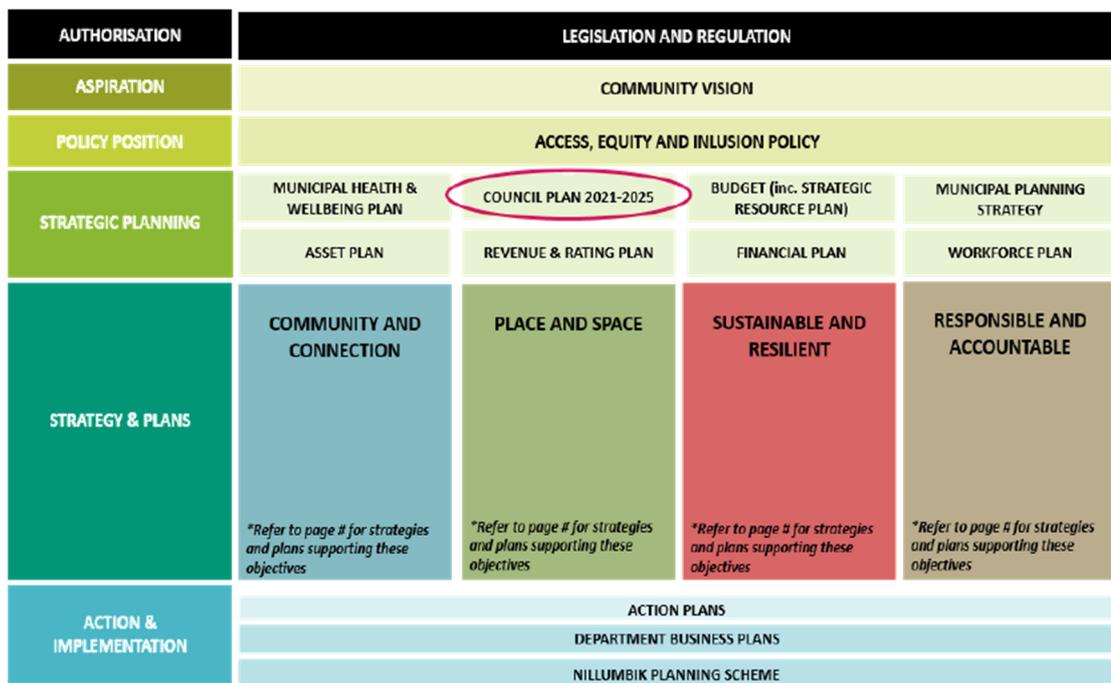


Image: Council's Strategic Planning Framework

The *Local Government Act 2020* promotes an integrated approach to strategic planning and reporting. This ensures a strong alignment between the Community Vision, Council Plan 2021-2025 and other Council documents that direct and influence initiatives, activities and projects undertaken by Council.

The benefits of this approach include:

- Clarity of direction and streamlining of effort, planning, cost and administration
- Reporting on the results helps ensure Council transparency and accountability to the community
- Strategies, policies and plans have a clear purpose and are easy to understand and implement, and the development of action and annual plans provide accountability for the delivery of strategy and projects across Council
- The results achieved through the implementation of strategies and plans are easy to see as all strategies and plans have appropriate objectives and clear performance measures linked to reporting mechanisms.

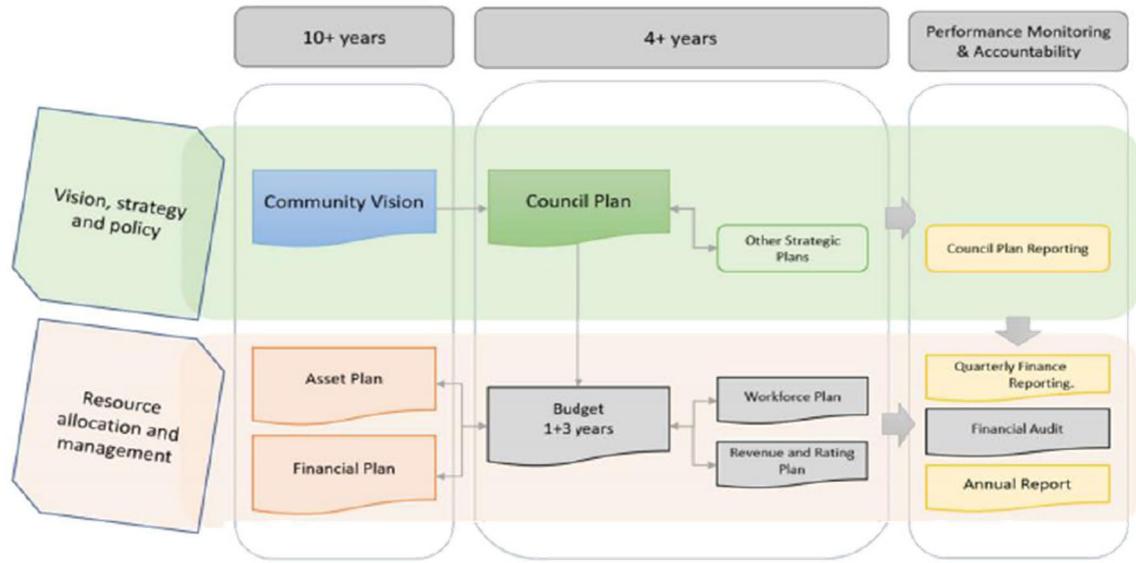


Image: Council's Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework

About Nillumbik

History

The area now comprising the Shire of Nillumbik was inhabited for tens of thousands of years by the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Woi Wurrung speaking people. Wurundjeri is the clan name, willam refers to a subsection of the clan associated with a specific land area recorded as the Yarra and Plenty. The Wurundjeri people called the region 'nillumbik', meaning shallow earth, a name later used by the Europeans who settled here.

European settlement of the Nillumbik area dates from the late 1830s, with land used mainly for grazing, timber cutting and viticulture. Despite this timber and agricultural activity, the area was slow to develop until the discovery of gold in the 1850s. Gold saw the establishment of townships such as Panton Hill, Research, Queenstown (now St Andrews) and Diamond Creek in the late 1850s and 1860s. From 1870 to 1900, orchards spread along the Diamond Valley, with the prosperity of the fruit-growing industry resulting in the townships of Arthurs Creek, Doreen, Plenty and Strathewen. A railway was built to Eltham and later Hurstbridge in the early 1900s supporting industry and residents.

Location

Renowned as "the Green Wedge Shire", Nillumbik is located in Melbourne's north-east and provides our residents with easy access to Melbourne, its services, job opportunities and facilities; along with access to an abundance of open space, vibrant communities and unique environmental landscapes.

Nillumbik Shire's boundaries are the Kinglake National Park in the north, the Yarra escarpment in the east, the Yarra River in the south, and the Plenty River and Yan Yean Road in the west. Nillumbik's location on the urban fringe along with its unique environmental characteristics make the area prone to bushfire. Our community's strong sense of belonging and high-levels of engagement has strengthened its ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from bushfires.

Community

Nillumbik has a population of approximately 65,000 people who enjoy a healthy, safe and family-friendly lifestyle. Nillumbik is a collection of townships and villages, each with its own unique identity and heritage.

Nillumbik offers residents and visitors distinctive village-style shopping, access to professional services, public transport and places to meet and socialise. Rural properties, rich agricultural land, shared trail networks, orchards and award-winning wineries complement the shire's unique and diverse landscape. These social, economic and environmental features enhance quality of life and make it a desirable place to live, work and play.

Green Wedge

Melbourne has 12 Green Wedges, widely known as the "lungs of Melbourne". The Nillumbik Green Wedge covers 91 per cent of the total area of the Shire and is host to a number of state and national parks. Home to approximately 12,630 residents, Nillumbik's Green Wedge is highly valued locally and regionally because of its biodiversity, natural beauty, recreation opportunities, visitor experiences, mixed-use trails, grazing land and agriculture, and offers residents and visitors a unique rural environment of bushland, small farms, rivers and forest.

The productivity of Nillumbik's Green Wedge is important to the Shire's economy. There is a growing number of artisan food and beverage producers across the Green Wedge, and opportunities continue to grow for farm gate initiatives, paddock to plate experiences and food and beverage trails.

Environment

The Shire of Nillumbik contains an array of peri-urban areas, bushlands, landscapes, open spaces, townships and communities. The Yarra River corridor is a special and defining element of the southern edge of the shire, and flows around the special environmental living zone of the Bend of Islands, on to North Warrandyte, Research and Eltham. A distinguishing feature of the municipality is its vast Green Wedge with the key purposes of conservation, agriculture, lifestyles and tourism.

Much of Nillumbik is characterised by open grassy woodland, with relatively shallow soils dominated by long-leaved and red box eucalypts, and with the fertile soils of an old volcano at Kangaroo Ground offering localised rich farming land. The Arthurs Creek and Strathewen areas have seen a long history of orchards and cattle farming, yet still retain many stands of ancient eucalypts. The tree canopy cover in Nillumbik is more extensive than the average for metropolitan areas with 30% tree canopy cover in Nillumbik compared with 16.2% for metropolitan areas.¹

The Shire is home to a vast array of indigenous flora and fauna species, including many that are listed significant and threatened species. Local fauna ranges from kangaroos, wombats, echidnas to a wonderful array of birds, and to rare Brush-tailed Phascogales, Eltham Copper Butterflies, Platypus, Powerful Owls and Southern Toadlets.

Active lifestyles

Nillumbik has a higher level of participation in sport and recreation activities than the state and national averages. Walking for recreation is the most popular activity, followed by cycling, swimming and running. Horse riding and bike riding are also common activities as residents and visitors utilise the expansive shared trail network on offer.

Residents' participation in structured sports such as tennis, golf, football and netball are all higher than the state and national averages, and the Shire is currently experiencing unprecedented growth in women's participation in sport.

Artistic and cultural identity

Nillumbik is an arts-rich environment. Residents and visitors value the rich local artistic heritage, as well as the Shire's history and culture, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The creative life of the community is highly-valued and artistic practices are seen as varied, flourishing and reflecting the connection to the natural environment.

The strength of Nillumbik's artistic traditions, commencing with the early Australian Impressionist painters, the mudbrick movement and through to current practice in contemporary arts, is evident in Nillumbik's artist communities including Baldessin Press, Butterfly Studios, Dunmoochin and Montsalvat as well as the very popular Artists Open Studio weekends. Nillumbik also has strong links to the performing arts and is proud to be home to acclaimed and emerging authors, photographers, filmmakers and musicians. Nillumbik's contribution to arts and culture is regularly showcased at local, regional and international forums.

¹ Nillumbik Shire Council (2021) Community Profile – Open Space and Sustainability, p.105.

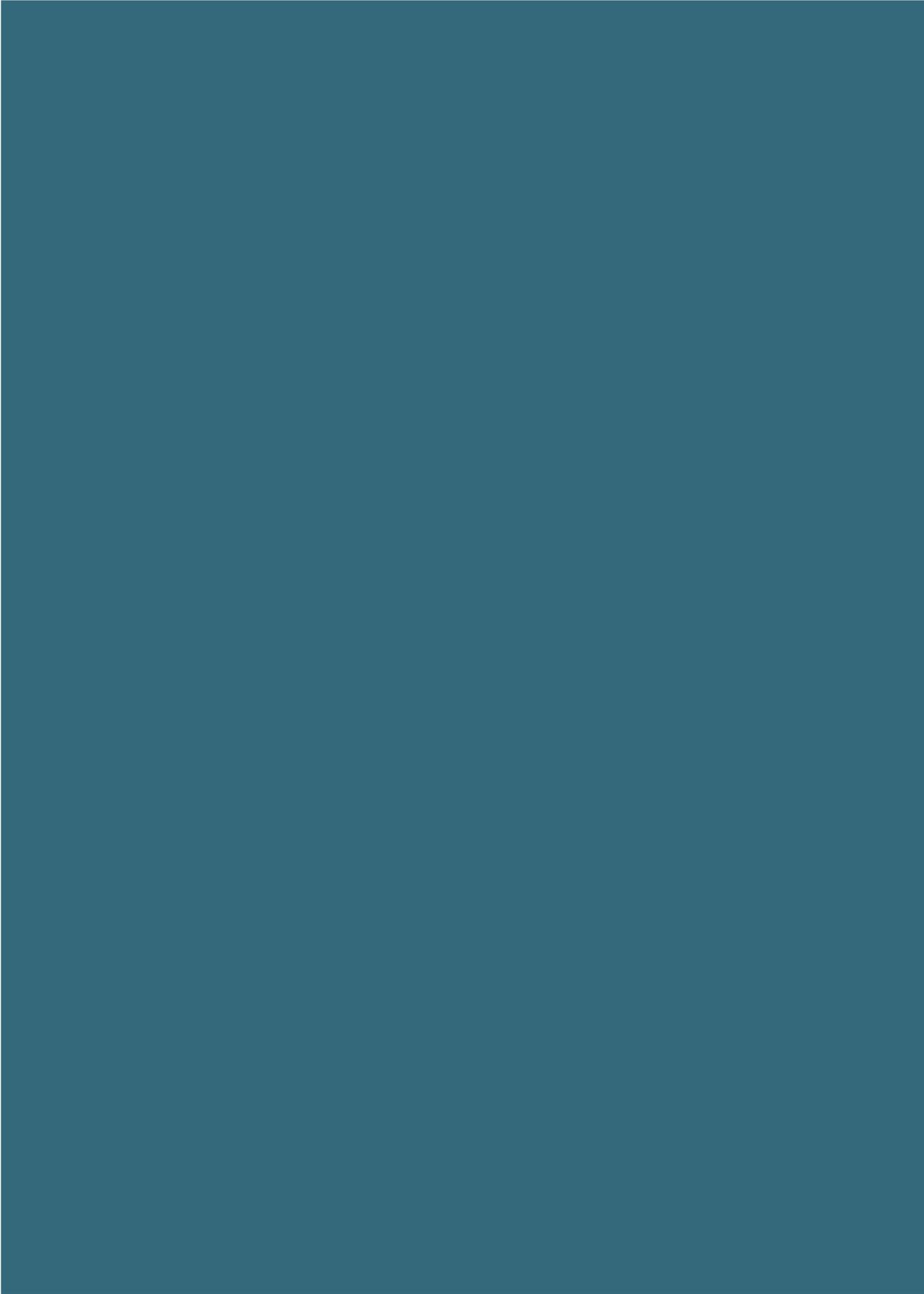
Snapshot of the Shire

Land Area		
Land area by square kilometres	432km ²	
Estimated Residential Population		
Estimated residential population	65,369	
Forecasted population to 2036	70,315	
Community Profile		
	Nilumbik	Greater Melbourne
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population	0.4%	0.5%
Overseas born	16%	34%
Language spoken at home other than English	9%	32%
Median age	41 years	36 years
Residents aged 0-17 years	24.2%	21.6%
Residents aged 18 – 49 years	40.1%	47.4%
Residents aged 50-69 years	27.9%	21.2%
Residents aged 70-84	6.7%	7.7%
Residents aged 85+	1.1%	2.1%
Medium and high density housing	7%	33%
Median weekly household income	\$2,093	\$1,539
Households with a mortgage	48%	34%
Households renting	9%	29%
University qualification	28%	27%
Trade qualification (certificate)	19%	15%
Unemployment rate	4.3%	6.8%
Public transport to work	10%	15%
Travel to work by car (as driver or passenger)	70%	64.1%
SEIFA index of disadvantage	1099	1021
Volunteering	24%	17.6%

Source: .id Demographics Profile <https://profile.id.com.au/nilumbik> 2016 Census data



Image: Yarra River at Eltham South



**COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025
 SUBMISSIONS**

The below submissions have been noted and will be subject to further consideration in the drafting of the final document.

Sub. Number	Summary
1	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (theme headings) • Green Wedge (protection) • Planning standards (enforcement) • Green Wedge Management Plan 2019 (application) • Sports and recreation • Shared trails <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 1</p>
2	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Climate (action) • Climate (Emergency Declaration) <p>REFER SUBMISSION 2</p>
3	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (links to Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) • Document structure (vision statement) • Document structure (priority actions) • Supporting strategies and plans (review) • <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (requirements) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 3</p>
4	<p>The submission references the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (action) • Climate (Emergency Declaration) • Environment (protection) • Biodiversity • Document structure (goals, objectives and measures) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 4</p>
5	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment (health, protection and regeneration) • Climate (action) • Climate (Emergency Declaration) • Health and wellbeing • Biodiversity • Renewable energy • Bushfire (management) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 5</p>

6	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment (protection) • Sustainability • Biodiversity • Climate (Emergency Declaration) • Climate (action) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 6</p>
7	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (action) • Green Wedge (protection) • Biodiversity • Climate (Emergency Declaration) • Document structure (priority actions) • Supporting strategies, policies and plans (review) • Document structure (themes) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 7</p>
8	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Document structure (vision statement) • Strategies, policies and plans (review) • Document structure (priority actions)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Green Wedge (protection) ● Biodiversity ● Environment (protection) ● Climate (action) ● Sustainability <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 8</p>
9	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rates ● Sports and recreation (age inclusivity) ● Fee for service ● Environment (protection) ● Recycling ● Roads and roadside (maintenance) ● Planning standards (decisions) ● Bushfire (risk reduction) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 9</p>
10	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Document structure (vision statement) ● Strategies, policies and plans (review) ● Document structure (priority actions) ● <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (requirements) ● First Nations People ● Planning Standards (Nillumbik Planning Scheme)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Wedge (protection and management) • Biodiversity • Environment (protection) • Status of Nillumbik as a 'Conservation Shire' • Climate (action) • Waste management <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 10</p>
11	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (vision statement) • Strategies, policies and plans (review) • Document structure (priority actions) • Shared trails (network) • Green Wedge (protection) • Biodiversity • Neighbourhood character (protection) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 11</p>
12	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural residents (recognition) • Roads and roadside (maintenance) • Roads and roadside (safety) • Document structure (strategic indicators) • Bushfire (risk reduction)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (action) • Food systems • Agriculture • Planning standards (Nillumbik Planning Scheme) • Population demographics (rural and urban breakdown) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 12</p>
13	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment (protection) • Climate (action) • Climate (Emergency Declaration) • Biodiversity <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 13</p>
14	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural residents (recognition) • Health and wellbeing (safety) • Green Wedge (enjoyment) • Shared trails (network) • Sports and recreation (horse-riding) • Nillumbik Community Profile (rural and Green Wedge statistics) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 14</p>
15	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Wedge (protection) • Green Wedge Management Plan (application) • Environment (health) • Environment (protection) • Environment (education) • Strategies, policies and plans (review) • Native vegetation • Wildlife • Biodiversity • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Document structure (priority actions) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 15</p>
16	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Document structure (vision statement) • Strategies, policies and plans (review) • Document structure (priority actions) • <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (requirements) • Green Wedge (protection) • Biodiversity • Climate (action) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 16</p>
17	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Green Wedge (protection) • Biodiversity • Climate (action) • Document structure (vision statement) • Strategies, policies and plans (review) • Document structure (priority actions) • <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (requirements) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 17</p>
18	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (link to Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) • Document structure (language) • Climate (action) • Climate (Emergency Declaration) • Environment (protection) • Resilience (environment) • Renewable energy • Document structure (strategic indicators) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 18</p>
19	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (vision statement) • Document structure (priority actions)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment (protection) • Biodiversity • Green Wedge Management Plan 2019 (review) • Strategy, policy and plans (review) • <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (requirements) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 19</p>
20	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (action) • Biodiversity • Green Wedge (protection) • Carbon neutrality • Document structure (priority actions) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 20</p>
21	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (Emergency Declaration) • Climate (action) • Biodiversity • Carbon neutrality • Document structure (priority actions) • Renewable energy • Environment (protection) • Green Wedge (protection) • Urban development • Bushfire (management)

	REFER TO SUBMISSION 21
22	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • First Nations People (recognition) • Wildlife (protection) • Green Wedge (protection) • Open space • COVID-19 <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 22</p>
23	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (priority actions) • Environment (protection) • Strategies, policies and plans (review) • Agriculture • Waste (reduction) • Climate (action) • Bushfire (risk management) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 23</p>
24	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (Emergency Declaration)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Climate (action) ● Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) ● Document structure (strategic indicators) ● Biodiversity ● Native vegetation ● Public transport ● Bushfire (risk management) ● Extreme weather events (risk management) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 24</p>
25	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) ● Document structure (vision statement) ● Strategies, policies and plans (review) ● Document structure (priority actions) ● Green Wedge (protection) ● Climate (action) ● Biodiversity <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 25</p>
26	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Green Wedge (protection) ● Biodiversity ● Wildlife ● Climate (action)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies, policies and plans (review) • Document structure (priority actions) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 26</p>
27	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (links to Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) • Document structure (strategic indicators) • Planning standards (Municipal Planning Strategy) • Leadership (Council) • Neighbourhood character (urban design) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 27</p>
28	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife (protection) • Roads and roadside (management) • Green Wedge Management Plan 2019 (review) • Climate (action) • Bushfire (risk management) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 28</p>
29	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (links to Strategic Planning documents) • Document structure (strategic indicators)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment (local) • Strategies, policy and plans (review) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 29</p>
30	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of Nillumbik as a ‘Conservation Shire’ • Document structure (language) • Document structure (links to Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) • Environment (statistics) • Wildlife (statistics) • Green Wedge (protection) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 30</p>
31	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (action) • Biodiversity • First Nations People (acknowledgement) • Climate (Emergency Declaration) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 31</p>
32	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Document structure (themes)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Green Wedge (protection) ● Green Wedge (identity) ● Document structure (priority actions) ● Biodiversity ● Environment (protection) ● Rural residents (recognition) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 32</p>
33	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Document structure (vision statement) ● Status of Nillumbik as a ‘Conservation Shire’ ● Strategies, policies and plans (review) ● Document structure (priority actions) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 33</p>
34	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Green Wedge (protection) ● Native vegetation ● Wildlife ● Bushfire (risk management) ● Document structure (links to Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) ● Document structure (priority actions) ● <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (requirements) ● Environment (protection) ● Biodiversity

	REFER TO SUBMISSION 34
35	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Wedge (protection) • Biodiversity • Document structure (priority actions) • Native vegetation • Wildlife • Green Wedge Management Plan 2019 (Review) • Climate (action) • Climate (Emergency Declaration) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 35</p>
36	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acreage landowners • Green Wedge (zoning) • Municipal Planning Strategy <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 36</p>
37	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acreage landowners • Green Wedge (zoning) • Municipal Planning Strategy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure (utility) • Housing Strategy (review) • Diamond Creek Activity Centre Structure Plan (review) • Bushfire (planning overlay) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 37</p>
38	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (links to Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) • Document structure (vision statement) • Document structure (priority actions) • Strategy, policy and plans (review) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 38</p>
39	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (action) • Biodiversity • Environment (protection) • Document structure (strategic indicators) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 39</p>
40	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (action) • Climate (Emergency Declaration)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) ● Green Wedge (protection) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 40</p>
41	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) ● Document structure (links to Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) ● Document structure (vision statement) ● Document structure (priority actions) ● Strategy, policy and plans (review) ● Green Wedge (protection) ● Biodiversity ● Climate (action) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 41</p>
42	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) ● Document structure (links to Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) ● Green Wedge (protection) ● Biodiversity ● Climate (action) ● Document structure (priority actions) ● Strategy, policy and plans (review) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 42</p>

43	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (action) • Climate (Emergency Declaration) • Document structure (strategic indicators) • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Green Wedge (protection) • Biodiversity <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 43</p>
44	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (action) • Climate (Emergency Declaration) • Document structure (language) • Environment (protection) • Environment (health) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 44</p>
45	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (links with Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) • <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (requirements) • Document structure (strategic indicators) • Strategies, policies and plans (reporting)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (objectives, goals and measures) • Wildlife (diversity) • Native vegetation (diversity) • Biodiversity • Green Wedge Plan 2019 (review) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 45</p>
46	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate (action) • Climate (Emergency Declaration) • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Environment (protection) • Biodiversity • Sustainability (renewable energy) • Sustainability (food systems) • Document structure (strategic indicators) • Green Wedge (protection) • Bushfire (risk management) • Extreme weather events (risk management) <p>REFER TO ATTACHMENT 46</p>
47	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (themes) • Document structure (strategic indicators) • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of Nillumbik as a 'Conservation Shire' • Green Wedge Management Plan 2019 (review) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 47</p>
48	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Document structure (strategic indicators) • Environment (health) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 48</p>
49	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (alignment to Council services) • Document structure (themes) • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Document structure (links with Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) • Document structure (strategic indicators) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 49</p>
50	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Wedge (protection) • Status of Nillumbik as a 'Conservation Shire' • First Nations People (acknowledgement) • Green Wedge (custodian recognition)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document structure (priority actions) • Document structure (links to Strategic Planning documents) • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 50</p>
51	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural landowners (recognition) • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Bushfire (mitigation) • Document structure (strategic indicators) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 51</p>
52	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Green Wedge (protection) • Environment (protection) • Climate (action) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 52</p>
53	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Document structure (links to Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040) • Document structure (vision statement)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Document structure (priority actions) ● Strategy, policy and plans (review) ● Green Wedge (protection) ● Biodiversity ● Climate (action) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 53</p>
54	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Climate (action) ● Document structure (priority actions) ● Water (management and storage) ● Environment (health) ● Wildlife <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 54</p>
55	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) ● Status of Nillumbik as a ‘Conservation Shire’ ● Green Wedge (protection) ● Environment (protection) ● First Nations People ● Biodiversity ● Climate (action) ● Environmental health (statistics) ● Native vegetation (statistics)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife (statistics) • Document structure (priority actions and measures) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 55</p>
56	<p>The submission focuses on the following themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (requirements) • Engagement (not representative) • Our People, Our Place, our Future (engagement resources) • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement findings) • Our People, Our Place, Our Future (engagement analysis) • Vision project evolution (explanation) <p>REFER TO SUBMISSION 56</p>
57	<p>Nil comments entered. Nil documents attached.</p>
58	<p>Nil comments entered. Nil documents attached.</p>
59	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“This plan should reference the vision throughout. It should be clearly the Plan of this Council (and no other) and our Council will be re-elected or rejected on how it performs in relation to this plan.</i></p> <p><i>Each section is linked to other existing supporting documents which will have been developed by other Councils and whose views and aspirations are not congruent to this Council nor this period of time. So all those supporting documents need to be reviewed to check if they resonate with the Vision and Plan of this Council.</i></p>

	<p><i>Many of the strategy points are generic and acceptable but show no detail as to how they will be achieved in definite terms so offer no guidance. The strategy points offer no guidance in case of non-compliance. So often in conversations people say that Council does not take action with barking dogs, weeds, vermin, tree removal, building works that have not been approved or that the people chose to ignore planning permit conditions so statements of 'We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environment' or 'we continue to meet Council's responsibilities' etc. are pointless (idealistic) unless sufficient staff are employed to ensure compliance in all Council's responsibilities.</i></p> <p><i>Please look at referencing the Vision to this document and explaining what happens if a strategy is ignore either by Council of ratepayers."</i></p>
60	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>"Hello, I consider the most important focus of this Council is to protect and enhance the green wedge.</i></p> <p><i>This should be demonstrated in the draft plan but it currently does not.</i></p> <p><i>Please change this.</i></p> <p><i>Perhaps an ideal based planning rule would be more appropriate,</i></p> <p><i>i.e. " To maintain and or enhance the quality of lives for the majority of current Nillumbik residents "</i></p>
61	<p>Nil comments received. Nil attachment received.</p>
62	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>"We need to protect the green wedge. There is only very high-level, meaningless words in the plan. I expect the plan to have clear direction on what we want as a community. Our green wedge is what sets our community apart and why well all love it here - we need strong protection so that we don't endure the same environmental vandalism that we have experienced over the past years.</i></p>

	<p><i>What are the objectives and targets that we are doing for protecting the green wedge? I don't see anything here that outlines what we stand for as a green wedge and HOW we are going to protect it.</i></p> <p><i>My other concern is opportunity for health and exercise in the community. We need better cycling opportunities - paths and roads to protect riders. Better walking paths."</i></p>
63	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>"Thank you for the opportunities to give input to the formulation of this plan and this chance to provide feedback on it. In general I feel disappointed in the plan from the point of view of specific details, and strength of statements. I am strongly influenced by my concern with the effects of climate change on our community and indeed on the world and our future. While the plan includes reference to issues of climate change and states the need to be agile around responding to this, I would like to see reference to the urgency of not taking actions. If the plan was redrafted from the viewpoint of a declaration of a climate emergency, and this underpinned the aims and strategies, I believe there would be a shift created towards real goals, not aspirations or themes. Goals that included emission reduction targets, meeting carbon neutrality and energy efficient programs. I and many others are feeling despair at the Federal Government's lack of action. If I saw bold actions within my own community, that perhaps I could be part of, then optimism might return.</i></p> <p><i>I have lived in Eltham for over 40 years. My children attended primary and secondary school in Eltham and my grandchildren also are currently attending primary school here. My children have or are currently also working in the Shire. I have always been active in local community groups as a participant and volunteer. I am passionate about this area and would love to see us take a leadership role in the area of mitigation of climate change, to our immediate advantage, as well as for the future. This council has already shown a willingness to listen to the community. I look to you for good leadership as we face an alarming future."</i></p>
64	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>"As a long time Nillumbik resident and ratepayer (30+years), I would like to see much stronger Climate Action initiatives included in the forthcoming Council Plan.</i></p>

	<p><i>There can be no escaping the fact that world climate warming will before long become the most pressing and urgent crisis to face every level of government, everywhere.</i></p> <p><i>Those with foresight are beginning to take the initiative for responsible action now, not when it is too late. The Council Plan should demonstrate awareness of the seriousness of the problem we all face.”</i></p> <p><i>Nillumbik Council should be right at the forefront, taking a leadership position, encouraging real action, such as setting carbon emission targets, supporting renewable energy, tree planting programs and bushland regeneration.”</i></p>
65	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“Hello. Imagine it is, say 1920, about 20 years before the second world war began. And imagine if a whole lot of scientists and sociologist and psychologists etc. worked out that a second world war was inevitable in only a couple of decades unless decisive, in some ways quite radical action was taken. Would we say, "Oh well, we'll do a little bit of what they say, but you know, scientists are fallible and they may be wrong". Perhaps we would say that, because there is something in us that wants to block out such things, we don't want to face it, we just want things to stay the way they are.</i></p> <p><i>We have very hard scientific knowledge now about the impacts of Global Warming, and what we can do to prevent the worse outcomes. I think the Draft Council Plan needs to more strongly acknowledge that we have a Climate Emergency that we must tackle now - not just a few years before 2050. Imagine if through some magic in 1920 people could have seen what happened in the second world war, and knew how that war could be prevented - of course they would have done everything possible to ensure it didn't happen. That is where we are at - we know what the future holds if we don't act now, so we are morally, and in the case of Council and Government, legally responsible to do everything possible to avert the worst case scenarios of Climate Change. This needs to be front and centre in the Plan - in a positive way, not an alarmist way, because if we do the right things, we will have a bright future.”</i></p>
66	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p>

	<p><i>“Once again rural dwellers come of second best. This council must plan better for rural residents. Don't just look after the roads in suburban areas. Rural roads need your work too. Weeds are rife out here and council doesn't plan to allocate enough funds to keep on top of them. The tree canopy along our roadsides WILL cause MROE deaths should we have another 2009. More money and maintenance is needed out here and if it is not in your plan, it won't happen.</i></p> <p><i>Also you need to support your farmers. Out here is one of the biggest orchardists in the state, and your plan does not make life any easier for farming people. We are lucky to have so many food growing enterprises in the rural parts of the shire but this document does not include us. Don't make farm life too hard for people or we won't be able to grow food out here. It only burdens us with more restrictions and by laws.”</i></p>
67	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“We have lived here in Nillumbik area since 1983 and were attracted here by the ‘Green Wedge’ shire.</i></p> <p><i>We love Eltham where we live, its rural aspects and with people who generally care for the environment. We are active members of local groups and feel very much a part of the community. After looking through the Council plan we cannot see any mention of climate energy or emissions targets. Please do consider and focus on the urgency of these very important topics.”</i></p>
68	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“I find the amount and rate of development very alarming especially now Fitzsimons roundabout is under way. I am fearful that our Eltham is turning into a generic suburb e.g. Templestowe. Seeing the vast devastation in Diamond Creek with all that land clearing is depressing. Also our wildlife are at the brink with them being left in small enclaves dotted throughout the shire. Even with the Montmorency railway station I found it hard to understand why it needed to be moved. I realised that it needs to be bigger but moving not so sure. Now there is a proposition of an Eltham hospital on the old council sight which will definitely change our suburb. It should have been put where the CFA is now or down where the fitness centre is but of that is too late. Maybe it should go back to where the old Greensborough hospital was, in Grimshaw Street.”</i></p>
69	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p>

	<p><i>“There is a Climate Emergency. This has been rightly declared by 100 LGAs across the country. This is a humanity threatening emergency. Climate change is mentioned in the draft plan as...‘The community has identified a number of key short term priorities, including action on climate change’ Climate Change a short term priority? How about a ‘Life threatening clear and present danger that requires decades of action. If short term means it needed to be addressed in the 1980s, fine. It is happening in the absence of central Government direction but local communities are crying out for leadership. This is an emergency that ought to be treated as such and accordingly be placed front and centre of the Nillumbik plan. Literally front and centre of the quartered circular graphics because everything else is dependent upon it. There is not going to be much point concerning ourselves with ‘place and space’ if it all goes up in smoke in the coming years. The increasing prevalence of uncontrollable bushfires is of course but one of the many certain catastrophes that will be brought about by a heating planet and only used here as an example. Demonstrating, I hope, the urgent need to develop a climate perspective.”</i></p>
70	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“The Council plan needs to include –</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Setting up a Climate Change advisory committee including community members and climate experts to advise on strategies to deal with a Climate Change.</i> • <i>Be guided by the IPCC recommendations on how to take action on Climate Change.</i> • <i>Establish an indigenous advisory group to help with heritage matters.</i> • <i>Review all strategies, plans and policies to reflect the community’s needs of protecting the neighbourhood character and the Green Wedge.</i> • <i>Manage weeds and protect wildlife</i> • <i>Preserve and promote Nillumbik’s unique rural environment for residents and visitors.</i> • <i>Improve managing waste.</i> • <i>You say ‘we partner with the State + Federal governments to advocate in our community's best interests.’ Please, regardless of which Party is in Govt. make evidence based, long term decisions that will preserve where we live, now and for future generations.</i>
71	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p>

	<p><i>“Comment on the Section of Nillumbik Council Plan dealing with Sustainability and Resilience.</i></p> <p><i>Sustainability of the Nillumbik environment and the living conditions for its residents is very much predicated on sustaining the climatic conditions within manageable limits. The Nillumbik Council must take decisive action on climate change in accordance with International, State and hopefully eventually Federal Govt policies.</i></p> <p><i>This must involve both abatement of carbon pollution of the atmosphere and adaptation to the climatic conditions that cannot be changed. Council activities are responsible for a small fraction of the total carbon emissions within the Shire and it should continue to reduce these but also devise and implement ways for its community to reduce theirs.</i></p> <p><i>It would be preferable for the Council to adopt an explicit commitment for its emissions to some kind of framework e.g. State Govt. policy, 50% by 2030, 100% by 2050 and to take on more of an advocacy/leadership role for the community contributions by reference to the above framework. Regular general information relating to the emissions target should be communicated to residents.</i></p> <p><i>With respect to “sustainability”, refer also climate change impacts.”</i></p>
72	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“I like the key themes and the objectives within the Plan.</i></p> <p><i>I think at a high level it has captured the things that are important to residents.</i></p> <p><i>Retaining neighbourhoods and place important.</i></p> <p><i>The only thing is we are an Interface Council and I don't feel that is quite captured in the Plan.”</i></p>
73	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p>

	<p><i>“The Local Government Act 2020 doesn't include Themes, so it would be good to align the wording to ensure that it clearly meets the requirements of the Act. i.e. Strategic Directions, Strategic Objectives. The Strategic Planning Framework on page 26 makes little sense. It looks like Council only has one policy, it took me a lot of time to work out that all of the items next to Strategic Planning were equally weighted (I think?) and it looks like the strategic planning documents are only aligned to one Council Plan 'Theme.' i.e. Council Plan and Revenue/ Rating Plan are only about Place and Space - which is referred to as a Strategy/Plan. If these sounds confusing it's because it is... please fix this. And the diagram on page 27 is straight out of the guidelines but not referenced - not sure why both are included.</i></p> <p><i>One of the most startling things is that there is no reference to COVID-19 and the impact it has had on community or recovery. There is also really mixed messaging about health and wellbeing. I acknowledge there are strategies about improving health, yet page 28 describes the community as 'healthy, safe' etc. I also call upon Council to strengthen their references to climate by declaring a Climate emergency.”</i></p>
74	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“When I moved to the Nillumbik Shire some 30 years ago, the locals talk about the weather, then drought, then the climate, then climate change.</i></p> <p><i>The Green Wedge was something to be proud of back then, but now so few people know of it. The lungs of Melbourne I was told. I thought how lucky I was to be here. The loss of biodiversity I have seen is alarming. There is an urgency in the environment to help heal. We can help. We need to build a campaign for community aware about the Green Wedge, and build targeted programs for regeneration of the land. Tree planting programs for the rural and urban areas. Provide incentives for rural land owners to engage in regenerative agricultural practices. There is a CLIMATE EMERGENCY and we need to spread the word. The IPCC has told us so. But we could see it happening long before. Declare a CLIMATE EMERGENCY now.”</i></p>
75	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“The draft plan is a good base for a document that reflects Council's values and what it currently does and will do in future. However, the plan also needs to reflect and be consistent with other existing plans and policies that continue to be relevant to life in Nillumbik such as ‘Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040’.</i></p>

	<p><i>Regarding the section relating to climate action, I think Council should be more ambitious and set out goals such as ensuring that all Council owned facilities become carbon neutral by 2030. I think it would also be good to promote energy saving measures and renewable energy solutions that residents and business owners could easily implement without incurring undue expense. I would like to see a greater commitment to informing and assisting the community in relation to this.</i></p> <p><i>The liveability of the Shire has become even more important since Victorians have been mainly confined to their homes and immediate surroundings during the Covid-19 pandemic. Research shows that connection to nature has enormous benefits for both physical and mental health. This is to a large extent created by the semi-rural nature of even the urban centres in the Shire. I would like the Council to strongly advocate for, and take action to preserve, the character of Eltham by encouraging low density development and the retention of native trees and other vegetation, and ensuring the protection of native animal habitat. Council should also be encouraging buildings that are designed to mitigate the effects of climate change and are in keeping with their surroundings. If these things can be implemented more effectively by making changes to the Nillumbik Planning Scheme, I would like to see this being identified as a specific action within the Council Plan.”</i></p>
76	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“I have concerns that the draft plan is particularly vague in relation to the climate emergency we are facing, as outlined in the latest IPCC report. The theme 'Sustainable and Resilient' is especially disappointing in its almost total lack of references to climate change and any concrete plans to mitigate its effects by Council. There are no goals or targets for the shire to strive for. In effect there is no plan. The Council Plan needs to convey an understanding of the seriousness of the climate crisis by using appropriate language. It should set goals to reduce carbon emissions and commit to renewable energy programs/targets for Council, business and residents. A commitment to working towards becoming a carbon neutral shire, with time lines, strategies and targets should be at the core of the theme "Sustainable and Resilient".</i></p>
77	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Council Plan 2021- 2025. Clearly, a lot of work has gone into this document but unfortunately as with the Council Vision document which should underpin it, I found it disappointing. I remind you again that your earlier survey, Our People, Our Place, Our Future to which around 3000 people responded, showed that the top three concerns for our future were –</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Preservation of the Green Wedge Shire,</i> • <i>The Protection of the environment and biodiversity and</i> • <i>Action on Climate Change.</i> <p><i>The Council Plan should align directly with the values inherent in the Community Vision - Nillumbik 2040. Immediately noticeable is the omission of acknowledgement that Nillumbik is a Green Wedge Shire which was created with the conservation of the environment as its strategic focus. All themes, objectives and strategies should reflect that basic acknowledgment.</i></p> <p><i>Existing Plans, Policies should be reviewed to ensure that they recognize and reflect the Community Vision that should have been informed by the findings of the Our People etc survey. This Plan appears to devolve responsibility to its current Green Wedge Management Plan without any recognition of the fact that this Plan, despite its expensive price tag, is highly controversial, being written as it was by a small vocal section of the community with the majority of the feedback from the community being totally ignored. I respectfully suggest that it is shelved, either rewritten, or, to expedite matters, bring the original 2010 GWMP back as it did not really have to be reviewed when it was. Update this Plan to include action on soil dumping.</i></p> <p><i>The Council Plan in its present form makes a lot of fine sounding motherhood statements but does not mention specific priority actions which will ensure the objectives and strategies are successfully implemented. Reflect the implementation of these priority actions in Council's Financial Plan which is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020.</i></p>
78	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>"A plan for the future of Nillumbik without a heading for sustainable and regenerative land management seems incomplete. We need to regenerate our soil to be able to sustain life in this region and beyond. Planning should include ways to assist small landholders produce food appropriate to the changing climate.</i></p> <p><i>Regenerating green wedge bush land to make it more resilient and less fire prone should be a priority. By planning to avert the next disaster we might never need to know exactly how resilient our communities are. I think that having a community able to plan and adapt to changes due to climate change is very important. Being adaptable leads to resilience."</i></p>

79	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“COUNCIL PLAN</i></p> <p><i>We commend the second point in Equity and inclusion: working towards reconciliation and process of healing. The third point: protect Aboriginal heritage etc... the task of building trust, education and celebration ...rather than leading to respect for all First Nations people. Could there be a stronger commitment? Full stop after heritage. Through building trust, education and celebration we stand with First Nations people respecting their unique place in our nation.</i></p> <p><i>STRATEGIC INDICATORS</i></p> <p><i>Include one for reconciliation in the community. Percentage of community supporting reconciliation: the Uluru Statement from the Heart or constitutional change or attending reconciliation events in the shire.</i></p> <p><i>NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER</i></p> <p><i>We promote place making and shaping.....local character remembering the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung were here for thousands of years before us.</i></p> <p><i>OPEN SPACES</i></p> <p><i>We are committed to protecting....environmental integrity... unique surroundings, Aboriginal heritage, natural environment, diverse wildlife.</i></p> <p><i>Supporting strategies, policies and plans, include Reconciliation Action Plan.”</i></p>
80	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“As a green wedge shire we should be ahead of the pack in taking action on Climate Change. It is mentioned but there need to be stated goals and emission targets set to actively reach the goal of becoming a carbon neutral shire by 2030. I would like to see the shire commit to the following suggestions to ensure this goal is reached:</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Emphasis on education of Nillumbik residents on the importance of biodiversity, the imminent threat of climate change and part they can play in combatting this - minimizing landfill, composting, using renewable energy</i> • <i>New shire vehicles to be electric</i> • <i>Greater allocation of funds to shire environmental departments</i> • <i>Mandate environmentally sustainable design for new residential and commercial developments</i> • <i>Commitment to renewable energy programs</i> • <i>Commitment to biodiversity</i> • <i>No dealings with fossil fuel companies”</i>
81	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Council Plan. This Plan is broad ranging but does miss out on focusing on actions that sufficiently support matters relating to the preservation of our Green Wedge, protection of the environment and action on climate change. To this end, I strongly support suggestions presented in Submission from the Bend of Islands Conservation Association.</i></p> <p><i>We need plans that are innovative with actions and realistic actual targets to deal with what we already know are challenges of the future in regard to climate change, pandemics, loss of biodiversity and intense bush fires.”</i></p>
82	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“The Nillumbik Mudbrick association includes over two hundred Nillumbik residents. We would like to see an increased emphasis on encouraging Mudbrick wherever possible including but not limited to –</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Statutory planning (Mudbrick blends with the bush environs both rural and urban)</i> • <i>Strategic planning including the use of Mudbrick in any Shire/public buildings being considered</i> • <i>The arts including encouragement of events like the Eltham High Mudbrick Tour or a festival that showcases Mudbrick making and laying.</i>

	<i>We request that Nillumbik Shire builds a closer relationship with our community group so that jointly we can explore ways to platform and market Mudbrick. Nillumbik is the heartland of Mudbrick in Australia and Council needs to actively nourish that along with the NMA."</i>
83	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>"Imperative to the future successful planning in Nillumbik is the need for council to increase levels of trust and support, hence alienation of community groups is to be avoided (e.g. suggesting sale of designated parklands). On contrast, communities should be strongly supported in their endeavours.</i></p> <p><i>Given that the shire is endowed with, at present at least, a substantial amount of native vegetation this should be maintained. With a small rate base, the council must explore ways of increasing donation from the state government to support the protection of natural areas within the Green Wedge and council's activities in the peri-urban environment."</i></p>
84	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>"Implementation and Reporting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A progress report to Council Meeting each quarter and progress against the Council Plan will be reported annually through an Annual Report" Yes.....and what about the Community , how are you going to relay this information to us?</i> <p><i>"Artistic and Cultural Diversity"</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The strength of Nillumbik's artistic traditions has next to nothing to do with Nillumbik Council. Artists are more often than not used as window dressing by Council, their contribution to our Shire is undervalued and frequently under paid, if paid at all."</i>
85	<u>Verbatim response:</u>

	<p><i>"It looks great! I'm pleased to see a whole section on sustainability and resilience. I'm particularly concerned about climate change, which threatens all the other outcomes in your plan. I think council has a huge role in inspiring and facilitating change in the community. I'm a little concerned that there are no strategic indicators attached to climate change actions. I'd love to see a net zero by 2030 target for council operations. I think council emissions should be there AT LEAST, as council can directly control that. Ideally community emissions will be there too, Ironbark sustainability collect that data. Also, solar panels uptake can be found (from the Australian Photovoltaic Institute), electric vehicle uptake data should be around somewhere too.</i></p> <p><i>Finally, I'd like to see a reference in here somewhere to the impacts of climate change (and ecological destruction more broadly) on mental health, particularly among young people. This is a huge issue that is not only debilitating for sufferers, but is a massive barrier to positive action. This probably belongs in the health plan I guess, and you could work strategically with health service providers. Or run some workshops! Thank you!"</i></p>
86	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>"It looks great! I'm pleased to see a whole section on sustainability and resilience. I'm particularly concerned about climate change, which threatens all the other outcomes in your plan. I think council has a huge role in inspiring and facilitating change in the community. I'm a little concerned that there are no strategic indicators attached to climate change actions. I'd love to see a net zero by 2030 target for council operations. I think council emissions should be there AT LEAST, as council can directly control that. Ideally community emissions will be there too, Ironbark sustainability collect that data. Also, solar panels uptake can be found (from the Australian Photovoltaic Institute), electric vehicle uptake data should be around somewhere too.</i></p> <p><i>Finally, I'd like to see a reference in here somewhere to the impacts of climate change (and ecological destruction more broadly) on mental health, particularly among young people. This is a huge issue that is not only debilitating for sufferers, but is a massive barrier to positive action. This probably belongs in the health plan I guess, and you could work strategically with health service providers. Or run some workshops! Thank you!"</i></p>
87	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p>

	<i>"We need to keep our trees, our open community spaces and we need to plan to stop climate change."</i>
88	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>"The Draft Council plan has many positive comments but I fear many are motherhood statements which don't outline clear and decisive action to be taken in areas such as strengthening environmental protections in the planning scheme to preserve the Green Wedge, creating a shire wide wildlife protection plan, better managing weeds and invasive species, implementing a climate action plan consistent with the IPCC recommendations and ensuring all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice. I urge you to consider these points to ensure the Council addresses the community's priorities, wellbeing and services in the best possible way."</i></p>
89	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>The Council Plan 2021-2025 must be clearly founded on the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 via a succinct vision statement.</i></p> <p><i>Nillumbik is a conservation shire with the green Wedge as its strategic focus. This should be reflected in all Council policies and strategies.</i></p> <p><i>The Council Plan 2021-2025 needs to include priority actions which indicate how strategies to enact the Community Vision will be achieved. Timelines are also required indicating when these priority actions will be completed during the four year life of the plan. Without these elements we do not really have a plan. Without clear statements about concrete actions to be taken within a specified time frame what we have is more a statement of intentions. Once priority actions and timelines are established the resources required to fulfil the plan can be identified. Those resources can then be budgeted for in the Council's financial plan. In this way Council will have met the vital democratic requirements of transparency and accountability.</i></p> <p><i>Responsibility for environmental protection is largely devolved to the Green Wedge Management Plan, but this document does not reflect the broader community's aspirations for the environment. Nor has it been incorporated into the planning scheme so it carries little planning weight, for example at VCAT. A key priority action for the council plan should be a rewrite of the GWMP so that it aligns with the overwhelming weight of feedback from the broader community during the GWMP review process and the Our People, Our Place, Our Future consultation."</i></p>

90	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“There’s no mention on fire management which is astounding considering event if the last 10yrs.</i></p> <p><i>There’s no mention of roadside and council land management.”</i></p>
91	<p><u>Verbatim response:</u></p> <p><i>“On the whole I think the artefact shows some alignment with the Community Vision, however the Strategic Objectives and Strategies seem to be disconnected with regards to one of the most important assets and valued feature of our municipality - the Green Wedge and our natural treed environment - as stated clearly in the Community Vision and the referenced Green Wedge Management Plan. This needs to be rectified as it is currently entirely disconnected to the strongest value stipulated by the community - time and again.</i></p> <p><i>Other areas for improvement:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Across the four strategic objectives, the strategic indicators lack any real commitment, with a vague reference to a trend that is increasing or decreasing based on Council records. There needs to be a genuine commitment to achieving a set target - particularly for the more significant indicators most closely linked to the key areas of value expressed by the community. Set some stretch targets and work hard to reach them!</i> • <i>While some indicators come from the LGPRF, and some from the Community Satisfaction Survey, there are some that should be clearly linked to relevant, existing strategies. As an example, given the importance of protecting the Green Wedge - as stated in the Community Vision and Green Wedge Management Plan, and vaguely referenced in the draft Council Plan - there is no commitment to % tree canopy increase, natural capital improvement % or similar.</i> • <i>The resilience and recovery of the community would more appropriately be listed before support for business and tourism.</i> • <i>The health of our environment is intrinsically linked to the health of our environment and some mention of this would also align with MPHWP desired outcomes.”</i>

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025
SUBMISSION ATTACHMENTS

SUBMISSION 1



Response to NSC Vision Document August 2021

I have attended a workshop and wish to make the following comments:

I do not like the theme headings of:

- Community and connectedness
- Space and place
- Sustainability and resilience
- Accountability

although I know this seems to be a trend and is used by other Councils. While agreeing with these as value statements it is not clear which Council's departments work in and through these themes for accountability.

My main concern is for the protection of our Green Wedge. I would like to see more emphasis on this and that the sustainability and protection of the Green Wedge is more central to the plan. As a long term resident at [REDACTED] it seems I and other like minded older residents need to continue to "bang the drum" on this as Councils and staff come and go.

The other aspect to this is compliance. NSC has a terrible record on not following through on developments that are against or break planning standards. We have witnessed:

- trees cut down for better views and bush paddocks cleared,
- chook sheds, artists' studios, bungalows constructed along shared fence lines (no permits or consultation),
- second houses remain after the new house is built and a house on our road not safely finished for over 15 years but occupied
- paddocks covered with weeds and blackberries

Previous Green Wedge Management Plans better reflect the views of the majority of residents, with more emphasis:

- To preserve bio-diversity, sustainability and ecological viability
- To retain productive farmlands
- To retain the semi-rural/township lifestyle

- To limit sub-division and prevent 'sprawl'
- To encourage the development of environmentally sensitive/appropriate buildings
- To retain our environmental and cultural heritage

Another aspect I strongly endorse is the support for healthy and active lifestyles across all age groups. NSC has done well in this regard and we need to continue to support our sporting associations and clubs, their facilities and sustainability. NCS has one of the highest participation rates in organised sport and this needs to be respected and maintained.

Supporting physical activity levels extends to walking/riding trails and bushland reserves that need ongoing protection and management/maintenance.



Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025.

I congratulate the Council on listening to the views of the 2000 people who contributed to the Our People Our Place Our Future engagement process and making some improvements to the Plan.

I would like to point out, though, that **action on climate change** is the first of the "key short term priorities" listed in response to this engagement. This would appear to suggest that climate change was identified as the community's most popular or urgent concern. This would not be surprising. Even before the recent publication of the sobering 6th IPCC report, more than one survey showed Australians to be more concerned about climate change than catching Coronavirus.¹

In any case, it certainly gives the impression that Council intends to take serious notice of, and act upon, this concern. Yet with "action on climate" prominent under the heading What we have heard, it is not mentioned at all under the headings What we've done or What we'll do.

So, although disappointing, it is not surprising to find that real action on combatting climate change is almost entirely missing from the Draft Plan.

The first heading under Sustainable and Resilient - Strategies is "Climate Action". So far, so good. However, only two details are offered: unspecified "decisive action" and "develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation". These are hopelessly vague and their success would be impossible to assess.

The Strategic Indicators seem to be an admission of this. They contain no mention of emissions or any other measurable indicator of the success of whatever our "climate action" may turn out to be.

All the above is reminiscent of the classic political satire *Yes Minister*, where the wily civil servant advises the inexperienced Minister to "put the difficult part in the title and forget about it".

But maybe it isn't so difficult. The Council could step up and shoulder the responsibility of leadership that this turning point in human history demands. This could include the following:

- Actively work towards declaring a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat confronting Nillumbik's natural environment and community.
- Set emissions targets for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030 at the latest, with clear interim targets to reach that goal.
- Strongly commit to energy efficiency programs, renewable energy programs and upgrades for residential and commercial properties and sporting facilities, towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.

¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2667278221000298>
<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/feb/19/australians-fear-climate-change-more-than-catching-covid-survey>

- Utilise the Declaration of Climate Emergency and environmental sustainability to aid in the promotion of business and tourism within Nillumbik Shire.
- Set up a climate advisory committee comprised of community members, business leaders and climate experts to help advise on climate emergency mobilisation and implementation of climate emergency strategies, with reference to how community emissions targets could be met.
- Use emergency language in all Council documents, meetings, media releases, Council website, community newsletters and other communications to convey urgency of the climate situation to all of council, the Nillumbik community and higher levels of government.
- Facilitate a campaign to build community awareness and engagement on the urgency of the climate crisis.
- Develop a plan for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies and projects, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions.
- Develop a procurement policy that assesses environmental and social credentials of tender applicants and their services/supplies.
- Create a planning policy that mandates Environmentally Sustainable Design in planning applications for new commercial and residential developments. Drawdown initiatives: - Build in a targeted tree planting program for urban areas. - Provide incentives and programs to rural landowners to engage in regenerative agriculture practices and bushland regeneration.
- Bushfire management. Ensure that bushfire management policies align with biodiversity maintenance and drawdown initiatives that support a zero carbon target.

We have the burden and the privilege to be living through a unique moment, not just in human history, but in the history of the living planet. This means we have a heavy moral choice to make. To pay lip service to climate action but largely continue with business as usual, hoping the worst won't occur until we're dead anyway, or to rise to this challenge and help lead the great global effort to turn back the terrifying tide of climate collapse.

Feedback on the Council Plan 2021-2025

Feedback on the overall document:

- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to make an explicit link back to the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040* (by inclusion of the concise vision summary statement).
- All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040*, the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* and the *Financial Plan 2021-2025*. Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation. These may include the Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.
- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to include priority actions against each strategy (see table below) that take significant steps towards the *Community Vision* and each theme's objective, and that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan as per our neighbours Banyule and Yarra Ranges' Draft Council Plans 2021-2025, rather than as part of a later *Annual Action Plan* devised by Council only (contrary to Council's commitment to community consultation). Furthermore, the resources needed to implement these priority actions should be reflected in the financial plan which is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020.

Proposed priority actions to be added to the *Council Plan 2021-2025* (arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft *Council Plan 2021-2025*):

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>

Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a "conservation council" for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council's responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	<i>Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community.</i>

Thank you for considering my submission.



SUBMISSION 4



Not enough reference to climate change, and does not use language appropriate to the severity of the problem.

Use appropriate language: climate crisis, climate emergency, moral responsibility to future generations and the biodiversity of Nillumbik).

- It makes no reference at all to a Declaration of Climate Emergency.

Declare a Climate Emergency

- It makes no mention of setting carbon emissions targets.

Set council business emissions to net zero by 2025

- It fails to convey a sense of urgency about the nature of the crisis.

Use appropriate language.

- It fails to convey a strong commitment to climate action, e.g. lack of clear climate action priorities, and ways to achieve them.

Set 3 clear climate action priorities and ways residents can achieve them.

- It uses general aspirational terms such as 'seek to' and 'favour' rather than strong goals.

Use SMART goal statements.

- When forming policy on the climate emergency, the purpose of a document such as the Council Plan is to provide leadership to the community, in line with the IPCC report (which provides guidelines for policy makers for all levels of government). The current draft document fails to demonstrate such leadership on the climate crisis; instead, it simply reflects community opinion.

Demonstrate leadership and step forward into our changing future with decisive, helpful actions for residents.

- Concern with overall lack of weighting given to climate issues. For example, under the theme Sustainable and Resilient, which you would assume to be focussed on climate and the environment, there is a section entitled Business and Tourism, which contains four dot points, while the section entitled Climate Action contains only two. Furthermore, the section 'Business and Tourism' does not seem to fit the description of Sustainable and Resilient, as three of the four dot points in this section make no mention of sustainability at all. The last four strategic indicators also relate to business or employment indicators with no connection to sustainability or resilience. Weight climate issues with the risk they bring. Act swiftly and decisively. No unsustainable business ventures to be approved. All council business to provide

resilience support to residents.

- Strategic indicators related to climate action are scanty.

Detail goals, methods and publish target dates and assessments.

- In place of the theme Sustainable and Resilient, substitute the goal of an Environmentally Sustainable Future. This goal must be the number one priority of the Council Plan.

Placing this goal first communicates a recognition that the health of the natural environment is absolutely crucial to a community's health and wellbeing, with climate change described by the World Health Organisation as the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century.

All Council policies and actions need to be implemented with this primary goal in mind.

- The objective for this goal would become 'to preserve the health of the environment and the community by working towards a carbon neutral and biodiverse municipality'. The link between the health of the environment and the health of the community, as well as the risks to both if not enough is done, needs to be clearly spelt out here. For references, see the latest IPCC report, Climate Council Report, World Health Organisation list of 13 greatest threats to global health.

- Strategies and/or strategic indicators that follow on from this would be:
 - o Actively work towards declaring a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat confronting Nillumbik's natural environment and community.

o Set emissions targets for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030 at the latest, with clear interim targets to reach that goal.

o Strongly commit to energy efficiency programs, renewable energy programs and upgrades for residential and commercial properties and sporting facilities, towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.

o Utilise the Declaration of Climate Emergency and environmental sustainability to aid in the promotion of business and tourism within Nillumbik Shire.

o Set up a climate advisory committee comprised of community members, business leaders and climate experts to help advise on climate emergency mobilisation and implementation of climate emergency strategies, with particular reference to how community emissions targets could be met.

o Use emergency language in all Council documents, meetings, media releases,

Council website, community newsletters and other communications to convey urgency of the climate situation to all of council, the Nillumbik community and higher levels of government.

- o Facilitate a campaign to build community awareness and engagement on the urgency of the climate crisis.
- o Develop a plan for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies and projects, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions.
- o Develop a procurement policy that assesses environmental and social credentials of tender applicants and their services/supplies.
- o Create a planning policy that mandates Environmentally Sustainable Design in planning applications for new commercial and residential developments.
- o Drawdown initiatives:
 - Build in a targeted tree planting program for urban areas. - Provide incentives and programs to rural landowners to engage in regenerative agriculture practices and bushland regeneration.
- o Bushfire management. Ensure that bushfire management policies align with biodiversity maintenance and drawdown initiatives that support a zero carbon target.

SUBMISSION 5

I have lived in [REDACTED] for 45 years. My parents and Grandparents also live/d here. I am proud of our green canopy and community.

I would like to see the council plan focus more on setting clear goals for an Environmentally sustainable future. Even though this is an area of Federal power, local communities will need to lead the way given the lack of action from our current government.

Our main goal should be recognizing that the health of the natural environment is absolutely crucial to a community's health and wellbeing, with climate change described by the World Health Organisation as the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century.

• The objective for this goal would become 'to preserve the health of the environment and the community by working towards a carbon neutral and biodiverse municipality'. The link between the health of the environment and the health of the community, as well as the risks to both if not enough is done, needs to be clearly spelt out here.

Strategies should include:

1. Setting emissions targets for a carbon-neutral municipality by 2030 at the latest, with clear interim targets to reach that goal.
2. Strongly committing to energy efficiency programs, renewable energy programs and upgrades for residential and commercial properties and sporting facilities, towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.
3. Utilising the Declaration of Climate Emergency and environmental sustainability to aid in the promotion of business and tourism within Nillumbik Shire.
4. Setting up a climate advisory committee comprised of community members, business leaders and climate experts to help advise on climate emergency mobilisation and implementation of climate emergency strategies, with particular reference to how community emissions targets could be met.
5. Facilitating a campaign to build community awareness and engagement on the urgency of the climate crisis.
6. Developing a plan for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies and projects, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions.
7. Developing a procurement policy that assesses environmental and social credentials of tender applicants and their services/supplies.
8. Create a planning policy that mandates Environmentally Sustainable Design in

planning applications for new commercial and residential developments.

9. Build in a targeted tree planting program for urban areas.

10. Provide incentives and programs to rural landowners to engage in regenerative agriculture practices and bushland regeneration.

11. Bushfire management. Ensure that bushfire management policies align with biodiversity maintenance and drawdown initiatives that support a zero carbon target.

Thanks for your hard work thus far

SUBMISSION 6



My thoughts on the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

I believe the draft council plan is an improvement on the previous council plan, but it does not go far enough with environment and sustainability.

Humanity is facing a bleak outlook, with future generations and the biodiversity of Australia, including Nillumbik at risk.

I would have expected the draft council plan to mention the Declaration of a Climate Emergency. How much worse does the situation have to get before it is taken seriously?

I believe mitigation of climate change is a much more important response to the climate emergency than an adaptation response, which seems to be the path being taken by council with the draft plan. I believe we need to focus on stopping the damage rather than cleaning up after the damage has already been done.

The draft council plan lacks a sense of urgency, as well as clear climate action priorities and ways to achieve them.

Climate change has been described by the World Health Organisation as the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. The latest IPCC report reinforces and amplifies this threat. We will have a temperature rise of 1.5 degrees by 2035, and expect damaging weather events including but not limited to fires and floods will become even more frequent than they currently are. Nillumbik is at particular risk of both of these catastrophes. We need to preserve the health of the environment and the health of our community by transitioning quickly to a carbon neutral municipality. I would like to see Nillumbik Council declare a Climate Emergency, set emissions targets for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030 at the latest, and put in place clear interim targets to reach that goal.

Our community needs to be made aware of the urgency of the climate crisis and all planning from now on needs to ensure that the climate emergency is being addressed. This must include:

Ensuring council policies mandate Environmentally Sustainable Design in planning applications for any new developments.

Ensuring businesses who apply for tenders are having their environmental and social credentials checked, and are not awarded contracts if they do not meet high standards that need to be set and then maintained by council

Divesting from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies or projects, and to invest in and bank with financial institutions who are environmentally and socially ethical.

Time is running out for dealing with this unfolding crisis. Our current council needs to make this climate emergency front and centre in all its planning from today and not wait for the next council voted in to make the necessary changes. We have a chance to limit the damage but only if action starts NOW!



Some suggestions for Nillumbik's 2021-2025 Council Plan

It seems that officers have simply taken the draft Community Vision and invented a priority list of catch words to become the Council Plan. The environmental issues have been reduced to a few words; and rather than planning a proactive and coherent approach to them (including mitigating climate change), there are no specific actions listed for Council to undertake in the next four years.

So, below are some examples of how councillors can change the Plan to include a more proactive approach that non-apologetically support the shire's natural environment and its biodiversity.

Recommendation 1

There is a need for a blunt statement in the Council Plan for the Green Wedge Shire supporting Nillumbik's natural environment such as:

"A distinguishing feature of The Green Wedge Shire is Council's key purpose for protecting and enhancing its biodiversity."

Recommendation 2

Suggest a rewrite of Nillumbik's Draft Council Plan to include the equivalent of Yarra Ranges' Council Plan with emphasises on the actions contained in their 'Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment' section.

To explain. Currently, Nillumbik's Draft Council Plan lacks stand out support for our natural environment and for mitigating climate change where it affects our flora and fauna.

For instance, compare Nillumbik's 'thematic areas' as contained in its *draft Council Plan to those in Yarra Ranges' Council Plan:*

<i>Nillumbik Draft Council Plan 2021-2025</i>	Yarra Ranges Council Plan 2017-21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community and connection</i> • <i>Place and space</i> • <i>Sustainable and resilient</i> • <i>Responsible and accountable</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Connected and Healthy Communities</i> • <i>Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places</i> • <i>Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment</i> • <i>Vibrant Economy, Agriculture and Tourism</i> • <i>High Performing Organisation</i>

Yarra Ranges do not claim to be the "Green Wedge Shire", yet they do far more in their **"Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment"** section than anywhere in Nillumbik's Draft Council Plan. Specifically:

**Yarra Ranges Council Plan 2017-21:
 Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment**

Environmental Strategy – improves the health and biodiversity of our natural environment through environmental best practice, supporting the future of agriculture and horticulture and reducing resource and energy consumption to represent the best interests of our environment.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS TARGET BY 2021

Kilometres of roadside with bushfire fuel levels reduced 132km or greater
Increase habitat restoration through change in the proportion of reserves from medium to high conservation status
2% or greater

Flora and Fauna Strategy – protects, maximises and enhances the habitat and ecosystems of indigenous flora and fauna.

Fosters a culture of environmental stewardship to influence flora and fauna management outside of Council's control.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS TARGET BY 2021

Plants distributed for planting per annum through the Ribbons of Green Program
240,000 or greater

Weed Management Strategy – educates community, reduces the impact and prevents new threats of weeds. Aims to review, evaluate, conduct research, develop options and build partnerships for weed management.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS TARGET BY 2021

Maintain the proportion of high threat weed cover at 220 hectares of Biodiversity Hotspots in the Dandenongs to prevent the establishment of new weeds lower than 1% weed cover

Maintain the proportion of high threat weed cover at 812 hectares of Core Habitat in the Dandenongs to prevent the establishment of new weeds lower than 10% weed cover

Proportion of Council managed Very High Conservation Reserves that contain less than 5% high threat weed cover

100%

Proportion of Council managed High Conservation reserves that contain less than 25% high threat weed cover

100%

Climate Change and Adaptation Plan - aims to manage carbon pollution through efficient use of renewable energy and help the organisation and the community adapt to a changing climate.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS TARGET BY 2021

Reduction of corporate greenhouse gas emissions towards zero 10,000 tCO₂e or lower (2016 baseline = 14,621 tCO₂e)

Recommendation 3

I've been shown a wish list of ways the Council Plan can be improved and I've extended them to include pro-active directions for Council.

I suggest the following statements be written into the Council Plan to help guide Council's actions for the four years.

Green Wedge

- Review the Green Wedge Management Plan to fit the new structure after the review of Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land is complete.
- Develop a strategy for invasive species including enforcement on private land where invasive species are being allowed to flourish.
- Review the biodiversity strategy
- Use training and other measures to foster a culture among council staff that prioritises Green Wedge protection. There is a need to - recruit senior environmental officers capable of writing policy to maintain and enhance biodiversity within the Green Wedge and across all Council land.
- Indigenous vegetation is essential for harnessing Green Wedge integrity and biodiversity, and should be encouraged throughout the shire, in both our rural and residential areas.

Yarra River

- Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan and extend them to include the Yarra tributaries that flow through Nillumbik.

Planning

- Perform planning scheme amendments to improve clarity within the planning scheme and strengthen environmental protections.
- Identify new areas that should be covered by ESOs and SLOs (include the urban SLOs, particularly tree protection, in those areas of Nillumbik that missed out at the whim of previous councillors when SLOs were first introduced – namely Diamond Creek and Apollo Parkway.)

Also, start with Waterway ESOs as all Nillumbik waterways drain into the Yarra River and increasing the Yarra River water quantity and quality is a State Government priority.

Open spaces, BMX

- Review Nillumbik's Open Space Strategy and include an increase the amount of public open space to help enhance the biodiversity within the Green Wedge.
- Develop a BMX strategy for Nillumbik that also ensures protection of the natural environment, particularly erosion mitigation.

Transport

- Continue to review and implement the Trails Strategy to ensure the biodiversity of the adjacent flora and fauna is enhanced.

Bushfire

- Review the Bushfire management plan, including the role played by tree trunks in reducing the radiant heat, as well as slowing down the speed of grass fire. (BTW the biomass of indigenous grasses is often a lot less than that of exotic and weedy grasses.)

Recommendation 4

While the Council Plan should pay a lot of attention to the state of the Green Wedge, there is also an essential role for residential areas in supporting the vibrancy of the Green Wedge, and strengthening biodiversity connectivity across the landscape. The Council Plan should be changed to recognise this, and to result in greater pro-active actions by officers in protecting neighbourhood character, the biodiversity potential and Green Wedge connection of residential areas (especially via encouraging indigenous vegetation).

Recommendation 5

It is a no-brainer: Nillumbik Shire Council should **declare a Climate Emergency as part of their Council Plan.**

Submission on Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

Introduction

We thank Council for its efforts in the preparation of the draft Council Plan 2021-2025.

However, the current draft Plan gives insufficient attention to the 3 top priorities identified as the most important to the community, in its feedback to the Council's survey 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future': -

- Preservation of the Green Wedge
- Protection of environment and biodiversity
- Action on climate

To provide adequate focus on these issues, we request that the following suggestions be incorporated into the Plan.

General Comments

- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to make an explicit link back to the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040* by inclusion of the concise vision summary statement such as: -
 - In 2040 Nillumbik is a world leader in***
 - biodiversity protection and reinvigoration***
 - community stewardship of the environment;***
 - climate change mitigation and adaptation;***
 - - sustainable urban design and living;***
 - community inclusiveness, equity and connection;***
 - community participation in the arts and celebration of its cultural heritage;***
 - economic systems that are responsive to, and protective of, the environment, in keeping with the Community's statements of priority.***
- All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040*, the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* and the *Financial Plan 2021-2025*.
 - Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation, including the
 - The Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review)
 - Climate Action Plan.
 - Biodiversity Strategy;
 - Bushfire Mitigation Strategy;
 - Open Space Strategy;
 - Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy;
 - Integrated Water Management Plan;
 - Recreation and Leisure Strategy;
 - Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy;

- Advocacy Plan;
- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to include **priority actions** against each strategy that: -
 - take significant steps towards the *Community Vision* and each theme's objective
 - have been identified so that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan (as in Banyule and Yarra Ranges' Draft Council Plans - rather than as part of a later *Annual Action Plan* devised by Council only, which would be contrary to Council's commitment to community consultation).
 - Have the resources needed to implement these priority actions allocated in the financial plan as required by the Local Government Act 2020.

Refer to Attachment 1 for the priority actions that should, as a minimum, be included to cover Environmental/Planning issues.

Other priority actions, relating to the other aspects of the Plan, should be developed and included to supplement these.

Regards,

██████████

19/8/2021

Attachment 1 - Sheet 1 of 2

Proposed priority actions to be added to the *Council Plan 2021-2025* (arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft *Council Plan 2021-2025*):

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne’s Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review); Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>

Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.</i>

Attachment 1 - Sheet 2 of 2

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Place and space	Neighbourhood character	We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	<i>Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council’s responsibilities for emergency management by working with the	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is</i>

		community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	<i>Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community. (With allocation of sufficient Council resources for follow-up monitoring procedures to ensure <u>effective compliance</u>.)</i>

SUBMISSION 9



Need to work within budget, stop relying on rate increases.
Not enough support and arrive for those in the 60 plus age group. Where is the elderly play equipment to encourage mobility.
Poor relationship between other authorities like VicRoads.
Are residents/ rate payers paying for electricity and infrastructure for electric vehicles? That's not fair or equitable. Should be users pay EV drivers should pay a fee the service and infrastructure. Would like to see better traffic flow as a way of reducing carbon emissions. Indoor pool for Hurstbridge. Trees given a monetary value to improve planning and protection. Include a policy on 1 - 10 year tree removed, 10 planted... increase public land to create and protect environment. Provide recycle facilities like those Council shops in Ringwood at Crlsper. Improve range of materials that can be put in recycle bin. Better parking restrictions are 24/7, rather than just between 9-5, and a few hours on Saturday - prevents using local business. Increase longer term parking, short stay (2hr parking) not providing benefits to store keepers. Remove click and collect spaces move to loading zones and have prescribe hours to avoid additional car park pressures. Stop buying unless art - put the money into more trees along the creeks. More road maintenance of shire roads, better data on roads and more consultation with real traffic engineers from VicRoads and residents that have to live with idiotic choices - guard rails places on road surface in Broadgully Rd, (someone at councils dream and stubborn Vision is every drivers and road users nightmare, it's not compliant, it's dangerous, more wildlife are getting killed and there was no data to support it), planned reduction of main road Eltham for bike path (get more creative! reduce the railway land, for goodness sake). How about some burns of Bush nature strips for regrowth. More bike paths and better signage and connections. Employ 80% shire staff that live in Nillumbik, so that they have to suffer the consequences of poor planning too. Better consultation with community - why do I have to create a login to comment? It's not really a survey then? Protect local species - orchids lost to bellbird drive housing estate in Diamond Creek is a crime. Protect more native nature stripes like those along broadgully Rd and Halley's Gully. Drafts never result in changes so why waste rate payers money? Rate payers are never listened to. Changes or concerns are never acted on.

SUBMISSION 10



Draft Council Plan

Overall comments

- It would be good to make a clear link between the Council Plan and the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040. This could be done by including a paragraph or so summarizing the Vision in the introduction to the Council Plan, where it references the relationship pg 4 or pg 9
- The Plan references numerous existing Plans, Strategies and Policies. It would be good if an intention to review these in line with the newly adopted Council Vision and Plan is explicitly stated. It to state at the introductory part of the Plan that each section includes reference to existing plans, strategies and policies and that these will all be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040, the Council Plan 2021-2025, Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and the Financial Plan 2021-2025, once these are adopted. Where these documents also sit within external legislation and frameworks the need to update if and when the external context changes.
- The Council Plan would be strengthened with the inclusion of some key or priority actions against each strategy. These should demonstrate the significant steps towards the vision/aspiration statements, that Council will implement during the four years of the plan. The resources needed to implement them should be reflected in the financial plan, as is required by the Local Government Act 2020.

If an Annual Action Plan is subsequently developed by Council, it should include a process for community consultation. This would be consistent with community expectations and Council's stated standard of transparency and would reflect community expectations.

Comments on each of the themes

Some suggestions for additional strategies to support the objectives in the draft Council Plan are listed below. They are presented under the headings of the four themes outlined in the Plan and as far as possible reflect the current language in the draft Plan.

Theme: Community and connection

Suggested additional strategy

- Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters)

Theme: Place and space

Suggested additional Strategies:

- Our Municipal Planning Strategy is a succinct expression of overarching strategic policy directions for land use across the whole Shire consistent with maintaining and enhancing the Green Wedge, protection of environment and biodiversity and action on climate change (to ensure the Nillumbik Planning Scheme is aligned with the Community Vision -Nillumbik 2040)
- We have a clear and robust position on the future of the numerous lots in the Green Wedge that are below the minimum subdivision size for the planning zones they are within (to ensure these lots can best serve ongoing and future requirements for biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture)
- We protect and reinvigorate the tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire
- We protect indigenous vegetation to best assure Green Wedge integrity and biodiversity enhancement and have a weed and invasive species management Plan
- We Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan
- We have strong environmental protections within the planning scheme
- We identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlay [in order to support the Vision for the Green Wedge Shire]
- We have a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan
- We have initiatives that support and protect healthy terrestrial and aquatic habitat corridors in the Watsons Creek catchment (to be consistent with our commitment to the Yarra Strategic Plan Performance Objective “A healthy river and lands”)
- We have a broad and comprehensive program of community engagement and education around Nillumbik’s natural environment (to build a community-wide culture of stewardship of the land and natural environment)

In keeping with the Community Vision of GWS, and key priorities of Nillumbik as conservation Shire, it is recommended that Nillumbik consult with the community to create:

- a Bend of Islands Environmental Living plan.
- a Research Township Plan
- a North Warrandyte township plan.

Theme: Sustainable and Resilient

Suggest additional Strategies

- We take action on climate change consistent with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
- We have a waste plan that supports approaches that minimise environmental impact. This should to apply to internal workings of Council AND community action.
- All Council infrastructure management and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision and Nillumbik’s status as a Conservation Shire.

Comment

The strategy to explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within

Nillumbik, needs to focus on regenerative processes and protection of biodiversity.

Theme: Responsible and Accountable

Suggested additional strategies

- We ensure adherence to Plans, Strategies and Policies, within Council and community.
- We are advocates for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term
- Our bushfire management plan prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people. Noting that to protect human life there are some areas where development should not be permitted, owing to the vegetation clearing that would be required.

WATTLE GLEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

(Incorporation No. A OO 26090 Z)

ESTABLISHED 9th February 1968

WATTLE GLEN RESIDENTS
ASSOCIATION

PLANNING FOR

*PEOPLE *RECREATION * ENVIRONMENT *SPORTING *WELFARE *ROADS

Feedback on the Council Plan 2021-2025

The following feedback provided by the Wattle Glen Residents' Association (WGRA) is premised on our pride that Wattle Glen is a "Gateway to the Green Wedge" and as such we advocate for the enhancement of biodiversity in the Green Wedge and throughout our township to ensure that what we consider Nillumbik's greatest asset, it's natural environment and scenic terrain, endures for generations to come.

The WGRA also believe that Nillumbik's natural environment, being situated at the metropolitan-rural interface and so easily accessible by both metropolitan and regional visitors, could also be used to Nillumbik's economic advantage if appropriate eco-tourism was provided. Further below you will see our justification for priority actions to be included against each strategy in the *Council Plan 2021-2025*. However we strongly recommend the following priority action, ideally with a Wattle Glen focus, for the strategy dot point "We continue to enhance the Shire's shared trail network, working proactively to improve connectivity" for the "Open spaces" strategy under the "Place and space" theme: ***Develop an extensive, varied and interconnected recreational trails network to cater for walking, hiking, mountain biking, BMX and horse riding for all abilities and ages.*** We believe Wattle Glen is uniquely situated for such a development being where a number of important trails converge nearby the train station and existing infrastructure at Peppers Paddock and where further expansion could occur through acquisition of the land adjacent.

Feedback on the overall document to make Nillumbik, and in turn Wattle Glen, a better place:

- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to make an explicit link back to the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040* (by inclusion of the concise vision summary statement).
- All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040*, the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* and the *Financial Plan 2021-2025*. Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation. These may include the Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.
- As mentioned above, the *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to include priority actions against each strategy (see table below) that take significant steps towards the *Community Vision* and each theme's objective, and that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan as per our neighbours Banyule and Yarra Ranges' Draft Council Plans 2021-2025, rather than as part of a later *Annual Action Plan* devised by Council only (contrary to Council's commitment to community consultation). Furthermore, the resources needed to implement these priority actions should be reflected in the financial plan which is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020.
- There is an essential role for residential areas, such as Wattle Glen, in supporting the vibrancy of the Green Wedge and strengthening biodiversity connectivity across the landscape. The *Council Plan 2021-2025* should recognise this and ensure greater pro-active actions by officers in protecting neighbourhood character, the biodiversity potential and Green Wedge connection of residential areas (especially via encouraging indigenous vegetation).

Proposed priority actions to be added to the *Council Plan 2021-2025* (arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft *Council Plan 2021-2025*) to make Nillumbik, and in turn Wattle Glen, a better place:

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understorey throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s	<i>Affirm indigenous vegetation to best assure Green Wedge integrity and biodiversity enhancement.</i>

Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a "conservation council" for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council's responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	<i>Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community.</i>

Thank you for considering our submission.


 Secretary
 Wattle Glen Residents' Association

SUBMISSION 12



We are asked for our thoughts. Here are some below.

The Council plan says they encourage inclusion and participation to support health and wellbeing and ensure all residents have equitable access to services, programs, events, and initiatives – except rural grazing and hobby farming residents. We are purposefully excluded and not acknowledged by Council.

- Council champions and celebrates equity ages and stages – except if you are a rural grazing and hobby farming resident. This is by design, as most policies, plans, laws are carefully crafted to purposefully exclude us from receiving any assistance and benefit.
- No performance measure or data will ever acknowledge this either – because as a minority population (albeit with large landholdings), we are invisible within the measures Council has put in place in their plan to measure how well they perform in serving our interests.

The Council plan says they plan, design, maintain places and spaces that strengthen identify, reinforce character, improve accessibility, and encourage social connection and respect the environment - except rural grazing and hobby farming residents and rural council land. This it purposefully excluded and not acknowledged by Council.

- Rural roads and roadsides and rural places are clearly excluded from this by Council – as many are routinely inaccessible and are not maintained for safety and thoroughfare.
- The plan contains conflict in this space – Council says they maintain and support the environmental integrity of the natural environment maintaining all infrastructure for safety and consistently with neighbourhood character – except in rural areas, rural local roads, roadsides and public lands are weed infested fuel loaded, eroding pot-hole encrusted death traps, routinely blocked by trees where far too many animals die leaping out from behind scrub into oncoming traffic. Perhaps council's vision of rural road neighbourhood character is that the rural parts of the shire are weed infested, fuel loaded death traps? I suspect this is not council's intent – it is their stated objective.
- No performance measure or data will ever acknowledge this either - as a minority population, (albeit with large landholdings) we are invisible within the measures Council has put in place in their plan to measure how well they perform in serving our safety and our interests.

The Council plan says we will be sustainable and resilient – except rural grazing and hobby farming residents and rural council land. This is purposefully excluded and not acknowledged by Council. Bushfire risk appears to not be an issue here at all.

- The plan is heavy on climate action without mentioning the weather – and the obvious challenges of drought, heavy rainfalls, cyclonic weather events, extreme bushfire risk are all ignored – and yet it is these things that are the risks to rural residents

- The plan talks about food systems without mentioning farmers, which must be by design. It talks about agricultural pursuits, but only sustainable ones and it does not clarify what that means. What is a sustainable agricultural pursuit and what does that mean to thousands of hobby farmers out here?
- The plan talks about response and recovery – but not prevention – which is the only chance rural residents and rural areas have of avoiding catastrophic loss.
- No performance measure or data will ever acknowledge this either - as a minority population, (albeit with large landholdings) we are invisible within the measures Council has put in place in their plan to measure how well they perform in serving our safety and our interests.

The Council Plan says council will be accountable and facilitate the best possible outcomes for their community by working to achieve the community's objectives. Rural grazing and hobby farming residents are not recognised or acknowledged by Council – and the plan does not demonstrate any evidence there is an interest in our objectives, lives, safety, livelihoods, amenity, services, or families.

- Council plan to exercise good governance – except they do not acknowledge us as residents, know nothing about us or our interests, and have no data or input to assist them to execute this strategy
- Council plan to manage risk – mentions bushfire once in this plan. This is inadequate.
- They aim to be equitable and inclusive – but excludes us as a resident group which can only be by design.
- There is one measure that may assist us in future – and this is the percentage of fire prevention notices that result in compliance – this measure is important for rural grazing and hobby farming residents and their families. If compliance is not 100% then the responsibility and negligence for being aware of a risk and not managing it, sits with Council. Compliance is never 100% because it is one of many areas of governance that does not appear to be a priority of council.
- With this one exception - as a minority population, (albeit with large landholdings) we are invisible within the measures Council has put in place in their plan to measure how well they perform in serving our safety and our interests.

Page 28 Renowned as the “Green Wedge Shire” – this is factually incorrect. Council calls Nillumbik the “Green Wedge Shire”. Many rural grazing and hobby farming residents would prefer that, since council consistently refuses to acknowledge our needs, interests, human rights, and existence, they called their shire something else – something that did not covet our land. We would prefer to be zoned under another local government area. Murrindindi sounds nice. Renown is a word a bit like infamous – it may be intended as a positive thing – it has never caused anything but suffering, pain and punishment to rural grazing and hobby farming communities.

P 28 Community – Council says Nillumbik is a collection of townships and villages – most rural grazing and farming residents do not live-in townships and villages and so we are excluded.

P 28 Our communities strong sense of belonging – I do not know what this means. For rural grazing and hobby farming residents we have a strong sense of our land

belonging to us and us to it – but most of us do not feel we belong in Nillumbik. 20 years of being bullied, harassed, marginalised, threatened, targeted, and marginalised by Council and Eltham, and more recently Diamond Creek has resulted in that one absolute, which is absolute clarity that we and our lands do not belong in Nillumbik.

P29 Peri urban is a planning scheme term. It is not real. In Nillumbik there are urban areas and rural areas. We know council does not understand this – but we are so much more than the planning scheme.

The Plan says the with the key purposes of the rural part of the Shire is conservation, agriculture, lifestyles, and tourism. Most of these are planning scheme terms. They are not real. Council does not know what the key purposes of rural parts of the Shire are because they have never asked. This passage requires amendment.

The description of Nillumbik excludes grazing and hobby farming areas and is factually inaccurate. It excludes our grazing lands, our dams, local vineyards, groves of fruit trees, animals, and livestock. We are here and writing a plan that excludes our presence and existence does not mean that we are not here, it just means Council does not acknowledge our existence and presence or serve any of our needs. This appears purposeful. This text is not real. It is not based on evidence. It is part of the urban myth that surrounds rural Nillumbik.

Active lifestyles sections are out of date and it is not clear they are accurate. Since March 2020 there has been a dramatic decline in all participation in sporting and other activities across Victoria, particularly impacting Greater metropolitan Melbourne – which unfortunately for reasons that are not clear, includes rural Nillumbik residents. This section needs to be re-written.

Why has the profile ID chart not separated rural and urban residents? This would enable council to plan more effectively for transport, access, age, and other services? This purposeful exclusion makes us invisible and supports the fantasy which says rural Nillumbik belongs to urban residents – let's be clear on this – it does not.

SUBMISSION 13

As a resident of Nillumbik for sixteen years, I value the natural landscape that so many in other urban settings do not have access to. I believe this valuable natural asset must be maintained for future generations. This leads me to concerns that the proposed Council Plan does not include enough to secure this precious natural environment.

I ask that you work towards declaring a Climate Emergency as other shires have. See Yarra Ranges' Council Plan with emphasis on the actions contained in their 'Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment' section.

Nillumbik with all its natural environment and the community that live so entwined with it, is at serious threat from ongoing climate change. This Council has a responsibility to preserve and enhance the biodiversity in this municipality to link with other neighbouring areas, allowing all living things to thrive. Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan and extend them to include the Yarra tributaries that flow through Nillumbik. Indigenous planting can mitigate the effect of fire and climate change. Residential areas can also play a supporting role in maintaining the vibrancy of the Green Wedge, and strengthening biodiversity connectivity across the landscape.

Set carbon neutral emissions targets for this municipality by 2030 at the latest, and establish clear targets in the meantime to reach this goal.

In view of a Carbon Neutral goal by 2030, please commit to renewable energy programs and upgrades for residential and commercial properties, sporting facilities, and energy efficiency programs to support this strategy.

Establish a climate advisory committee made up of community members, business leaders and climate experts. Advice from these community members on Climate Emergency would help mobilise and implement climate emergency strategies particularly relevant to emissions in this shire. Focusing on the ways targets could be met. There needs to be greater clarity around climate and sustainable business and tourism options.

A Declaration of Climate Emergency would then direct sustainable management of the environment and specifically promote business and tourism within the Nillumbik Shire.

I respectfully request that Council readdress the Nillumbik's 2021-2025 Council Plan. To strengthen the environmental issues, and develop proactive planning towards this end that can be undertaken in the next four years.

Yours sincerely,



Council Plan 2021-2025

P.11 COMMUNITY AND CONNECTION

Strategies:

Equity and inclusion - Do we need to include some wording around the differences in rural (green wedge) and urban existence in the shire when we consider equity and inclusion?

Health and wellbeing - There is no mention of 'safety' for the community, which is a big concern for rural residents in terms of bushfire and the recent storms for example.

P. 12 Supporting strategies, policies and plans

Should the Recreation & Leisure Strategy be included here?

P.15 PLACE AND SPACE

Objective:

"To plan, design and maintain places and spaces that strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility, encourage social connection and facilitate enjoyment (add) and respect of the environment."

Strategies:

Identity - Dot Point 2 - "admire our Green Wedge Shire" sounds smug - 'value, appreciate and enjoy' is more balanced and reflective wording

Again, 'protecting' and 'enhancing' - all tasks, no enjoying

Add a new dot point - 'We acknowledge the rural activities and diverse lifestyles that characterise and enrich our Green Wedge'

Strategic indicators:

Number of kilometres of shared trail delivered - built or in the planning phase

Supporting strategies, policies and plans:

Include the Nillumbik Trails Strategy

P.21 SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT

Supporting strategies, plans and policies:

Include the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy

About Nillumbik

P.28 LOCATION: Paragraph 1, last line, “..unique environmental landscapes...”
replace ‘environmental’ with ‘rural’ or ‘natural’ landscapes to be more applicable.

P.28 GREEN WEDGE: In the first paragraph include:

- That 80% of the Green Wedge is in private ownership
- ‘animal keeping, particularly of horses, is very popular in rural areas across the shire’
- ‘shared’ trails instead of ‘mixed use’
- ‘outdoor’ recreation opportunities

P.29 ENVIRONMENT

‘Pasture or grazing land’ should be included in the opening sentence as this is across all rural areas of the shire.

Mention that the predominant lifestyle properties contribute to the rural character, visual amenity and sustainability of the Green Wedge.

P.29 ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

Paragraph 2 - important to include the wording, ‘equestrian competition’ in the list of sports as participation rates in Nillumbik are also much higher than the state and national averages.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

SUBMISSION 15
BEND OF ISLANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

SUBMISSION TO NILLUMBIK SHIRE COUNCIL RE DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Whilst most of what is in the Plan is commendable; it is what is missing that is most concerning. The Plan should be amended to emphasise the Green Wedge and the Council's role as custodian of this via the Green Wedge Management Plan (GWMP).

- We are a community that highly values the objectives and implementation of the GWMP. The Green Wedge needs to be at the forefront of the Plan with emphasis on the protection and enhancement of the qualities/biodiversity of the natural bush areas, fostering a balanced mix of land use and avoiding inappropriate development
- The health of the natural environment is fundamental to the wellbeing of the residents. The Shire's Green Wedge and biodiversity will ensure this health is being nurtured. This is an important aspect of the Council's responsibility.
- Community education around Council policies including environmental management needs to be provided and promoted by Council.
- We commend the Plan for its strong commitment for retention of the Urban Growth Boundary as it is. This is fundamental to the sustainability of the Green Wedge.
- Council's draft Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and Financial Plan 2021-2025 need to be reviewed to ensure adequate compatibility with the issues raised here for protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

BICA thanks Council for its efforts in the preparation of the draft Council Plan, and requests that Council considers the issues below for revision of the draft to include appropriate emphasis on the Green Wedge and the biodiversity of the areas of natural environment within it.

INTRODUCTION

This submission has been prepared by on behalf of the Bend of Islands Conservation Association (BICA). This association was established by the community in 1966. Its main objectives being

- the preservation and enhancement of the diversity of native flora and fauna within this area of natural beauty, consistent with essential community needs including fire precaution
- promotion of community understanding of the local ecology
- to work with other organisations with aims consistent with these objectives and to act for and on behalf of members in negotiations with public authorities and other organisations.

Our membership includes more than 70% of the landowners in the Bend of Islands

The notion of Residential Conservation was achieved for the area through the establishment of the initial Environmental Living Zone, Shire of Healesville, which was later converted to the current Special Use Zone 2 – Environmental Living – Bend of Islands, when the area was incorporated into the Shire of Nillumbik.

BICA thanks Council for its efforts in the preparation of the draft Council Plan, and requests that Council considers the issues below for revision of the draft to include appropriate emphasis on the Green Wedge and the biodiversity of the areas of natural environment within it.

Council's draft Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and Financial Plan 2021-2025 also need to be reviewed to ensure adequate compatibility with the issues raised here for protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

COMMENTS ON SOME PARTICULAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PLAN

Yarra Strategic Plan: This is a commendable step by the Government for protection, and enhancement of the natural environment of the whole of the Yarra River and its environs. The YSP includes important initiatives within Nillumbik Shire to achieve these aims. For example, the Kinglake NP – Warrandyte SP Habitat Link is highlighted as important for maintaining and enhancing the immediate and longterm biodiversity of the Yarra River. Council needs to take all steps possible to support the YSP, and take all opportunities available for Government assistance, financial and technical, to implement the YSP. This will have positive benefits for the residents of the Shire, as well as the broader community.
For these reasons, the YSP needs to be referenced in the Plan

Bend of Islands Place Plan: The Bend of Islands is a special place. The community, working with Council and State Planners, has developed our own specific Planning Provisions (**SU22 - Environmental Living – Bend of Islands**) to maintain and enhance the environmental integrity of the area.

We support the development of a Place Plan for the area. This would outline, in specific terms, how the Planning Provisions operate and support what is needed for our community. It will be a valuable tool, both for Council officers and for residents, prospective and existing.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE DRAFT PLAN

The current draft Plan gives insufficient attention to the 3 top priorities identified as the most important to the community, in its feedback to the Council's survey 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future': -

- Preservation of the Green Wedge
- Protection of environment and biodiversity
- Action on climate

To provide adequate focus on these issues, we request that the following suggestions be incorporated into the Plan.

General Comments

- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to make an explicit link back to the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040* by inclusion of the concise vision summary statement such as: -
In 2040 Nillumbik is a world leader in
 - ***biodiversity protection and reinvigoration***
 - ***community stewardship of the environment;***
 - ***climate change mitigation and adaptation;***
 - ***sustainable urban design and living;***
 - ***community inclusiveness, equity and connection;***
 - ***community participation in the arts and celebration of its cultural heritage;***
 - ***economic systems that are responsive to, and protective of, the environment, in keeping with the Community's statements of priority.***
- All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040*, the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* and the *Financial Plan 2021-2025*.
 - Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation, including the
 - The Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review)
 - Climate Action Plan.
 - Biodiversity Strategy;
 - Bushfire Mitigation Strategy;
 - Open Space Strategy;
 - Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy;
 - Integrated Water Management Plan;
 - Recreation and Leisure Strategy;
 - Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy;
 - Advocacy Plan;
- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to include **priority actions** against each strategy that:
 - take significant steps towards the *Community Vision* and each theme's objective
 - have been identified so that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan (as in Banyule and Yarra Ranges' Draft Council Plans - rather than as part of a later *Annual Action Plan* devised by Council only, which would be contrary to Council's commitment to community consultation).
 - Have the resources needed to implement these priority actions allocated in the financial plan as required by the Local Government Act 2020.

Refer to Attachment 1 for the priority actions that should, as a minimum, be included to cover Environmental/Planning issues.

Other priority actions, relating to the other aspects of the Plan, should be developed and included to supplement these.

Council's draft Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and Financial Plan 2021-2025 need to be reviewed to ensure adequate compatibility with the issues raised here for protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

Regards,



Secretary

Bend of Islands Conservation Association

24 August 2021

Attachment 1 - Sheet 1 of 2

Proposed priority actions to be added to the *Council Plan 2021-2025* (arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft *Council Plan 2021-2025*):

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne’s Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review); Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.</i>

Attachment 1 - Sheet 2 of 2

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Place and space	Neighbourhood character	We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	<i>Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council's responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	<i>Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community. (With allocation of sufficient Council resources for follow-up monitoring procedures to ensure <u>effective compliance</u>.)</i>

Submission on Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

I would like to thank Council for its efforts in the preparation of the draft Council Plan 2021-2025.

However, the current draft Vision gives insufficient attention to the 3 top priorities identified by the community, in its feedback to the Council's survey 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future': -

1. Preservation of the Green Wedge
2. Protection of environment and biodiversity
3. Action on climate

To provide adequate focus on these issues, following suggestions should be incorporated into the Plan.

General Comments

- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to make an explicit link back to the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040* through a concise vision statement
- Existing strategies, policies and plans need to reflect the values and direction established in the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040*, the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* and the *Financial Plan 2021-2025*.
- Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation, including the
 - The Green Wedge Management Plan
 - Climate Action Plan.
 - Biodiversity Strategy;
 - Bushfire Mitigation Strategy;
 - Open Space Strategy;
 - Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy;
 - Integrated Water Management Plan;
 - Recreation and Leisure Strategy;
 - Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy;
 - Advocacy Plan;
- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to include actions for each strategy that:-
 - Take significant steps towards the *Community Vision* and each theme's objective
 - Have been identified so that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan.
 - Have the resources needed to implement these priority actions allocated in the financial plan as required by the Local Government Act 2020.

Kind Regards,

██████████

24/8/2021

█ and █

Thanks to Council for the opportunity to comment on the draft Council Plan 2021-2025.

We are disappointed that the current draft Plan gives insufficient attention to the 3 top priorities identified as the most important to the community

- Preservation of the Green Wedge
- Protection of environment and biodiversity
- Action on climate

We fully endorse the Bend of Islands Conservation association's (BICA) response and request that their following suggestions be incorporated into the Plan.

General Comments

- The Council Plan 2021-2025 needs to make an explicit link back to the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 by inclusion of the concise vision summary statement such as: -

In 2040 Nillumbik is a world leader in

- biodiversity protection and reinvigoration
- community stewardship of the environment;
- climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- - sustainable urban design and living;
- community inclusiveness, equity and connection;
- community participation in the arts and celebration of its cultural heritage;
- economic systems that are responsive to, and protective of, the environment, in keeping with the Community's statements of priority.

- All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040, the Council Plan 2021-2025, the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and the Financial Plan 2021-2025.

o Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation, including the

The Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne' s Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review)

- Climate Action Plan.
- Biodiversity Strategy;
- Bushfire Mitigation Strategy;
- Open Space Strategy;
- Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy;
- Integrated Water Management Plan;
- Recreation and Leisure Strategy;
- Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy;

- Advocacy Plan;
- The Council Plan 2021-2025 needs to include priority actions against each strategy that: -
 - o take significant steps towards the Community Vision and each theme's objective
 - o have been identified so that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan (as in Banyule and Yarra Ranges' Draft Council Plans - rather than as part of a later Annual Action Plan devised by Council only, which would be contrary to Council's commitment to community consultation).
 - o Have the resources needed to implement these priority actions allocated in the financial plan as required by the Local Government Act 2020.

We encourage you to strive for positive targets that reflect the amended vision, show leadership in environmental and sustainability action as that is uppermost in the minds of many Nillumbik residents.

Sincerely

██████████ and ██████████

24/8/202

Submission re – “Council Plan – 2021-2025”

24-08-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS

This is organised with similar themes to the Council Vision, but I don't see much in the way of cross-references?

Please make the goals more targeted, clearer, strong.

- **Terminology**

By “strategy” I understand “a route by which to achieve a goal” ... so I expect to see a list of ways to reach the stated “objective”, some actions – and an indication of **priorities**. I see none of that here. “Strategies” seems to me to be consistently the wrong title – the words might be very worthy, but they are motherhood statements. Do we really need to read each plan to see what actually might be done and to guess where Council's priorities lie?

On p26 under “Implementation and reporting” I do finally see the words “Action Plans”, but those plans will include tiny details.

There needs to be a greater level of guidance in the Council Plan, something which lies in between the fine details in the Action Plans and the general motherhood statements here. Maybe I have just dreamt it, but I believe I have seen it in past ones in tables where the column on the right has had the heading “proposed priority action” ??

- **Important issue gone missing**

Where is the detailed reference to climate change?

Where is the language that recognises the severity of the problem?

And please when you do add this, make more references to actions that will mitigate climate change, not just ways of adapting to it –our Shire is so well placed to model how to work to preventing it in the first place, we should be taking advantage of this opportunity.

SPECIFIC ITEMS

- **“Sustainable and Resilient”**

p9, p20: **Objective** = “To ensure that we are able to meet the present needs of the Nillumbik community without compromising its future needs”.

I don't see “resilience” reflected in this objective at all, just the meeting of needs. I also find it a very strange objective for a theme which on the face of it evolved out of the “Future” one in the Council Vision. I expected it to be focused on climate, the environment, and sustainability?? It seems almost totally about business or employment.

Where are the indicators related to climate action?

It feels like “climate” and “environment” have gone missing.

Please change this to “An Environmentally Sustainable Future”
and make it the **number one priority** of the **Council Plan**.

If you need a justification for doing this, you can quote the World Health Organisation - climate change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century.

For references, see the latest IPCC report, Climate Council Report, World Health Organisation list of 13 greatest threats to global health.

Strategies / Actions / Strategic Indicators should include

- Declare a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat we face
- and, yes - use this Declaration to aid the promotion of business and tourism in the Shire

- use Emergency language in all Council documents, media releases, website, newsletters etc
- Set emissions targets so the Shire can be carbon neutral by 2030 at the latest, including clear interim targets
- strongly commit to energy efficient programs, renewable energy programs, and related upgrades to personal and commercial properties and all Council facilities
- establish a Climate Advisory Committee comprised of community members, business leaders and climate experts to advise on strategies and their implementation, including how community emissions targets could be met
- facilitate an education and awareness campaign to engage the community in the urgency of the climate crisis
- draft a Climate Emergency Plan and include in it a plan for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuels, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions
- support initiatives that target tree planting in urban areas
- provide incentives to rural landowners to engage in regenerative agriculture practices and bushland regeneration
- bushfire management: ensure these plans align with biodiversity maintenance and support initiatives that support a zero carbon target

- **“Place and Space” –**

p9, p15: **Objective:** “To plan, design and maintain places and spaces that strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility, encourage social connection and respect the environment”

p16 – Strategic Indicators

Please add (all with an “up” target)

“percentage of planning applications that overtly support neighbourhood character”

“percentage of infringements issued for illegal tree felling cf number of instances”

“community satisfaction with infringements issued and enforced following illegal tree felling”

“community satisfaction with local drainage”

“community satisfaction with the results of subdivision applications”

I see “Play and Space” does include the word “environment” in its objective, plus a clear overlap here between this theme and the “future” / “sustainable” one. Perhaps this is inevitable, because “place” encompasses “the environment”, yet “climate crises” are going to be part of our future and will require us to develop a good dose of “resilience” ...

But if Council wants this one to be about the environment, it needs to include here its climate actions, what they are! A lot of what I’ve said under “Sustainable and Resilient” would then apply here.

Sadly the Strategic Indicators relating to climate are few and far between; I see the number of trees, yes, and reported road kill, but I fear that the climate emergency has fallen neatly into the crack.

So for completeness, I paste here the Strategies / Actions that I listed above:

Strategies / Actions / Strategic Indicators should include

- Declare a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat we face

- and, yes - use this Declaration to aid the promotion of business and tourism in the Shire
- use Emergency language in all Council documents, media releases, website, newsletters etc
- Set emissions targets so the Shire can be carbon neutral by 2030 at the latest, including clear interim targets
- strongly commit to energy efficient programs, renewable energy programs, and related upgrades to personal and commercial properties and all Council facilities
- establish a Climate Advisory Committee comprised of community members, business leaders and climate experts to advise on strategies and their implementation, including how community emissions targets could be met
- facilitate an education and awareness campaign to engage the community in the urgency of the climate crisis
- draft a Climate Emergency Plan and include in it a plan for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuels, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions
- support initiatives that target tree planting in urban areas
- provide incentives to rural landowners to engage in regenerative agriculture practices and bushland regeneration
- bushfire management: ensure these plans align with biodiversity maintenance and support initiatives that support a zero carbon target

With thanks for the opportunity to contribute.

██████████ 24-08-2021

SUBMISSION 19
CHRISTMAS HILLS
LANDCARE GROUP



**Christmas
Hills
Landcare
Group**

Christmas Hills Landcare Group

P.O. Box 274 Yarra Glen 3775

Website: <http://portphillipwestempport.landcarevic.org.au/Christmashills>
ABN: 24 281 456 670
Member: Landcare Victoria Inc (# A0011936S)

24th August 2021

Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

To whom it may concern

The Christmas Hills Landcare Group welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 and encourages the Nillumbik Shire Council to articulate the priority actions it will take towards the 2040 Community Vision over the next four years.

The Christmas Hills Landcare Group currently has 94 financial adult members managing 51 private properties covering over 715 hectares in the Nillumbik and Yarra Ranges shires. The feedback presented in this document was distributed to the membership and has received unanimous support for submission on behalf of the entire membership.

Overall

Overall document:

- The Council Plan needs to include the overall summarising vision statement referred to in our submission on the Draft Community Vision Nillumbik 2040
- The Draft Council Plan does not include any actions. The Council Plan needs to include keystone/priority actions against each strategy that take significant steps towards the vision/aspiration statements, and that Council will implement during the four years of the plan. This is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020. (refer Appendix 1)

Proposed actions

The following actions are proposed under one of the strategies in the Plan

Theme: Place and space

Identity

We value and admire our Green Wedge shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance

Priority actions:

- Review and revise the Nillumbik Green Wedge Management Plan (to ensure alignment with the outcomes (planning system reforms) of the DELWP project, "Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land", and alignment with the Community Vision -Nillumbik 2040)
- Develop a clear and robust position on the future of the numerous lots in the Green Wedge that are below the minimum subdivision size for

the planning zones they are within (*to ensure these lots can best serve ongoing and future requirements for biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture, the main purposes for the Nillumbik Green Wedge*)

- Evaluate and renew the Nillumbik Biodiversity Strategy (2012) (*to ensure alignment with DELWP's "Protecting Victoria's Environment - Biodiversity 2037", and alignment with the Community Vision -Nillumbik 2040. Should incorporate strategies for invasive species and wildlife protection, and habitat and biodiversity monitoring*)
- Design and implement initiatives to strengthen terrestrial and aquatic habitat corridors in the Watsons Creek catchment (*to deliver on the Yarra Strategic Plan Performance Objective "A healthy river and lands"*)
- Design and implement a broad and comprehensive program of community engagement and education around Nillumbik's natural environment (*to build a community-wide culture of stewardship of the land and natural environment*)

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Regards

Chair, CHLG, on behalf of the membership of the Christmas Hills Landcare Group.

Appendix 1

Extracts from the Local Government Act 2020

Clause 89 - -Strategic planning principles (page 94)

- (1) A Council must undertake the preparation of its Council Plan and other strategic plans in accordance with the strategic planning principles.
- (2) The following are the strategic planning principles—
- a) an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting is to be adopted;
 - b) strategic planning must address the Community Vision;
 - c) strategic planning must take into account the resources needed for effective implementation;
 - d) strategic planning must identify and address the risks to effective implementation;
 - e) strategic planning must provide for ongoing monitoring of progress and regular reviews to identify and address changing circumstances.

Clause 90 - -Council Plan (page 95)

- (2) A Council Plan must include the following—
- a) the strategic direction of the Council;
 - b) strategic objectives for achieving the strategic direction;
 - c) strategies for achieving the objectives for a period of at least the next 4 financial years;
 - d) strategic indicators for monitoring the achievement of the objectives;
 - e) ***a description of the Council's initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure and amenity***

(*bolding and underline emphasis added*)

Contribution of submission to the Nillumbik Council Plan

Qualification of writer

- Background in Agricultural economics and Pest control
- Owner 20 acres bushland in Nillumbik for 36 years
- Raised a family of x 3- all kids went to ██████ High school
- Run a business employing x 12 local people, 30 years
- 'Nature Steward' (via Manningham council) graduate last year

Submission to Final Draft of Council Plan.

- The Primary Goal of the plan should be for the Nillumbik area to become both Carbon and Biodiversity neutral by 2030. This should be an over-riding target that influences all decisions made by council. The goal should be supported with clear interim targets.

Commentary- Council will be aware of the exponentially increasing impacts of fossil carbon release on the world which are exceeding even worse case scientific forecasts. This submission is not attempting to describe such public knowledge. It is instead to make the point that all of the x 4 key 'themes' of the current Plan are increasingly adversely effected by climate change, which should become front and center of mind and policy. While the Nillumbik Plan is clearly a small pawn in the global game, it can set an example- show the way ahead- change our culture and mindset- help our local community in leading the way.

- The key to a 2030 Carbon neutral council area is to reduce growth.

Commentary- Council needs to accept the evidence that Growth does not make things better. In fact in wealthy nations such as Australia, the reverse is true. We do not need more..... or bigger... at the cost of an impacted environment which we all feel every day. Council should accept that the pressure to grow will never subside, and the more we grow, the more we want. It will never be enough. Is what we have today not enough?

Realistically, State and Federal politics will continue to push for the easy option of 'jobs and growth' and some growth will be inevitable- but it should be a clear policy in our Plan to minimise growth. Council needs to change the growth culture and implement a planning policy which reflects this.

- Reduce the carbon footprint of large homes.

Commentary- As the rich become richer and can build bigger and grander homes, a huge carbon legacy is created which has to be carried by the broader community. This is inequitable as well as short sighted. Council should introduce a 'carbon limit' on new builds and re-builds, based on the carbon release in production Eg per cubic meter of concrete and bricks. It should be set at less extravagant levels.

- Create a biodiverse green wedge and reduce low grade 'beef' farming

Commentary- The green wedge, which is mostly on poor Nillumbik land, should be prioritised for recreation and environmental biodiversity- and away from low productivity farming such as running beef cattle. Council should require permits to erect stock fencing, providing permits on only the very best land for innovative 'boutique agriculture' and provide incentives to revegetate low grade pastures and creation of walking paths, environmental sanctuaries and wetlands. The boutique agriculture will encourage tourism and the tracks will provide better access to the green wedge by Melbournians, which is currently mostly fenced off for low grade stock grazing.

My thoughts on the Draft Council Plan 2021 -2025
Sustainable and Resilient Communities.

This plan makes no reference to a Declaration of Climate Emergency. This is now basic science, fully acknowledged by mainstream scientists, and now even mainstream media. "The earth could be just 10 years away from heating by more than 1.5 degrees Celsius — a threshold beyond which even more serious and frequent fires, droughts, floods and cyclones are expected to wreak havoc on humanity". (Climate change report from IPCC a 'code red for humanity', United Nations chief warns - ABC News).

Council needs to reflect local communities' priorities of acknowledging and taking actions responding to this Climate Emergency. The complete disregard of mentioning this in the Council Plan shows a political bias that is appalling.

At the 2020 Communities in Control Conference it was acknowledged by multiple speakers that the biggest economic costs facing Australia will come from climate crisis weather impacts. The June 2021 storms are the perfect example of this. Under the current Council Plan how is council planning to address this? How is Council planning to protect/ support community so we are not under risk of losing power for weeks and drinkable water as a result of this climate crisis? These are third world/ nation questions! However due to our Climate Crisis the Council Plan needs to have plans, objectives and actions identifying how it will act to counter these impacts.

In further acknowledgement of this climate crisis, rather than titling this goal as Sustainable and Resilient Communities, this goal needs to be titled Environmentally Sustainable Future. It needs to be Council's number one goal as it acknowledges the links between a healthy environment/ planet, with healthy communities.

The Council Plan makes no comment about carbon neutral targets. This should be addressed as a key goal. As should be a biodiverse environment.

The Council's Plan appears to be a document responding to damage rather than having a preventative approach. This shows little/ no forethought, and future climate impacts will continue to have significant impacts on community. Again the Council Plan needs to outline actions it will take to reduce the climate crisis impacts and protect community before the damage is done.

Council's Plan needs to have a list of clear climate action priorities, including strategies and actions clearly outlining how to address these. The language needs to incorporate definite strategies rather than concepts like the term 'theme'.

Strategic indicators outlining goals, objectives, actions and outcomes addressing a climate action plan need to be incorporated as a priority for the Council Plan. (Including protecting habitat, carbon neutral emissions, biodiverse environments, reducing use/waste campaign, creative alternatives, revegetating and greening our spaces and recyclable strategies. Too often the only response is recycling and this is a cop out).

The Council Plan should address committing to renewable energy targets, programs and upgrades to council and privately owned properties with the aim of carbon neutral targets as soon as possible.

Key objectives need to be more strongly worded to factor in environmental protection rather than responding to environmental damage and destruction already done. For example, Council needs to have more design parameters to avoid environmental and habitat destruction and damage, for both internal (council) and external (out sourced consultants) to adhere to.

These design parameters need to include consequences for companies who do not follow them, eg. Financial penalties.

On Monday August 23rd 2021 I made a formal complaint to Nillumbik Council about the felling of an ancient dead tree in the area, as part of the creation of the Hurstbridge bike trail. The biggest dead tree standing beside the creek opposite Ben Friley Oval was felled before my eyes. This ancient tree was massive with obvious and numerous hollows. I have witnessed hundreds of birds utilising this habitat. Staff on sight had identified sugar gliders in some of the hollows, who knows what else was in that dead tree?

I complained to the men working there and one was an Ecologist who agreed with all my points that it was wrong to fell the entire tree. The ecologist and another worker agreed that it was unnecessary, a branch up higher could have been removed instead but that they had been ignored.

My complaint was investigated by the Nillumbik Council arborist, [REDACTED] On Wednesday August 23 2021, he agreed that upon initial investigation it appears the (out sourced) company had taken an unnecessary short cuts, (and were they even going to remove the dead tree from the creek?!?)

This is a clear example of council mopping up damage when it is too late and this significant piece of habitat was destroyed. This is at the end of the trail works. Who knows how many times this occurred?

Community has chosen to live in the green wedge for a reason. Council has the responsibility to protect this precious resource and I believe council is failing to do this. Staff need to be more resourced to ensure everyone is accountable and provide the outcomes they are employed for.

Living in H [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for the last 20 years has shown me how popular and loved this area is, including as a tourist destiny, let alone a home. Council should prioritise tourism around the green wedge focus and for being a leader in blending environmental sustainable living.

The Council Plan should include the development of an environmental committee of community members, traders, climate experts, other experts and young people, (potentially the youth group or expanding to involve other young people). This committee could work with Council to strategize and implement strategies, plans and actions addressing our climate emergency.

From my recent experience, (the above example) I have little faith in the companies council outsources to. Even when employing private companies, council is still responsible for their works and impacts. Council should include a plan that only invests and works with proven environmentally sustainable companies and businesses, moving away from divesting in companies and institutions that profit from (in any way) the fossil fuel industries and projects.

The Council Plan needs a goal to include environmentally sustainable plans and designs for all planning applications, both private and industrial. The new(ish) housing estate as you're leaving Diamond Creek, driving towards Hurstbridge, (on the left side), is absolutely appalling. What was once, and not so long ago a vegetated hill of trees and indigenous bush has had nearly every tree removed and has lost all top soil and has been scraped clean of any biodiversity. Hurstbridge, Wattle Glen, Research, Eltham and even (although to a lesser extent) Diamond Creek, are all examples of how housing development can be more in harmony with the natural environment, sustainable and green. These areas prove it is possible for housing development to occur with/ in the natural habitat.

This plan needs to stipulate a bush fire management response which includes biodiversity maintenance and carbon neutral targets.

The revegetation of suburbs through tree planting including incentives for land owners to revegetate needs to be another identified goal in this Council Plan.

The current draft does not show any indepth thinking, planning or strategizing to address the climate crisis. It is highly disappointing as it stands.

Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 – Nillumbik

Sub by [REDACTED]

Thankyou for the opportunity to be able to comment of this Vision.

The Draft Council Plan does not adequately reflect the top three priorities of the Nillumbik Community as found earlier this year. These were:

1. Preservation of the Green Wedge
2. Protection of environment and biodiversity
3. Action on Climate Change

If this is the case it would be interesting to know how many new parks and open spaces will be included in the plan to offset all this housing development.

Community and connection / Equity and inclusion.

Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).

The above is a great idea and I look forward to seeing it in action

The next would be to acknowledge that this is Aboriginal land, and show our appreciation of their skills and knowledge when it comes to bushfire mitigation techniques. Stewardship of the land and natural environment and actively caring for it, reversing biodiversity decline.

Then please look at changing the recently so-called Australia Day from the 26th of January to a date that everyone can celebrate.

For Aboriginal Australians, 26 January is a day of mourning; a painful reminder of the beginning of the oppression of Aboriginal people and the invasion of Aboriginal lands. Celebration on this date can add to the trauma and be viewed as inappropriate, insensitive and contradictory to Council's commitment to reconciliation.

It would be great to attend such a day locally, rather than travelling to rallies in Town. Some of the councils that are supporting "change the date" are; Yarra, Darebin, Whittlesea. And other councils have altered what they do on that day.

Place and space /Open spaces/We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife. Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.

I travel regularly out into the green wedge. And appreciate how fortunate we are to have such an area as part of the Shire.

Unfortunately, this will always be under threat by developers and needs to be protected for us and all of Melbourne. I have people come out here from nearer into town, who always comment of how pretty the area is and also enjoy the cafes.

To be included in the above plan we could provide further land or park sites where our kangaroos and other wildlife could live and have bush to be safe in without them being forced further north. There is an example of this in neighbouring suburbs. Such

as on the south side of the Yarra between Fitzsimons Lane and Blackburn Road extension including Petty's orchard. Westerfolds Park. and the Banyule Flats.

Kangaroos are a great attraction. I see many people watching them and photographing them in these other suburbs. Having them visible tells people that we care about our wildlife and we can continue to provide for them near the housing development as long as we allocate the land.

When travelling along the new fantastic trail from Diamond Creek to Wattle Glen I did see five kangaroos which is unusual as it is rare to see any Kangaroos before you arrive at the larger properties. They were over to the left near the new housing development and unfortunately, were initially being chased by a dog not from the trail. Strategic fencing would have fixed that and land of course.

I believe due to Covid that everyone has become aware of the importance of our open space and parks for our own health. Which is another reason to include them in the plan.

Why do these wildlife friendly areas exist in these other councils and yet we don't appear to be planning for them?

Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

Could I ask the following to be included as **Priority Actions or Action Plans?**

Community and Connection – establish a process to enhance the inclusion Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung people

Place and Space - identity - Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term and provide better protection in the Planning Scheme. Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire, manage weeds and re-asses ESO land.

Place and Space – open spaces

- Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan. Recognise the needs of threatened species and how we maintain healthy levels of native wildlife we have.
- Review the Roadside Management Plan, it needs metrics for all roads in Nillumbik (Council and State) and include strategies to reduce the number of wildlife killed and injured on Nillumbik's roads
- Re-visit the Green Wedge Management Plan to include greater protection for native flora and fauna so positive actions are clearer for landowners.
- Review the Biodiversity Strategy with the aim of supporting our Shire's conservation aims, particularly for identified threatened species but for all native wildlife that calls Nillumbik home.
- Strengthen the Planning Scheme to help protect our wildlife such as enforceable types of fencing, TFN covenants, etc

Sustainable and Resilient

Agriculture: I support Council exploring innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative, plant-based processes which protect biodiversity. Animal agriculture is not compatible with reduced emissions.

Waste: Create an optimised waste to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council and community education and action.

Climate: Target to preserve the health of the environment and the community by working towards a carbon neutral and biodiverse municipality. The link between the health of the environment and the health of the community, as well as the risks to both if not enough is done, needs to be clearly spelt out here. For references, see the latest IPCC report, Climate Council Report, World Health Organisation list of 13 greatest threats to global health.

- Strategies and/or strategic indicators that follow on from this would be:
 - Actively work towards declaring a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat confronting Nillumbik's natural environment and community.
 - Set emissions targets for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030 at the latest, with clear interim targets to reach that goal.
 - Strongly commit to energy efficiency programs, renewable energy programs and upgrades for residential and commercial properties and sporting facilities, towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.
 - Set up a climate advisory committee comprised of community members, business leaders and climate experts to help advise on climate emergency mobilisation and implementation of climate emergency strategies, with particular reference to how community emissions targets could be met.
 - Develop a plan for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies and projects, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions.
 - Develop a procurement policy that assesses environmental and social credentials of tender applicants and their services/supplies.
 - Create a planning policy that mandates Environmentally Sustainable Design in planning applications for new commercial and residential developments.

Responsible and Accountable - Risk Management - Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people. Recognise the risk of bringing stock animals into the environment without plans to evacuate them in the event in a bush fire. These creatures are sentient beings and our plans should reflect that fact. Recognise the risk to our endangered wildlife in the event in a bush fire. Consider working with State Government to find better ways of helping wildlife after bush fire events such as allowing rescuers in with other Emergency Services to prevent prolonged suffering.

██████████, ██████████

SUBMISSION 24

Council Plan and Vision Submission August 25. 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to the draft Council Plan 2021-2025 (as below).

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

While the draft Council Plan is an improvement on the previous Council Plan in its focus on the climate, the environment and sustainability, the following concern me:

- The draft Council Plan makes no reference to a Declaration of Climate Emergency. Councils and the Community in the Climate Emergency (CACE) state that the rationale for getting local councils to declare a Climate Emergency is twofold: 1. To create a campaigning beachhead from which to get the nation and the world to declare a climate emergency (that would drive the necessary action to solve the problem at emergency speed); and 2. To help build a broadly-based commitment to the necessity for emergency climate goals and action. The IPCC Sixth Assessment Report on climate, states that emergency action is needed. One of its key messages states: there is a narrow path to avoiding climate catastrophe, only through immediate, deep and sustained emissions reductions. This may be our final warning. The window to act is closing.
- The draft Council Plan does not set carbon emissions targets.
- It makes very little reference to climate change, and does not use language appropriate to the severity of the problem (e.g. climate crisis, climate emergency, moral responsibility to future generations and the biodiversity of Nillumbik).
- The general focus of the document strongly favours an adaptation response to the climate emergency rather than mitigation.
- It fails to convey a sense of urgency about the crisis.
- It fails to convey a strong commitment to climate action,

It uses general aspirational terms such as 'seek to' and 'favour' rather than strong goals.

- The Council survey, Our People, Our Place, Our Future identified three main community priorities. of the community. They were: 1. Preservation of the Green Wedge; 2. Protection of environment and biodiversity; 3. Action on climate change. In the Taking Action on Climate Change survey, 90% of residents expressed concern about climate change, and 82% of online respondents thought Council should consider climate change in its decisions. When forming policy on the climate emergency, the purpose of a document such as the Council Plan is to provide leadership to the community, in line with the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (which provides guidelines for policy makers for all levels of government). The current draft document fails to do this; leadership that is desired by the Nillumbik community.
- Concern with overall lack of weighting given to climate issues. For example, under the theme Sustainable and Resilient, which one would assume to be focussed on climate and the environment, there is a section entitled Business and Tourism, which contains four dot points, while the section entitled Climate Action contains only two. Furthermore, the section 'Business and Tourism' does not seem to fit the description of Sustainable and Resilient, as three of the four dot points in this section make no mention of sustainability at all. The last four strategic indicators also relate to business or employment indicators with no connection to sustainability or resilience.
- Strategic indicators related to the measurement of climate action are scanty.
- I would prefer to use the term 'goal' rather than themes. The term goal sets a target to reach an outcome, as opposed to a general description.

Below are some points that I think should be included in the Council Plan, to convey a strong sense of urgency and commitment to address the climate crisis.

Place and Space.

- Objective - To plan, design and maintain places and spaces that strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility, encourage social connection and respect the environment. I would like to see the phrase 'respect the environment' replaced with the phrase, maintain and enhance the biodiversity values of the Green Wedge.
- Strategies

Open spaces.

Amend first strategy dot point to; We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity, biodiversity values and carbon storage potential of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife. Virginia Young from the Australian Rainforest Conservation Society points to the role of biodiversity in maintaining the integrity of carbon storage ecosystems, and the need to maintain this ecosystem integrity in order to build the resilience required to tackle

action on climate change in an integrated fashion Australian Forest Network Summit, 26 July 2021.

Add the following priority actions and strategic indicators:

- o Undertake a tree planting program for urban areas.
- Strategic Indicator: increased number of trees planted.
- o Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme to preserve and protect existing bushland and wildlife.
- Strategic Indicator: Increase in the health, diversity and area of native bushland maintained and preserved.
- o Provide incentives and programs to rural landowners to engage in bushland regeneration, e.g. Shire of Yarra Ranges' Ribbons of Green program.
- Strategic Indicator: increased participation in Ribbons of Green program or similar.
- o Develop a program focused on connecting paths and trails across the municipality to remove barriers to active transport *(eg walking and cycling).
- Strategic Indicator: increase in number of people using active transport.

Movement and Place

Add the following priority actions and strategic indicators:

- o Partner with state transport authorities to improve efficiency of the public transport network within the shire. Develop a coordinated service to connect buses and trains.
- Strategic Indicator: increase in number of people using public transport.
- o Transition to electric buses, and increase number of mini-buses.

Establish electric vehicles charging stations

Sustainable and resilient

- In place of the theme Sustainable and Resilient, substitute the goal of an Environmentally Sustainable Future. This must be the number one priority of the Council Plan, reflecting the Community Vision of a carbon neutral and biodiverse shire. Placing this goal first communicates that the health of the natural environment is absolutely crucial to a community's health and wellbeing, with climate change

described by the World Health Organisation as the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. The Council's draft Health and Wellbeing Plan also states that 'climate change is the greatest threat to public health of the 21st century. Councils are ideally positioned to take action to help mitigate and adapt to climate change and its impacts on health at the local level, and to contribute to state and national actions.' The latest IPCC report reinforces and amplifies this threat. This connection between climate, the health of the environment, and the mental and physical health of the community needs to be reflected in the priorities of the Council Plan. All Council policies and actions need to be implemented with this primary goal in mind.

- This goal's objective would be 'to preserve the health of the environment and the community by working towards a carbon neutral and biodiverse municipality'.
- Priority actions and strategic indicators that follow on from this would be:

Climate Action

- o Actively work towards declaring a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat confronting Nillumbik's natural environment and the community.

- o Use emergency language in all Council documents, meetings, media releases, Council website, community newsletters and other communications to convey the climate emergency to all the council, the Nillumbik community and higher levels of government.

Set an overall emissions target for a carbon-neutral municipality by 2035 (recommended by the Climate Council for Australia)

- o Set clear interim targets to reach these goals.
- o Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they align with the above strategy for a carbon-neutral municipality by 2035 or earlier.
- o Establish a baseline of carbon emissions across all sectors of the Shire to measure Council, residential, commercial, and transport emissions.
 - Strategic Indicator: reduction in Council emissions
 - Strategic Indicator: reduction in community emissions
- o Develop a carbon neutrality plan to create initiatives and set priorities for a carbon neutral municipality by 2035 at the latest.
- o Set up a climate advisory committee comprised of First Nations Custodians, business leaders, climate experts and other community members to develop clear and effective initiatives on climate emergency advocacy and implementation of

climate emergency strategies, with particular reference to how community emissions targets could be met.

o, Facilitate a campaign to build community awareness and engagement on the urgency of the climate crisis.

- Strategic Indicator: number of climate crisis events held
- Strategic Indicator: number of participants in climate programs and events
- Strategic Indicator: community satisfaction with Council meeting its responsibilities towards climate action

Sustainability

o Develop a waste management program that focusses on reduction of GHG emissions such as methane, and utilizes the principles of a circular economy.

o, Encourage the development of innovative food techniques which increase resilience to climate change, embrace regenerative agriculture principles, and protect and enhance biodiversity.

o Strongly commit to energy efficiency programs, renewable energy programs and upgrades for all Council operations, and for residential and commercial properties and sporting facilities, towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2035 or earlier.

- Strategic Indicator: Uptake of Environmental Upgrade Finance program, which offers loans to households and small businesses, to be repaid through the local council rates system.
- Strategic Indicator: Increased uptake of Solar Savers program and other renewable energy and energy efficiency programs.
- Strategic Indicator: Number of participants in energy conservation programs such as the Cool Shade program.
- Strategic Indicator: Increased replacement of gas appliances with electric.
- Strategic Indicator: Positive response to awareness campaign for use of existing split-system air conditioners for space heating in lieu of gas heating.
- o Develop a policy for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies and projects, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions.
- o Strategic Indicator: increased divestment from financial institutions which support and fund fossil fuel industries.

- o Develop a procurement policy that assesses environmental and social credentials of tender applicants and their services/supplies, and publish the environmental credentials of successful applicants.
- o Create a planning policy that mandates Environmentally Sustainable Design in planning applications for new commercial and residential developments, with new developments built to as close as possible to the ten star rating.
- Strategic Indicator: increased proportion of new buildings built to an energy-efficient rating of as close as possible to ten stars, including no new gas connections.
- 2.11.2020 Sustainability
- Victorian Residential Efficiency Scorecard: 10 stars
- Carbon status: zero net carbon

Zero Net Carbon Homes minimum requirement 6.5 stars

- Business and Tourism
- o Utilise the Declaration of Climate Emergency and environmental sustainability to aid in the promotion of business and tourism within Nillumbik Shire.
- Strategic Indicator: increased uptake of ecotourism enterprises
- Strategic Indicator: increased uptake of environmentally sustainable businesses in Nillumbik
- Strategic Indicator: increase in number of jobs in the shire related to mitigation of climate crisis i.e. in renewable energy, waste and recycling initiatives.
- o Provide incentives and programs to agricultural food producers to engage in regenerative agriculture practices and practices which protect biodiversity.
- Strategic indicator: Increase in number of Land Management Incentive Program grants provided to the rural landowners for adoption of regenerative/holistic farming practices which encourage biodiversity.
- Strategic Indicator: Increase in number of council programs focussing on regenerative or holistic agriculture

Responsible and Accountable

Risk Management. Add to this section the strategy dot point and action –

- Actively work to mitigate the risk to people, property and the environment caused by catastrophic weather events due to the climate emergency by setting strong emissions targets, with clear steps to reach these.
- o Ensure that the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy aligns with biodiversity maintenance and drawdown initiatives that support a zero carbon target.

The Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040

The Community Vision is divided into four sections; Our People, Our Place, Our Future, Our Council. I commend the Council's Vision for incorporating the many aspirations that emerged from the community consultation process, including aspirations of access, equity and inclusion, cultural and artistic heritage, participation and engagement in community life, indigenous heritage, retention of neighbourhood character, Green Wedge and environmental integrity, commitment to sustainable living, transparent consultation, and courage to embrace future challenges.

However I'm concerned that the document contains no overarching summary vision statement:

My suggestions are as below.

In 2040 Nillumbik is a world leader in

- biodiversity protection and reinvigoration
- community stewardship of the environment;
- climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- sustainable urban design and living;
- community inclusiveness, equity and connection;
- community participation in the arts and celebration of its cultural heritage;
- economic systems that are responsive to, and protective of, the environment, in keeping with the Community's statements of priority

With regard to the theme, Our Future, I favour stronger wording emphasising action on climate change and biodiversity, as follows:

Our Future

In 2040, Nillumbik is:

- a zero carbon shire.

- a place where all living things have a right to exist, to thrive and to evolve within a biodiverse ecosystem and a healthy biosphere.

I also endorse the suggestions for the NRG vision relating to the theme, Our Council, as follows:

Our Council

In 2040, Nillumbik Council is an organisation

- That provides bold leadership in the reversal of biodiversity decline. Council achieves this by prioritising knowledge of, and respect for, Nillumbik's biodiversity, and this is evident throughout Council management, staff, and the broader community; clear application of planning laws; a shared culture of Council and community stewardship of the environment.
- That is exceeding its Climate carbon neutral certification
- That leads in traffic management through the promotion of active transport (eg walking and cycling), community connectivity, public transport, and clever road design
- That consistently fosters equality, diversity, compassion and non-violence.

Also I would like to add the following dot point:

- That provides bold leadership in mitigation of and adaptation to the climate crisis by enacting a climate emergency response (mitigation, resilience, education and advocacy) as the number one priority of council at all levels of its operation.

References:

IPCC 2021 Report

IPCC 2021 report explained

Climate Council Report: Hitting Home; the Compounding Costs of Climate Inaction

WHO 13 biggest threats to global health

Local Government Climate Emergency Toolkit

25/08/2021

Submission on Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

We thank Council for its efforts in the preparation of the draft Council Plan 2021-2025, however, the current draft Plan gives **insufficient attention to the 3 top priorities identified as the most important to the community**, in its feedback to the Council's survey "Our People, Our Place, Our Future":

- Preservation of the Green Wedge
- Protection of environment and biodiversity
- Action on climate

To provide adequate focus on these issues, we request that the following suggestions be incorporated into the Plan.

General Comments

The "Council Plan 2021-2025" needs to make an explicit link back to the "Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040" by inclusion of the concise vision summary statement such as: -

In 2040 Nillumbik is a world leader in

- *biodiversity protection and reinvigoration*
- *community stewardship of the environment;*
- *climate change mitigation and adaptation;*
- *sustainable urban design and living;*
- *community inclusiveness, equity and connection;*
- *community participation in the arts and celebration of its cultural heritage;*
- *economic systems that are responsive to, and protective of, the environment, in keeping with the Community's statements of priority.*

All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the "Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040", the "Council Plan 2021-2025", the "Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025" and the "Financial Plan 2021-2025".

Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation, including the

- The Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review)
- Climate Action Plan
- Biodiversity Strategy

- Bushfire Mitigation Strategy
- Open Space Strategy
- Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Integrated Water Management Plan
- Recreation and Leisure Strategy
- Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy
- Advocacy Plan

The "Council Plan 2021-2025" needs to include **priority actions** against each strategy that: -

- take significant steps towards the *Community Vision* and each theme's objective
- have been identified so that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan (as in Banyule and Yarra Ranges' Draft Council [REDACTED] [REDACTED] contrary to Council's commitment to community consultation).
- Have the resources needed to implement these priority actions allocated in the financial plan as required by the Local Government Act 2020.

Refer to the below table for the priority actions that should, as a minimum, be included to cover Environmental/Planning issues.

Other priority actions, relating to the other aspects of the Plan, should be developed and included to supplement these.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Regards,

[REDACTED] & [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Proposed priority actions to be added to the “Council Plan 2021-2025” (arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft “Council Plan 2021-2025”:

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne’s Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review); Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>

Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.</i>

Attachment 1 - Sheet 2 of 2

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Place and space	Neighbourhood character	We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	<i>Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental</i>

			<i>impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council's responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	<i>Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community. (With allocation of sufficient Council resources for follow-up monitoring procedures to ensure <u>effective compliance</u>.)</i>

<https://participate.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/our-future/Council-plan>

SUBMISSION ON DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2021 – 2025
by [REDACTED]

I'm a Nillumbik resident of almost 45 years, and want to say right at the outset, that I love living here and being part of a Green Wedge Shire. My property in [REDACTED] is visited regularly by kangaroos, echidnas and one lone little wallaby. The birdlife is extraordinary, and right now, various native wildflowers are making an appearance. Personally I feel extremely lucky, and yet at the same time I'm aware that luck, actually, has nothing to do with it. Before I moved to this area, I lived in Mernda. The difference between the two areas today is a stark reminder that we should never take anything for granted, and that it doesn't take luck to have a beautiful area in which to live, or to keep it that way!

I therefore really appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft Council Plan 2021 - 2025. For it is an opportunity to plan for our future and protect what makes this area so incredibly special. In particular, I believe that we need a strong Council Plan that: -

- values and preserves the Green Wedge
- protects the environment, biodiversity and wildlife
- safeguards a future through action on climate change.

My suggestions regarding the Green Wedge therefore are as follows:

PRESERVATION OF THE GREEN WEDGE within the *Place and Space* theme - **Identity**

Strategy Dot Point

We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance

Proposed Priority Actions for the above strategy dot point.

- *Rewrite the Green Wedge Management Plan*
- *Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a "conservation council" for the Green Wedge Shire*
- *Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme*
- *Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays*

PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE within the *Place and Space* theme – **Open Spaces**

Strategy Dot Point

We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment, and diverse wildlife

Proposed Priority Actions

- *Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment and native wildlife for the long term.*
- *Develop a Native Wildlife Protection Plan, which recognises the needs of threatened species and how we maintain the health of native wildlife.*
- *Review the Roadside Management Plan, and include roadkill data for all roads in Nillumbik (Council and State roads), plus strategies to reduce the number of wildlife killed and injured on Nillumbik's roads*
- *Re-visit the Green Wedge Management Plan to include greater protection for native wildlife so positive actions are clearer for land owners.*
- *Review the Biodiversity Strategy with the aim of supporting our Shire's conservation aims, particularly for identified threatened species as well as for all native wildlife.*
- *Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.*
- *Manage weeds and invasive species.*
- *Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.*
- *Strengthen the Planning Scheme to help protect our wildlife such as wildlife-friendly fencing, TFN covenants, etc*

CLIMATE ACTION within the ***Sustainable and Resilient*** theme

The extremely serious and urgent nature of climate change, I believe, warrants its priority status in a new forward-looking Council Plan. Reference needs to be made to its urgency, with the use of terms such as the climate crisis and the climate emergency, and the need for action locally within the context of Nillumbik's at-risk community and its special biodiversity.

The current draft plan is based around an adaption-model response, without many mitigation strategies. However I believe that Nillumbik is in an excellent position to develop a Council Plan which is also committed to strong mitigation strategies, in line with the IPCC report. Given the community's strong support for climate action, plus the potential dire impact on our future, climate action must be prioritised in the Council Plan. It's vital that Council is working towards an environmentally sustainable future, and the link between the health of the environment and the health of the community clearly made in the Plan.

I therefore suggest that **under the strategy sub-heading Climate Action**, this strategy dot point needs to be inserted:

- *We take decisive action on climate change*

With this proposed priority action: -

- *Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing*

Under the same strategy sub-heading Climate Action, another strategy dot point needs to read:

- *We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaption and mitigation*

With this proposed priority action: -

- *Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a "conservation council" for the Green Wedge Shire.*

I believe that an Action Plan should include the following priority actions: -

- *Actively work towards declaring a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat confronting Nillumbik's natural environment and community.*
- *Set emissions targets for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030 at the latest, with clear interim targets to reach that goal.*
- *Strongly commit to energy efficiency programs, renewable energy programs and upgrades for residential and commercial properties and sporting facilities, towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.*
- *Utilise the Declaration of Climate Emergency and environmental sustainability to aid in the promotion of business and tourism within Nillumbik Shire.*
- *Set up a climate advisory committee comprised of community members, business leaders and climate experts to help advise on climate emergency mobilisation and implementation of climate emergency strategies, with particular reference to how community emissions targets could be met.*
- *Use emergency language in all Council documents, meetings, media releases, Council website, community newsletters and other communications to convey urgency of the climate situation to all of council, the Nillumbik community and higher levels of government.*
- *Facilitate a campaign to build community awareness and engagement on the urgency of the climate crisis.*

- *Develop a plan for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies and projects, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions.*
- *Develop a procurement policy that assesses environmental and social credentials of tender applicants and their services/supplies.*
- *Create a planning policy that mandates Environmentally Sustainable Design in planning applications for new commercial and residential developments.*
- *Drawdown initiatives, that include building in a targeted tree planting program for urban areas and provision of incentives and programs to rural landowners to engage in regenerative agriculture practices and bushland regeneration.*
- *Bushfire management, ensuring that bushfire management policies align with biodiversity maintenance and drawdown initiatives that support a zero-carbon target.*

Thank you again for the opportunity to make a submission on the Draft Council Plan 2021 - 2025.


25/08/2021

Overall

The Council Plan needs to:

- Make an explicit link back to the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040.
- Include the review of the Municipal Planning Strategy and
- Recognise the leadership role of the Council in determining the vision for future land use and development in the Shire of Nillumbik.

THEME: PLACE AND SPACE

In line with the need to explicitly recognise the review of the Municipal Planning Strategy I suggest that the Council Plan include an additional heading under the

Theme of 'Place and Space' being:

Future land use and development

And under that to include the following strategy:

- We recognise the importance of Nillumbik planning scheme and the crucial role of the review of the Municipal Planning Strategy in setting the vision for future land use and development in the Nillumbik Shire for the protecting the natural and agricultural values of the Green Wedge.

The 'Strategic Indicator' could be:

- Completion of the review of the Municipal Planning Strategy.

Note of explanation

The Municipal Planning Strategy is designed to provide a succinct expression of overarching strategic policy directions for land use and development across the whole Shire.

The general directions provided by DELWP in preparing the MPS emphasized that:

- The MPS must succinctly explain the context for a municipality and provide the overarching strategic directions for the major land use and development matters that affect it.
- The content of the MPS should be easily read, expressed in a logical sequence and grouped by related land use and development themes. The preferred approach is to follow the PPF themes.
- To ensure MPS focuses on priorities and provides clear and direct messages a limit of 5000 words applies (excluding plans/maps).

- The MPS is intended to highlight the important planning issues and a context for a given municipality's local planning policies. The new concise format is designed to ensure a more focused and direct message about a council's planning aspirations. As part of the new Local Government Act 2020 all Councils have been required to engage with their community to develop a Community Vision.

While there is no strict formal relationship between the Community Vision and the Municipal Planning Strategy, there is a strong informal link between the two, in that they are both expositions of a vision for the municipality and the Local Government Act does require strategic planning to address the Community Vision.

My experience has shown that future land use and development is the single most important issue for the protection and enhancement of the Green Wedges (the number 1 priority in the community survey) , and the content of the MPS is critical to that end.

Under Neighbourhood character include:

- Champion good urban residential design to retain the tree canopy that is major feature of neighbourhood character in urban areas with a view to mitigating the 'heat island' impact associated with any reduced tree canopy due to residential consolidation in urban areas.

The strategic indicator could be:

- Canopy cover in urban residential areas (I understand that both DELWP and RMIT have access to such data that can be reported used in a summary format without identifying individual properties).

SUBMISSION 28
WILDLIFE ADVOCATES NILLUMBIK



Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

Wildlife Advocates of Nillumbik Submission

Wildlife Advocates of Nillumbik (WAN) would like to ask the following to be included as **Priority Actions** or included in **Specific Action Plans**:

Place and Space - identity - Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term, protect and enhance the natural environment to include a more wildlife friendly living space.

Place and Space – open spaces

- Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan. Recognise the needs of threatened species and how we maintain the health of native wildlife we have.
- Review the Roadside Management Plan, it needs metrics for all roads in Nillumbik (Council and State) and include strategies to reduce the number of wildlife killed and injured on Nillumbik's roads
- Re-visit the Green Wedge Management Plan to include greater protection for native wildlife so positive actions are clearer for landowners.
- Review the Biodiversity Strategy with the aim of supporting our Shire's conservation aims, particularly for identified threatened species but for all native wildlife that calls Nillumbik home.
- Strengthen the Planning Scheme to help protect our wildlife such as enforceable types of fencing, TFN covenants, etc

Sustainable and Resilient - climate action – we support Council exploring innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik. We ask these are regenerative, plant-based processes which protect biodiversity thus protecting and enhancing the ecosystem for our wildlife to thrive.

Responsible and Accountable - risk management - Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people. Recognise the risk to our endangered wildlife in the event in a bush fire. Consider working with State Government to find better ways of helping wildlife after bush fire events such as allowing rescuers in with other Emergency Services to prevent prolonged suffering.

pp [REDACTED]

Cottles Bridge

SUBMISSION 29
ELTHAM COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP

Eltham Community Action Group response to the

Draft Nillumbik Council Plan 2021-2025

EGAG appreciated the opportunity to make input into this Plan. It is a positive move to see that this Council is making these opportunities available and, as always, it would be equally positive to see actual changes made to the final Plan!

We do have some observations that we believe would improve this document.

1. This document should be very strongly linked to the other three documents that have been produced in this tranche, for comment. In particular to reference the Vision Statement and the Financial Plan with their implications for each theme.
2. This document could be criticised as being full of ideals and aspirations but ill-defined by concrete examples so that it is less than meaningful when read by an average person, e.g. the percentage of people living in Nillumbik who access the library or Leisure Centre regularly, these are meaningful examples.
P8 lists a framework but with no practical examples.
P11-12 talks about objectives and strategies but again with no real examples.
3. The strategic indicators also give no real information other than arrow showing 'up or down' – does Council want the 'up' to move by 1% over what number of years or 50% over the 4 years of the plan?
4. There are long term issues that need to be addressed but those need a longer term view and actual planning for further than 4 years lifetime of this document but appear not to be covered in this nor referenced in the other 3 documents in concrete, meaningful, language that demonstrates that the financing has also been planned.
E.g. what is planned for the upgrading of existing social and general facilities for aging population? What is planned for succession planting of canopy trees in parks? What is planned to utilise pocket parks and reserves. What is planned for any number of issues that will all need funding, so from where and how a proportion of income can be set aside for long term projects?
5. This document gives listings of numbers of supporting Council documents for each theme but how long ago were these documents approved and by which

Council? An urgent review ideally should take place to make sure they reflect the long term vision and plan of this Council. However, in doing so would expend the Council finances on paperwork rather than delivering the services that residents pay rates for.

This is an ongoing conundrum - does a Council spend scarce Council funding on 'beautifully crafted' paperwork or actually on the delivery of services and facilities?

6. Having commented on the extent of generalities contained in this document ,we make one example of simple solution to one item
P 23 Strategies – Good Governance states
We will continue to be an employer of choice **for local residents** - the addition of these words would make the document more informative and offer definite information.

A final point, maybe a nit-picking point.

P 29 **About Nillumbik**

This is an informative section of the document that can be used for many purposes but it appears that there have been a number of typos that have been corrected but show on the screen to be a slightly different burgundy colour - not a major problem and one than can be simply sorted!

As stated earlier, Eltham Community Action Group appreciates the opportunity to respond and if further clarification is needed please contact us via -

████████████████████

████████████████████ President

████████████████████ Seretary

26.08.21



Submission to Council August 2021

Framing the document

In framing the document overall, it must be stated that Nillumbik is a conservation Shire with the Green Wedge as its strategic focus. It's an enormous Green Wedge and of utmost importance to the whole of Melbourne and this should be the focus of Council work first and foremost. It is a very great responsibility and it must be properly shouldered, especially as there are many areas within the shire where the requirements of a Green Wedge are shamefully ignored.

This sort of framing must be done to ensure environmental protection is a key guiding principle.

A message from Council

Something is missing here! The first dot point is exceedingly woolly and vague. In order to more accurately to portray what the community has told Council, the first point must include a specific reference to the wildlife and flora of Nillumbik, and the natural systems on which they rely.

Developing a Community Vision for Nillumbik

A very considerable lack here. This must be much more precise, and ambitious – nothing wrong with that when it comes to the environment, and climate! And it must reflect what people put in the surveys! Goodness me!

Council surveys, 2040, found people valued first and foremost:

- Preservation of the Green Wedge
- Protection of environment and biodiversity
- Action on climate

These must be clearly stated as top priorities in the Community Vision.

Also, the vision should clearly describe the community's ideas and hopes, and intentions, for 2040. A possible overall statement could be:

In 2040 Nillumbik intends to be leading Victoria in:

- Biodiversity protection and reinvigoration via community stewardship;
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- Sustainable urban design and living;
- Community inclusiveness, equity;
- Community participation in the arts and celebration of its cultural heritage;
- Economic systems that are responsive to, and protective of, the environment, in keeping with the Community's statements of priority.

Nillumbik Community Profile

This section doesn't include important details and statistics for flora and fauna. These have to be seen as an integral part of a green shire such as ours. And not to include them would go against the community's top three values – see above.

For example, see the Nillumbik State of the Environment Report 201:

'Approximately 30,000 ha of remnant native vegetation still remains within the Shire, with the largest portion of intact vegetation on private land (67%)' and "The Shire of Nillumbik contains 1031 indigenous flora species, 64 of which are listed as significant species.350 indigenous fauna species, 70 of which are listed as significant species.'

We should be talking firmly and clearly about what we've got in this shire. It is in line with what the community wants, and also shows the value of our glorious natural assets.

Nillumbik now and into the future

This section analyses many things in the shire. The analysis should and must include living things, soils, waterways, landscapes, different micro climates. Quite obviously these must be included if we want to look even half way serious about being a committed Green Wedge shire.

But more, much more; such an analysis should include:

- Current annual loss of vegetation; and projected reversal of decline if appropriate policies are developed and applied
- Current prevalence of wildlife through diverse areas of the Shire; and projections of healthier and more widespread populations if actions are taken to improve connectivity and extent of native vegetation
- Current impacts of roadkill on wildlife; and likely outcomes if innovative steps are taken to reduce impacts
- Current health of soils, creeks, rivers, billabongs, and ephemeral waterways; and projections of their greater vitality and flow-on effects on biodiversity if appropriate policies are developed and applied; this would include policies to do with weeds and feral fauna in the shire, ever present great threats

In the next sections the same applies. More specificity and much more honouring of the environment, so that each aspirational set should lead with the following points.

Our People

1. In 2040, the Nillumbik community:

- Is knowledgeable, respectful, and responsive to the Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung people

& cultural heritage

- Is an active leader in protecting and reinvigorating the natural environment; minimises all waste and enables effective recycling; takes greatest action to reverse biodiversity decline; exceeds carbon neutral status; consistently and dramatically reduces or eliminates polluting activities [eg chemical inputs from herbicides, litter, toxic materials from infrastructure development] and achieves this through innovation and best practice – with policy and education to achieve outcomes.

Our place

Again, so vague and broad, and no specific reference to the environment! Instead this section should begin with something like

1. In 2040, Nillumbik is a place:

- renowned for its thriving biodiversity, where native wildlife and vegetation communities [from tall canopy trees to grasses, herbs and fungi] are more widespread, healthier, and better connected than they were in 2021. This also ensures greater resilience, especially with climate change impacts.
- Where the community's love for Nillumbik's biodiversity is evident throughout the Shire, including townships.

Our Future

Sustainability and resilience should be more broadly applied – not just to the human community.

Our Council

1. In 2040, Nillumbik Council is an organisation

- That provides bold leadership in the reversal of biodiversity decline. Council achieves this by prioritising knowledge of, and respect for, Nillumbik's biodiversity, and this is evident throughout Council management, staff and the broader community: clear application of planning laws; a shared culture of Council and community stewardship of the environment.
- That is carbon-positive, exceeding its Climate Active carbon neutral certification
- That leads in traffic management through the promotion of active transport (eg walking and cycling), community connectivity, public transport, and clever road design
- That consistently fosters equality, diversity, compassion and non-violence.

SUBMISSION 31

Thank you for your Plan. I appreciate the time and effort that has been spent on it...and now I'm going to be really critical of it. I live in Nillumbik, as do my daughter and her family, and my son and his family is soon to return here. I love the community here, and the stunning delights that Nature offers us with the trees, our exquisite river, the creeks, the wild places, birds and the little four legged creatures. You can keep the bull ants, however, and the wasps. I desperately hope the fight to preserve what we've been granted will become a lot more real than it has been so far.

My overall impression of the Council Plan is that while it pays lip service to climate change, biodiversity, and Indigenous acknowledgement, there appears to be no real commitment to actually do anything impactful.

It is as though Council has not really digested the actuality of where we're heading, as shown to us in very capital letters in the IPCC report; nor wondered how we're actually going to cope with the now inevitable 1.5C degree rise in temperature by 2030, with the likelihood of greater increase, when we're already under the pump with the present increase in temperature.

The Plan fails to grasp the severity and the immediacy of this emergency.

Nillumbik deserves a carbon neutral shire, to be aimed at as a definite goal, rather than a theme to think about for some time in the future. We need leadership strategies right now, with definite and clear goals in place that will help us adapt and hopefully mitigate the effects of the accelerating climate breakdown. An Environmentally Sustainable Future must underpin the Council Plan, because without that, the community's health and well being is in jeopardy, if the IPCC report and the WHO recommendations are to be believed.

The Strategies for this would be, just for starters, to declare a Climate Emergency and then act as if it's true, because it is... Council needs to acknowledge the seriousness and the validity of what science is saying about the state of the planet, carbon emissions, the essential need to maintain biodiversity, the terrifying state of our oceans with the influx of disposable plastics and their impact on wildlife; and they need to act accordingly, with the gravity and responsibility with which they've been entrusted. The strategies for action evolve from the understanding and genuine acknowledgement that our planet it is trouble, and therefore, so are we. Our shire needs strong and decisive leadership, with concrete, practical plans rather than a bunch of themes to muse and debate over, as seems to be the present case, even if mistakes are made in the initial implementation. We keep being told by scientists that we're running out of time. That perspective used to be associated with the radical left; now it's a mainstream statement of fact.

The other issue I'd like to comment on is that of Indigenous recognition. Nillumbik has made some effort to acknowledge the existence of the the First People and their story, but again, it's been presented to the Public thoroughly white-washed, skimmed over and largely devoid of the acknowledgement of the truth of the real impact the colonisers

inflicted on the Aboriginal people, their culture, their families, and their Land. There's no mention of the extraordinary loss of lives, of the loss of whole tribal groups, of language... Council, in my opinion, is perpetuating lies by omission... It's time that the true story was told, that we acknowledge its ugliness and barbarity, and that we become educated about it. I would like to see more accurate and detailed signposting in Pound Bend, for example, and a more detailed outline given on the stone monument at the end of The Boulevard. As it is, someone, I assume an Indigenous person, has corrected some of what has been left out in the telling of the story of Coranderrk: not in its full horror, but with more honesty. I think we owe that to First Nations people... We could do with more Indigenous-led events so that we can hear their experience and hear more of what they know of their history, of their understanding of the seasons, the local foods, fire management. We need education, and that is something the Council could facilitate.

So thank you for the opportunity to comment on what tugs my heart about our beautiful Shire, and I sincerely hope that something profound will come out of your work.

Yours sincerely,



From: [REDACTED] **Date:** 25 August, 2021

Contact Details:

Address: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mob: [REDACTED]

Present to Council: Yes please

THANKS to the writing team for drafting this Council Plan – Nillumbik 2021 – 2025.

The Plan contains some valuable general objectives and aspirations which represent an improvement on the previous Council Plan. However, there are some serious shortcomings.

This submission outlines concerns and recommends how these could be addressed

CONCERNS

In summary:

1. The Draft Council Plan needs to better reflect the 'Top three things most valued in Nillumbik'
2. The Plan needs themes chosen to suit a Green Wedge Shire
3. Key Actions, Major Initiatives or an Action Plan to achieve the objectives should be a part of this Council Plan - as in our two Green Wedge neighbouring Councils.

1. The Draft Council Plan needs to better reflect the three things most valued in Nillumbik

Top 3 things valued in Nillumbik

1. Preservation of the Green Wedge
2. Protection of environment and biodiversity
3. Action on Climate Change

Source: "Our People Our Place Our Future. Key Findings 15 February – 28 March" [Attachment to Council Meeting Agenda May 25, 2021]

- **A shared culture of community stewardship towards “Nillumbik, the Green Wedge Shire”** is expressed in the ‘*Top three things valued in Nillumbik*’. A will to protect our Green Wedge Shire has become is part of our shared identity. This should be reflected in each of the themes.
- **Protection of environment and biodiversity needs a stronger level of importance**
 - Our Environmental plans are tucked into “Play and Space”.
 - By comparison, *Banyule Council Plan 2021-25* has a “Community Priority Theme: *Our Sustainable Environment*” and
 - *Yarra Ranges Council Plan 2017 - 21* has a “*Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment*” theme,
 - Our Council Plan has low aspiration for the environment.
Under the Theme *Play and Space*, the Objective is: “*To plan, design and maintain places and spaces that strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility, encourage social connection and **respect the environment.***”
 - By comparison, the Strategic Objective for Banyule, under Priority Theme 2: *Our Sustainable Environment* is to be “*A progressive and innovative leader in protecting, enhancing and increasing the health and diversity of our natural environment, where we all commit to playing an active role in achieving environmental sustainability, waste and carbon emissions reduction.*”
 - As with the *Draft Community Vision Nillumbik 2940*, Council has NOT heard our concern about protecting biodiversity:
 - Under “What we have heard” (p.7), Biodiversity is not mentioned, despite being one of the top three things valued in Nillumbik
- **Action on Climate Change**
 - The Plan needs to reflect the urgency of the Climate Change crisis,
 - By contrast, *Banyule Council Plan 2021-25* (p.20) “recognizes we are in a state of climate emergency” and devotes a detailed, separate section to Climate Change, reflecting the importance of this concern.
 - Our Draft Plan contains no plan of action on how to address climate change.
By contrast, *Banyule* (p.20) has the following key targets:
 - Carbon neutrality by 2028 for our operations
 - A carbon neutral municipality by 2040.
 - A key component of these goals is recognition of the need to embed climate change considerations – both adaptation and mitigation – across Council and within all roles.
 - Noteworthy are the targets set by two local groups with a climate change focus and expertise: *Clean Energy Nillumbik* advocates “100% renewable electricity across Nillumbik by 2028”, and *Nillumbik Climate Emergency Action Team* advocates for “zero-carbon community by 2031”.
 - The Nillumbik Plan appears to focus primarily on adaptation with little recognition of the importance of mitigation or related actions needed. This is also the case on the Council website information about climate change, indicating that
 - There may be a lack of expertise in this area among council staff as to what climate mitigation is. The term is used, but the means is not reflected in the plan
 - The Plan appears to lack an understanding of the relationship between loss of biodiversity through deforestation and land degradation and the loss of carbon capture capacity, which equals increased carbon emissions

2. The Plan needs themes chosen to suit a Green Wedge Shire

- **The themes are urban themes, not the best fit for a Green Wedge Shire**
- The Nillumbik themes would suit any urban Local Government Area, but those chosen by our neighbour, Yarra Ranges Shire, appear to be a better fit for a Green Wedge Shire.
- Below is a comparison of our themes and the Yarra Ranges’ themes.

Nillumbik Draft Council Plan 2021-25 Themes p. 4	Yarra Ranges Council Plan 2017-21 Themes, p.3
• Community and connection	• Connected & Healthy Communities
• Place and space	• Quality Infrastructure & Liveable Spaces
• Sustainable and resilient	• Protected & Enhanced Natural Environment • Vibrant Economy, Agriculture and Tourism
• Responsible and accountable	• High Performing Organisation

The Themes should be modified to more accurately describe "The Green Wedge Shire" character and its primary conservation role.

Under “Recommendations” below is an easy tweaking to make our themes a better fit.

3. Key Actions, Major Initiatives or Action Plans to achieve the objectives should be a part of this Council Plan

- **The Plan contains strategies, but NO plan or commitments as to HOW we will:**
 - preserve our Green Wedge ;
 - protect our environment and biodiversity; and
 - take action on Climate Change.
- By contrast Yarra Ranges commits to “*Implement the Environment Strategy to improve the health and biodiversity of our natural environment*” (p.35)
- The Draft Plan includes objectives, strategies and strategic indicators, but there is no indication as to “HOW” those strategies are to be put into practice
 - *Banyule Council Plan 2021-25 includes the Annual Action Plan 2021/2022.*
 - *Yarra Ranges Council Plan 2017-25 includes Major Initiatives.*
 - *Yarra Ranges Council Plan 2021-2025 Draft contains as an Attachment the Draft Yarra Ranges Action Plan 2021-2025 “*

It is **not enough** for the Plan to tell us there will be an ‘Annual Action Plan’ (p.4). Key Actions or Major Initiatives or an Action Plan need to be part of the consultation.

Council places a high priority on transparency, but a Plan without Key Actions, Major Initiatives or an Action Plan lacks transparency.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Link the Council Plan to the Community Vision with an overarching summary statement common to both documents, reflecting community input, including the ‘Top 3 things valued in Nillumbik’

Overarching Community Vision Summary Statement

In 2040 Nillumbik, the Green Wedge Shire is a leader in: community support and connection, community stewardship of the environment, biodiversity reinvigoration, climate change mitigation & preparedness, townships of distinctive character befitting the Green Wedge Shire, a vibrant arts scene, celebration of our cultural heritage, and a sustainable economy consistent with the environmental values of the community as expressed in the Community’s priorities.

2. Modify the themes to better fit Nillumbik The Green Wedge Shire

Under Sustainable and resilient (p.4), **add sub themes:** :

- Community and connection
- Place and space
- Sustainable and resilient
 - Protected & Enhanced Natural Environment
 - Sustainable Economy, Agriculture and Tourism
- Responsible and accountable.

3. Protection of Environment and Biodiversity, as among the “Top 3 things valued in Nillumbik”, needs stronger emphasis

- To “What we have heard” (p.7) **add:**
 - “The Our People Our Place Our Future community engagement, ... has helped shape this plan. The community has identified a number of key short term priorities, including action on climate change, responsible urban housing development, protection of the **environment, biodiversity and** the green wedge, reducing waste, greater recycling and community consultation and leadership.”.
- Under the ‘Place and Space’ Objective, **replace** “... respect the environment” with “... **protect, nurture and enhance our indigenous environment and its biodiversity.**”
- Under *Protected & Enhanced Natural Environment* **add the Objective:**

Protect and enhance the quality and area of coverage of tree canopies and biodiversity, with increased connectivity of wildlife corridors and habitat

- **Under *Sustainable Economy, Agriculture and Tourism, add the Objective:***
Showcase our vibrant arts, beautiful natural scenery, rivers and parks to strengthen tourism, build support for local businesses and agriculture to become environmentally and economically sustainable while consistent with the environmental values of the community, as expressed in the Community's priorities.
- Expand the theme '*Community and connection*' *Objective:* 'To encourage inclusion and participation to support health and wellbeing, to ensure that all our residents have equitable access to services, programs, events and initiatives, and to foster a shared sense of identity as protectors of Nillumbik, the Green Wedge Shire.'

4. The Environment needs a higher level of authority in our Management system

- We pride ourselves on being 'Nillumbik, the Green Wedge Shire', but we give the 'Environment' a third tier management level of authority. It comes under ***Operations and Infrastructure***, along with Capital Works, Infrastructure, Property and Facility Maintenance, and Recreation and Leisure. *Operations & Infrastructure* is a second tier level of authority, accountable to the CEO
 - By comparison, in Yarra Ranges, the Department of *Environment & Infrastructure* is one of four second tier departments directly accountable to the CEO

5. Environmental expertise in a rural context needs rebuilding, especially at Senior Management level.

Environmental expertise was heavily depleted during the term of the last council, which saw:

- three CEOs during that 4 year term
- high staff turnover, from 5% in 2014, rising to: **2016 - 12.94%; 2017 -10.31%; 2018 – 17.57%; 2019 - 26.01%; 2020 – 12.70%** including 20 involuntary departures.

[Source: Annual Financial Report for the year ended 30 June for each of the years quoted]

- There is a need to recruit senior environmental officers capable of
 - writing policy to maintain and enhance biodiversity within the Green Wedge and the whole shire, including Council land
 - writing policy on Climate Change mitigation and adaptation
 - understanding of Nillumbik's unique RCZ Planning laws and of affirming Nillumbik's biodiversity and conservation role.
 - providing leadership in halting the loss of biodiversity and turning it around.

6. Key Actions which should be included in the Council Plan include:

Green farming initiatives

- Promote and support a shire-wide platform for environmentally sustainable farming initiatives
 - such as [*Telling our story*](#), involving family farmers banding together to showcase the climate action they are investing in, speaking directly to the community's growing concerns about global warming and environmental sustainability.

Climate Change

- Develop a new *Climate Action Plan 2021 - 25*, reviewing the *Climate Change Action Plan 2016-2020* and evaluating what has been done, setting goals for the next 4 years and for 2021 - 2022, moving Nillumbik towards achieving the Climate Change goals of the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040*
- Declare a “Climate Emergency”

Protecting and enhancing the environment and Biodiversity of our Green Wedge Shire

- Review and update the *Biodiversity Strategy 2012*
- Initiate a major project to update the *State of environment report 2014*
- Review the Green Wedge Management Plan to fit the new structure after the review of Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land is complete.
- Review the *Invasive Species Action Plan 2015* and develop an updated Plan
- Use training and other measures to encourage a culture among council staff that prioritises Green Wedge protection.
- Throughout rural and residential areas, encourage Indigenous vegetation to strengthen the integrity and biodiversity of our Green Wedge and our GW Shire.

Yarra River

- Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan and extend them to include the Yarra tributaries that flow through Nillumbik.

Planning

- Introduce planning scheme amendments which give clarity to prioritising the protection of environmental biodiversity.
- Identify new areas that should be covered by ESOs and SLOs (include the urban SLOs, particularly tree protection).
- Start with gullies and waterways, as our waterways all drain eventually into the Yarra and increasing the Yarra River water quantity and quality is a State Government priority.

Open spaces

- Review Nillumbik's Open Space Strategy to include an increase in the amount of public open space to help enhance the biodiversity within the Green Wedge.
- Develop a BMX strategy for Nillumbik that also ensures protection of the natural environment, particularly erosion mitigation

Trails

- Update and further develop the *Nillumbik Trails Strategy* to ensure that opportunities are taken to increase biodiversity and habitat connectivity, as well as extending the interconnectedness of our shire active transport system

Bushfire

- Review the Bushfire Management Plan, including the role played by tree trunks in reducing the radiant heat, as well as slowing down the speed of grass fire. (BTW the biomass of indigenous grasses is often a lot less than that of exotic and weedy grasses.)

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this feedback.



Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

Feedback on overall document:

- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to make an explicit link back to the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040* by inclusion of the concise vision summary statement.
- All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040*, the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* and the *Financial Plan 2021-2025*. Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation. These may include the Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.
- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to include priority actions against each strategy that take significant steps towards the *Community Vision* and each theme’s objective, and that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan as per our neighbours Banyule and Yarra Ranges’ Draft Council Plans 2021-2025, rather than as part of a later *Annual Action Plan* devised by Council only (contrary to Council’s commitment to community consultation). Furthermore, the resources needed to implement these priority actions should be reflected in the Financial Plan which is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020.

Proposed priority actions to be added to the *Council Plan 2021-2025* (arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft *Council Plan 2021-2025*):

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040</i>

		leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>and Nillumbik Shire Council as a "conservation council" for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a "conservation council" for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we	<i>Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.</i>

		work hard to protect and enhance	
Place and space	Neighbourhood character	We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	<i>Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>

Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council's responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	<i>Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community.</i>

As a former Executive Officer Sustainability and Manager Environment and Strategic Planning at Nillumbik from 2008 to 2017, I would like to encourage a rethinking of both the community vision and the council plan to better reflect the status of the Shire as an important Green Wedge, with significant vegetation and native plant and animal species, many of which are under threat. Much of this has been documented before in Nillumbik's conservation strategies, State of the Environment reports and the like, but there is increasing urgency given the worsening climate change assessments recently released by the IPCC.

The potential for more bushfires of higher intensity and for increased storms and flooding requires that there be critical planning and coordination for both mitigation and response to such events. The terrible impact on our community and environment of the 2009 bushfires is seared into the community's consciousness and everything should be done to ensure we are properly prepared to deal with future events. Considerable work was undertaken after the 2009 bushfires to ensure that council staff were trained on how to respond to an emergency and I hope that the major change to staff over the last 4 years has not seen this fall away.

I have viewed a variety of documents prepared by NEAG and other parties that contain important recommendations for changes to the vision and plan which I fully endorse. I have attached what I regard as the critical excerpts from those documents below.

I would hope that Council will recognise the critical need for pursuing action now to address this immediate threat to our environment and society.

[REDACTED]

Draft Council Plan

Feedback on overall document:

- The Council Plan needs to make an explicit link back to the Vision (by inclusion of the concise vision summary statement)
- The Council Plan needs to include keystone/priority actions against each strategy that take significant steps towards the vision/aspiration statements, and that Council will implement during the four years of the plan. The resources needed to implement them should be reflected in the financial plan. This is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020.

Extracts from the Local Government Act 2020

Clause 89 - Strategic planning principles (page 94)

(1) A Council must undertake the preparation of its Council Plan and other strategic plans in accordance with the strategic planning principles.

(2) The following are the strategic planning principles—

- a) an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting is to be adopted;
- b) strategic planning must address the Community Vision;
- c) strategic planning must take into account the resources needed for effective implementation;
- d) strategic planning must identify and address the risks to effective implementation;
- e) strategic planning must provide for ongoing monitoring of progress and regular reviews to identify and address changing circumstances.

Clause 90 - Council Plan (page 95)

(2) A Council Plan must include the following—

- a) the strategic direction of the Council;
- b) strategic objectives for achieving the strategic direction;
- c) strategies for achieving the objectives for a period of at least the next 4 financial years;
- d) strategic indicators for monitoring the achievement of the objectives;
- e) **a description of the Council's initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure and amenity**

The suggestion that an *Annual Action Plan* will be devised by Council later deprives the community of the opportunity to comment; it is also inconsistent with Council's standard of transparency and out of step with the Council Plans of our neighbours, Banyule and Yarra Ranges' Draft Council Plans 2021 – 2025.

Proposed priority actions under strategies currently in the draft Council Plan:

Theme: Community and connection

Strategies

Equity and inclusion

We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds

Priority actions:

- Develop an access, equity and inclusion policy for Council
- Develop an access, equity and inclusion strategy for community
- Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (*to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters*)

Theme: Place and space

Identity

We value and admire our Green Wedge shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance

Priority actions:

- Prepare the Municipal Planning Strategy, as part of the new format planning scheme, to provide a succinct expression of overarching strategic policy directions for land use across the whole Shire consistent with maintaining and enhancing the Green Wedge, protection of environment and biodiversity and action on climate change (to ensure the Nillumbik Planning Scheme is aligned with the Community Vision -Nillumbik 2040)
- Review and revise the Nillumbik Green Wedge Management Plan (*to ensure alignment with the outcomes (planning system reforms) of the DELWP project, Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land, and alignment with the Community Vision -Nillumbik 2040*)
- Develop a clear and robust position on the future of the numerous lots in the Green Wedge that are below the minimum subdivision size for the planning zones they are within (*to ensure these lots can best serve ongoing and future requirements for biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture*)
- Evaluate and renew the Nillumbik Biodiversity Strategy (2012) (*to ensure alignment with DELWP's plan, Protecting Victoria's Environment - Biodiversity 2037, and alignment with the Community Vision -Nillumbik 2040. Should incorporate strategies for invasive species and wildlife protection, and habitat and biodiversity monitoring*)
- Design and implement initiatives to strengthen terrestrial and aquatic habitat corridors in the Watsons Creek catchment (*to deliver on the Yarra Strategic Plan Performance Objective "A healthy river and lands"*)
- Design and implement a broad and comprehensive program of community engagement and education around Nillumbik's natural environment (*to build a community-wide culture of stewardship of the land and natural environment*)

Neighbourhood character

We respect and enhance the unique neighbourhood character in our communities to ensure a balanced approach to planning and development

Priority actions:

- Establish tree canopy cover targets for our urban areas, and introduce planning controls designed to achieve them (*to protect and extend Nillumbik's leafy urban character*)
- Amend the planning scheme to ensure our townships maintain their preferred character as townships of our Green Wedge Shire, differentiating them from other urban towns.

Proposed priority actions to be added to the *Council Plan 2021-2025* (arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft *Council Plan 2021-2025*):

Theme Strategy subheading Strategy dot point *Proposed priority action*

Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.</i>

Place and space	Neighbourhood character	We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	<i>Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council’s responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	

Submission on 2021-2025 draft council plan



Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2021-2025 draft Council Plan.

I enjoyed an idyllic childhood in what is now the Nillumbik Shire. My life revolved around exploring the bush and its wildflowers, birds and other wildlife, mucking about in creeks, and wandering far afield along quiet gravel roads on my pony. The years passed and partner and career choices meant that I had to leave, but I always missed the hills and bush of my childhood home.

Decades later I had cause to visit the area again. I braced myself for the inevitable heartbreak of seeing the beautiful places of my childhood memories gone forever under ugly, deadening suburbia. But as we drove through Pantom Hill and St Andrews I was transported back to my youth. This was still my home and, strangely, I found myself weeping for what wasn't lost after all. Once circumstances allowed, I sold up and moved back. This is one of the best decisions I've ever made.

This is a long-winded way of saying that the Green Wedge has long provided extraordinary protection for this very special area. We are the lucky beneficiaries of the wisdom, foresight and generosity of those who loved this place as we do and who didn't want to be last to enjoy it before it was degraded. We have inherited the privilege of living in the Green Wedge but we have inherited the responsibility too. We cannot be the last to enjoy it before it's degraded either.

We need to give the Green Wedge and its remarkable natural character and biodiversity the best protection we can from the impacts of increasing population with its concomitant suburban sprawl and over-development of roads as well as the impacts of climate change. Therefore, we need to be clear-sightedly focused on effective and practical strategies.

To this end, I recommend the following amendments:

PRESERVATION OF THE GREEN WEDGE within the *Place and Space* theme - **Identity**

Strategy Dot Point

We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance

Proposed Priority Actions for the above strategy dot point.

- *Rewrite the Green Wedge Management Plan*
- *Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire*
- *Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme*
- *Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays*

PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE within the *Place and Space* theme – **Open Spaces**

Strategy Dot Point

We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment, and diverse wildlife

Proposed Priority Actions

- *Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment and native wildlife for the long term.*
- *Develop a Native Wildlife Protection Plan, which recognises the needs of threatened species and how we maintain the health of native wildlife.*
- *Review the Roadside Management Plan, and include roadkill data for all roads in Nillumbik (Council and State roads), plus strategies to reduce the number of wildlife killed and injured on Nillumbik's roads*

- *Re-visit the Green Wedge Management Plan to include greater protection for native wildlife so positive actions are clearer for landowners.*
- *Review the Biodiversity Strategy with the aim of supporting our Shire's conservation aims, particularly for identified threatened species as well as for all native wildlife.*
- *Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.*
- *Manage weeds and invasive species.*
- *Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.*
- *Strengthen the Planning Scheme to help protect our wildlife such as wildlife-friendly fencing, Trust For Nature covenants, etc*

CLIMATE ACTION within the *Sustainable and Resilient* theme

Climate change presents an extremely urgent and serious threat and therefore demands priority status in a new forward-looking Council Plan. Its urgency should be explicitly acknowledged, with the use of terms such as the climate crisis and the climate emergency, and the need for action locally within the context of Nillumbik's at-risk community and its special biodiversity.

The current draft plan leans more towards adaptation rather than mitigation. However, I believe that Nillumbik is in an excellent position to develop a Council Plan which is also committed to strong mitigation strategies, in line with the IPCC report. Given the community's strong support for climate action, plus the potential dire impact on our future, climate action must be prioritised in the Council Plan. It's vital that Council is working towards an environmentally sustainable future, and the link between the health of the environment and the health of the community clearly made in the Plan.

I strongly recommend that **under the strategy sub-heading Climate Action**, this strategy dot point needs to be inserted:

- ***We take decisive action on climate change***

With this proposed priority action: -

- *Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing*

Under the same strategy sub-heading Climate Action, another strategy dot point needs to read:

- *We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation*

With this proposed priority action: -

- *Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.*

I believe that an Action Plan should include the following priority actions: -

- *Actively work towards declaring a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat confronting Nillumbik's natural environment and community.*
- *Set emissions targets for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030 at the latest, with clear interim targets to reach that goal.*
- *Strongly commit to energy efficiency programs, renewable energy programs and upgrades for residential and commercial properties and sporting facilities, towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.*
- *Utilise the Declaration of Climate Emergency and environmental sustainability to aid in the promotion of business and tourism within Nillumbik Shire.*
- *Set up a climate advisory committee comprised of community members, business leaders and climate experts to help advise on climate emergency mobilisation and implementation of climate emergency strategies, with particular reference to how community emissions targets could be met.*
- *Use emergency language in all Council documents, meetings, media releases, Council website, community newsletters and other communications to convey urgency of the climate situation to all of council, the Nillumbik community and higher levels of government.*
- *Facilitate a campaign to build community awareness and engagement on the urgency of the climate crisis.*
- *Develop a plan for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies and projects, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions.*
- *Develop a procurement policy that assesses environmental and social credentials of tender applicants and their services/supplies.*
- *Create a planning policy that mandates Environmentally Sustainable Design in planning applications for new commercial and residential developments.*
- *Drawdown initiatives, that include building in a targeted tree planting program for urban areas and provision of incentives and programs to rural landowners to engage in regenerative agriculture practices and bushland regeneration.*
- *Bushfire management, ensuring that bushfire management policies align with biodiversity maintenance and drawdown initiatives that support a zero-carbon target.*


26th August 2021

**ADJUNGBILLY PTY LTD submission to Council Plan 2021-2024 and
interrelated strategic documents.**

ADJUNGBILLY requests to be heard on this submission by [REDACTED] or nominee.

The company reserves all its rights.

We object to the Council Plan and associated documents unless changes are made to incorporate the following goals, ideas and objectives to the appropriate strategies.

We request an independent panel be appointed by the Minister to hear objections made by acreage landowners that cannot be incorporated (as they are the ones being impacted by the Green Wedge).

Justice and equity to be administered by Council staff and elected representatives particularly where planning anomalies and irregularities are being continually pointed out.

That Council will respect acreage landowners and their ideas especially as their lands and its use are being desired by the community for their benefit.

That Council will collaborate with these landowners/stakeholders and not make mandatory, unfair, unreasonable decisions for these landowners.

That Council will consider individual site specific circumstances on acreage lands on their own merit particularly in cases where major equity issues are at stake e.g. this property (and adjoining property), was family purchased in 1945, and made compulsorily liable for the urban reticulated infrastructure provision in the 1970's (to the entire area of the acreages). It was held a further 45 years in order to fully utilise this asset for the urban development certainty it gave. This was accomplished with 'blood, sweat and tears', as one very large (not fragmented) parcel of land and allowing optimum visionary, unique development designs. Many current and new community aspirations can still be incorporated, including protection of native vegetation where apt and safe either within this large area (40 acres) or within the overall development plan of any other residential area in the metropolitan urban suburb of Diamond Creek.

That Council honours accrued rights/entitlements in their planning decisions. (As is the case with this land and other like land in Ironbark Rd with established urban infrastructure, with no gerrymandering out of any site specific properties).

That Council make decisions with empathy and understanding for these landowners and their circumstances.

Individual Submission to Council Plan 2021-2025 and associated strategic documents.

Part 1

Property stakeholders of this submission and I reserve all our rights.

I wish to be heard on this submission and request an independent panel, appointed by the Minister, to hear objections and suggestions made by acreage landowners that cannot be incorporated.

I object to this draft Council Plan and associated documents unless my goals, ideas and suggestions are accommodated.

Please incorporate these goals and strategies into the Council Plan 2021-2025 and associated Community Vision, Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Financial Plan.

That Nillumbik Council promote a cohesive community and prevents community competition, friction and division.

That there will be equity and fairness in all Council planning decisions, especially to lands that have attached urban infrastructure (urban capacity).

That all property owners be treated equally with respect and dignity. That they have equal access and communication with the CEO, Council Managers and Council officers.

That all landowners/stakeholders have equal access to the Mayor and all Councillors.

That history, identity and sense of place will be maintained, respected and appreciated.

That decisions made by Council will be based on sound evidence and information, in consultation and partnership with materially impacted landowners/stakeholders.

That the new 2020 Council review decisions made by the previous Councils, especially those that have been unfair or inequitable.

Council must also consider new evidence, new information, including interpretation and dispute of same to equitably correct zoning/mapping mistakes, in consultation and partnership with affected landowners/stakeholders, irrespective of any final site specific land use. Green Wedge is not to be used as an excuse to fail to do so. Climate change, open space, conservation or any other new aspiration can still be achieved equitably by designation of such in the overall development plan of any

residential area or within a site specific property itself. This will ensure entitled equal land values together with the most desirable land use options.

That Council recognise utility infrastructure and associated property and development rights/entitlements. Recognition of these will enable mediation and potentially allow equitable transfer of these where desired.

That infrastructure currently in place be used for the area that it was established to serve. This includes water and sewer that was planned in conjunction with it, if not already available or diverted to others instead.

That the outdated 2001 Housing Strategy is updated as a short term priority and also includes new aspirations as influenced by the pandemic.

The 2020 Diamond Creek Activity Centre DCAC Structure plan passed by previous Council be revisited and reviewed following the New Housing Strategy. It divides Diamond Creek, it is a flawed, unbalanced plan and disadvantages those original commercial areas (Chute st, Main st and Collins St) and undeveloped acreages of the suburb north and north West (to its boundary) of the train station. It threatens the vitality and viability of the original suburb and may mean losses and damages are incurred.

That Council recognise the lands north and North West of the train station as an integral part of the suburb and metropolitan Melbourne since the mid 1950's.

That Nillumbik Shire will openly and transparently equitably correct mapping/zoning anomalies or irregularities.

That Council ensure Green Wedge ideals be achieved with integrity.

That the bushfire overlay in Nillumbik be reviewed.

That Council review their policies and strategies that have conflicting objectives e.g. bushfire risk management v's environment conservation and protection, protection of human life must take priority.

That the safety of Nillumbik residents be of paramount concern especially as concerns bushfire risk.

That Council lobby Yarra Valley Water and all others relevant, to include acreage lands and conservation areas in sewerage provision plans (particularly those that have reticulated water). This is because sewerage provision is more important to protect the environment.

Likewise water pressures, flows and capacity must remain in their respective catchments (or returned if already diverted). Relocation of water and pressures puts areas at serious risk of bushfire.

That the leapfrogging of development be considered in terms of the impact this has for the Shire in terms of traffic, transport, bushfire management and land use planning.

That all areas within the Shire be treated equally e.g. DCAC Structure Plan be reviewed AFTER the new Housing Strategy.

Should there be any municipal boundary changes that no family or site specific area is gerrymandered out of their suburb and township boundaries. Particularly if they have expressed their desire to maintain their identity and sense of place/connection with that suburb.

That all Rural land including that in Conservation zones and the Green Wedge zone be reviewed, in partnership with landowners (as per the new community engagement policy) with the purpose of increasing land sustainability e.g. tourism, education facilities.

That Council lobby the State Government for removal of land to the Diamond Creek boundary on the western side of Yan Yean Rd for removal from the Green Wedge. This land was within 25km of the CBD, was an integral part of the original suburbs of Metropolitan Melbourne and not a part of the Green Wedge (within which it has mistakenly been included).

That tourism, accommodation, leisure are not be limited to within township or activity centre boundaries but should be investor or owner driven.

That all community engagement processes include the option of participation via phoning in to zoom sessions instead of only via a computer/smartphone.

That Council adopt the policy of a soft urban edge to mitigate the impacts of developments in Whittlesea.

Please see all confidential evidence examples submitted to previous processes.

Please see also Part 2.

██████████

Impacted properties ██████████ and ██████████ Ironbark Rd Diamond Creek and adjoining ██████████ Pioneer Rd Yarrambat

SUBMISSION 38



Generally, I agree with the suggestions put forward by the Greens coalition. The council plan needs to be linked much more clearly to the community vision, and that vision needs to be spelt out in the document, so that at every point readers can measure whether or not the council has truly listened to the community.

These suggestions are as follows.

Referring to the document as a whole:

The Council Plan 2021-2025 needs to include the concise vision summary statement from the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 to make a clear and explicit link back to it.

All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040, the Council Plan 2021-2025, the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and the Financial Plan 2021-2025. Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation. These may include the Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.

The Council Plan 2021-2025 needs to include priority actions against each strategy that take significant steps towards the Community Vision and each theme's objective, and that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan as per our neighbours Banyule and Yarra Ranges' Draft Council Plans 2021-2025, rather than as part of a later Annual Action Plan devised by Council only (contrary to Council's commitment to community consultation). Furthermore, the resources needed to implement these priority actions should be reflected in the financial plan which is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020.

Proposed priority actions to be added to the *Council Plan 2021-2025* (arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft *Council Plan 2021-2025*):

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>

Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.</i>
Place and space	Neighbourhood character	We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	<i>Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s unique surroundings, natural	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>

		environment and diverse wildlife	
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council’s responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and	<i>Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community.</i>

		community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	
Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>

		work hard to protect and enhance	
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.</i>
Place and space	Neighbourhood character	We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	<i>Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>

		unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council’s responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through	<i>Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community.</i>

		improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	
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Council Plan submission



25/8/21

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Council Plan. I ask that the Council Plan is changed to recognise the climate emergency and associated biodiversity crisis existing today.

The following changes to strategies and measures need to be made in order to ensure Nillumbik's Council Plan does not add to climate change and the hardships and anxieties that come with this. The changes will also ensure that we recognise gross domestic wellbeing rather than dollars and are neutral on development.

	As in draft plan	Recommended addition or change
Place and space		Add strategy: We ensure biodiversity is maintained or improved, that community is able to appreciate the values of the natural environment
	Number of dead animals collected by Council	Good to see this here
	Number of trees planted in streets and parks to maintain tree canopy	Good to see this here, but we need to recognise tree removals and age of trees remaining. To address this – see below box...
		The measure of number of trees planted does not measure environmental health. We need to recognise that it takes 80 years to replace an 80 year old tree (maybe longer than that with climate change) We need to measure the: Change in average age of tree, and aim for this to be increased  To do this, council must measure and record

		the age of trees removed and encourage preservation of old trees.
	Number of Land Management Incentive Program grants provided to the community for control of noxious and environmental weeds	This favours large landholders with agricultural pursuits. To be fair to all community and to encourage greater biodiversity, see the following box :
		The following measure must also be added: Number of Land Management Incentive Program grants provided to the community or improvements of biodiversity and care of biodiversity
Movement and Place	We continue to deliver on our road management responsibilities; working to enhance infrastructure that aligns with the character of the neighbourhood	Change strategy to: We recognise that public transport requirements must be prioritised over road for the benefit of the community and climate
		Add strategy: We have neighbourhood character statements for every town and area of the shire developed in conjunction with extensive community consultation
	Community satisfaction with the appearance and quality of newly constructed developments	This measure will favour more development whether it is wanted or not - the target should be an increase in: community percentage satisfaction with approval of developments - not the appearance of it!
	Percentage of VCAT decisions upholding Council's determined position	The measure will favour council decisions even if against community wishes. The measure should be : percentage of VCAT decisions upholding council decisions or community applications
	Community satisfaction with the design of public spaces	This will favour built place or: "design" is an architectural and landscape term. The measure should be Community satisfaction with appearance, design, biodiversity contribution and and ecosystem services provided by open spaces
	Number of infringements issued following investigation of littering or rubbish dumping	This fails to recognise significant damage to our environment. The measure should be

		Number of infringements issued following investigation of littering or rubbish dumping, or removal of native vegetation
	Community perception of public safety during day and night	This will favour lighting and infrastructure in inappropriate places. The measure should be Community perception of levels of public safety that are appropriate for the site
Sustainability		
	We favour sustainable and innovative investment; focussing on renewable energy initiatives	This will favour development. The strategy should be: We favour low carbon emissions living
	We support sustainable agricultural pursuits and their contribution to Nillumbik and the broader community	There is no need for this addition – if the agriculture is commercial, it is covered under “business”, if it’s a hobby, its covered under “creative industries”
	Gross Regional Product (\$)	We must change from this concept to avoid catastrophic climate change. The measure should be Gross Regional Wellbeing
		There is absolutely no emissions target here – this is staggering!  Add the measure Emissions by Council, industry, residents, visitors, developments, infrastructure projects in the Shire
		Add the measure Percentage of renewable energy used within the shire 
		Add the measure Percentage of renewable energy used by residents within the shire 
Global interest		Add advocacy for immediate and severe reduction in emissions and protection of biodiversity throughout our region.

Submission for Draft Community Vision Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Council Plan 2021-2025

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback into the draft Council Plan 2021-2025, and the draft Community Vision. My comments are fairly general in nature, so can apply to both the Community Vision and the Council Plan.

My particular concern is the environment, especially the climate and the biosphere, which support all life on earth. I know that many people and groups, including NCEAT (Nillumbik Climate Emergency Action team), of which I am a member, have sent detailed submissions on both the draft Vision and the Draft Plan. I wish to fully support their submission, but also to express my own concerns on the desperate situation our planet is in. The IPCC's latest report is a clear warning that unless we act now, we are heading for a terrible future of rising sea levels, catastrophic storms, fires, floods, starvation, and air that is not fit to breathe. If you think the last two points are exaggerated, you should consider the recent drought years. How many crop failures would it take before we see food shortages? And are you aware that the majority of the oxygen that supports life as we know it comes not from trees as many think (though they are important), but from microscopic creatures that live in the oceans. If our oceans become too acidic to support life through absorption of carbon dioxide, how long will it be before we run out of oxygen? It is imperative on many levels that we cut emissions NOW.

Earlier this year, Nillumbik Council conducted a community engagement program titled 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future', which asked us what we believed was most important to the future of the Shire. I understand that there were over 2000 responses, which indicated that, to quote the Council website, "The community ... identified a number of *key short* term priorities, including **action on climate change**, responsible urban housing development, **protection of the green wedge**, reducing waste, greater recycling and community consultation and leadership."

Personally I would put those in a different order, since without a liveable climate, there will be no life on earth, let alone a Green Wedge. I don't know whether the order of these items on the website reflects the priorities of the respondents, but I suspect that there may be some who don't see climate action as a responsibility of local government, and would prioritise rubbish collection and lower rates, but may nevertheless want strong action on the climate. In fact, Local Government is in an ideal position, in close contact with residents, to take strong climate action at a grass

roots level. Rather than following survey data, Councillors should have the courage to take the lead. I believe we need to be on no less than a war footing, and I believe that people will be prepared to take needed action on a personal level if they are educated, and are given strong leadership.

It was disappointing therefore to see that both the draft Vision and the draft Plan place climate action so low in their priorities. The draft Plan makes no reference to declaring a Climate Emergency, nor to setting emissions targets. It makes very little reference to climate change at all, and does not use language that would be appropriate to the severity of the problem, such as climate *crisis*, climate *emergency*, *moral responsibility*, thus failing to convey a sense of urgency about the nature of the crisis.

Furthermore both documents emphasise adaptation rather than mitigation.

- “We acknowledge the pressures on liveability that in the future will likely challenge the way we live. We want to strengthen Nillumbik’s ability to manage and adapt to changing circumstances, to ensure the Shire and our community remain sustainable and resilient.” Of course we will need to be prepared to deal with the results of our inaction, if indeed that is possible (last summer’s fires give some idea of the scale of what we are facing), but it is **more important to take action to minimise the changes that are on their way, so that less adaptation is needed.**
- “We facilitate education and action on climate change” – sounds good, but lacking in details, and coming in at no. 4 on the list, when it should be at the top.
- It has been drawn to my attention that in the Councils finances there are no funds whatsoever allocated to climate action. This is a disgraceful oversight and needs serious attention. Funding and resources must be allocated to this vital task.

I call upon our new Council to address this emergency by placing climate action at the very centre of every decision they make, and every action they take, until we become a climate neutral shire that cares for the welfare and health of all life forms that live here, by providing a liveable climate, and a green, biodiverse land.

We thank Council for its efforts in the preparation of the draft Council Plan 2021-2025.

However, the current draft Plan gives insufficient attention to the 3 top priorities identified as the most important to the community, in its feedback to the Council's survey 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future': -

- Preservation of the Green Wedge
- Protection of environment and biodiversity
- Action on climate

To provide adequate focus on these issues, we request that the following suggestions be incorporated into the Plan.

General Comments

- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to make an explicit link back to the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040* by inclusion of the concise vision summary statement such as: -
In 2040 Nillumbik is a world leader in
 - ***biodiversity protection and reinvigoration***
 - ***community stewardship of the environment;***
 - ***climate change mitigation and adaptation;***
 - ***sustainable urban design and living;***
 - ***community inclusiveness, equity and connection;***
 - ***community participation in the arts and celebration of its cultural heritage;***
 - ***economic systems that are responsive to, and protective of, the environment, in keeping with the Community's statements of priority.***
- All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040*, the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* and the *Financial Plan 2021-2025*.
 - Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation, including the
 - The Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review)
 - Climate Action Plan.
 - Biodiversity Strategy;
 - Bushfire Mitigation Strategy;
 - Open Space Strategy;
 - Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy;
 - Integrated Water Management Plan;
 - Recreation and Leisure Strategy;
 - Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy;
 - Advocacy Plan;
- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to include **priority actions** against each strategy that: -
 - take significant steps towards the *Community Vision* and each theme's objective

- have been identified so that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan (as in Banyule and Yarra Ranges' Draft Council Plans - rather than as part of a later *Annual Action Plan* devised by Council only, which would be contrary to Council's commitment to community consultation).
- Have the resources needed to implement these priority actions allocated in the financial plans as required by the Local Government Act 2020.

Refer to Attachment 1 for the priority actions that should, as a minimum, be included to cover Environmental/Planning issues.

Other priority actions, relating to the other aspects of the Plan, should be developed and included to supplement these.

Good Health



Attachment 1 - Sheet 1 of 2

Proposed priority actions to be added to the *Council Plan 2021-2025*(arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft *Council Plan 2021-2025*):

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne’s Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review); Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas,	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>

		which we work hard to protect and enhance	
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.</i>

Attachment 1 - Sheet 2 of 2

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Place and space	Neighbourhood character	We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	<i>Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council’s responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	<i>Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community. (With allocation of sufficient Council resources for follow-up monitoring procedures to ensure <u>effective compliance</u>).</i>

SUBMISSION 42

Submission on draft Community Vision and draft Council Plan

26th August, 2021

Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 (draft):

In 1994 the Local Government Review Board established our shire's boundaries so that Nillumbik would be: **“the conservation council with the Green Wedge as its strategic focus”** (LGRB report) In other words, the need to conserve the green wedge environment was the reason Nillumbik was established. Since then, council surveys regularly showed our community strongly backed this idea. The Board's statement should be a key part of the introduction to the Community Vision document. Conservation is central to Nillumbik's role in Melbourne.

Message from Council (page 4) –

The first dot point doesn't go far enough. The Green Wedge is where the bulk of Nillumbik's natural environment and biodiversity is. The community prioritised both Green Wedge protection as well as biodiversity etc, so biodiversity should be included in dot point 1 consistent with, “Top three things valued in Nillumbik”(Our People, Our Place, Our Future, Key Findings)

Sixth dot point (transport): It should be noted that transport infrastructure in rural areas has the potential to urbanise and change the character of the Green Wedge unless its scale is appropriate.

Developing a community vision for Nillumbik (page 5) –

The 'Word Cloud' (page 5) is an inadequate way to summarise the results of the community engagement and doesn't convey what the community values in any priority order.

If the 'Top 3 things valued in Nillumbik' are given as: 1 Preservation of the Green Wedge. 2 Protection of environment and biodiversity. 3 Action on climate change; - why are these absent from this section leaving it vague and without a focus?

It's vital that the community's priorities should be explicitly stated because, together with Nillumbik's regional conservation role, these green wedge values must inspire the main vision statement and should also determine the organising themes.

Our themes (page 7) –

The 'Our Place' theme should've been divided into: 'Our natural environment' and 'Our built environment', because the Green Wedge natural environment is too significant and distinctive to be lumped together with urban facilities such as sports fields, activity centres, public transport etc. It has nothing in common with these things except as a highly abstract concept. 'Our Place' is not a useful organising category for a municipality with an extensive Green Wedge.

As a theme, 'Our Place' is far too broad and generalised, resulting in 91% of our shire with its endangered biodiversity and natural resources being under-represented and diminished in significance - it's not in tune with the community's priorities, 'Top 3 things valued in Nillumbik', or the significance of our Green Wedge and its regional value including its value for Melbourne, as partly described on page 16.

Aspirations (page 9-15) -

The community's aspirations for 2040 should be ambitious and written in the present tense, with intention and achievement, as well as aspiration. Example:

"In 2040 Nillumbik is a place where....."

"In 2040 Nillumbik is a world leader in...."

Our Council (page 15) –

The following needs to be added:

"In 2040, Nillumbik Council is an organisation:

That continues to show leadership in the reversal of biodiversity decline.

Where knowledge about Nillumbik's biodiversity is common throughout Council management and staff.

That continues to apply regulatory planning provisions for biodiversity enhancement.

That continues to exceed its Climate Active carbon neutral certification

That continues to lead in the promotion of active transport (eg walking and cycling), community connectivity, public transport, and clever road design

That consistently fosters equality, diversity, compassion and non-violence.

Nillumbik Community profile (page 16) –

The fourth paragraph summarises why Nillumbik's Green Wedge is highly valued, including for its biodiversity and natural beauty. This section should include important details about the shire's flora and fauna. The State of the Environment report 2014 can be used to include details about remnant native vegetation and the number and significance of indigenous flora and fauna species.

Nillumbik now and into the future (page 17) –

For Nillumbik to honour its origins as a conservation Council with the Green Wedge as its strategic focus, this section must also include information about Nillumbik's natural resources.

For example:

- Current annual loss of vegetation; and projected reversal of decline if appropriate policies are developed and applied
- Current prevalence of wildlife through diverse areas of the Shire; and projections of healthier and more widespread populations if actions are taken to improve connectivity and extent of native vegetation
- Current impacts of roadkill on wildlife; and likely outcomes if innovative steps are taken to reduce impacts
- Current health of soils, creeks, rivers, billabongs, and ephemeral waterways; and projections of their greater vitality and flow-on effects on biodiversity if appropriate policies are developed and applied.

.....
.....

Council Plan 2021 – 2025 (draft):

, 26th August

What we have heard (page 7) –

This section is the first opportunity for the Plan to, 'align with the community vision' (see page 9) yet the three dot points under, 'what we have heard', fall short.

This section fails to reflect the community's emphasis on protecting natural resources as reported in, 'Three top things valued in Nillumbik', Key Findings'. As it stands, the paragraph reporting on the community engagement has no priorities, with biodiversity not even mentioned!

The community clearly prioritised: preservation of the Green Wedge; protection of environment and biodiversity and action on climate change, and that should be reported here so there is alignment with the Vision.

The topics covered in the first and third dot points (council services and fiscal responsibility) were not community priorities from the Key Findings report so why does council services deserve top ranking at dot point No.1? The first dot point should emphasize the 'Three top things valued in Nillumbik' as above.

Structure of the plan and alignment to the community vision (page 9) –

The “Our Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040” diagram with aspirations (page 9) seriously underplays the “Key findings” summary particularly the ‘Top 3 things valued in Nillumbik’.

Protection of environment and biodiversity are highly ranked by the community yet are either not prominent or are only vaguely referred to in the diagram under ‘Our Place’.

Then the diagram underneath i.e. representing the community’s priorities for the four year draft council plan (Place and Space, Objective) omits all reference to biodiversity and the Green Wedge.

The community’s priorities regarding ‘Our Place’ have only been transferred into the Place and Space objective very minimally. The top two things valued in Nillumbik are reduced to: ‘and respect the environment’ (diagram, Place and Space, page 9) This seriously diminishes, both the community’s priorities as well as the significance of the Green Wedge (91% of the shire) and its irreplaceable biodiversity.

Place and Space (page 15) –

As commented on above (Community Vision) ‘Place and Space’ is a category which effectively minimises and diminishes the significance of Nillumbik’s extensive natural environment. There should have been two separate Themes: ‘Natural environment’, and ‘Built environment’. As a comparison, the Yarra Ranges Shire’s council plan themes should be examined.

Under the ‘Place and Space’ objective (page 15) the only element which could apply to the Green Wedge is: ‘and respect the environment’, which is disappointingly basic.

Then there are the Strategies under this theme:

Under “Identity” (page 15)

“We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance”

Why isn’t the Green Wedge referred to here?

The following should be added: “Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term; Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme; Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire; Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire; Manage weeds and invasive species;

Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan; Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire; Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan”.

Strategic Indicators:

There is no performance measure or reporting mechanism (strategic indicator) identified for this strategy (page 16) There is an annual State of the Environment report which should be used for this purpose.

There's a problem with having the 2019 Green Wedge Management Plan in the list of 'Supporting strategies, policies and plans'(page 17) because the plan did not reflect the consensus of the advisory community panel, the process was marred by poor governance and it attracted overwhelming community opposition. It undermined environmental protections which was the intention of the council majority of the day. It needs to be reviewed.

Supporting strategies, policies and plans

All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040*, the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* and the *Financial Plan 2021-2025*. Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation.

.....
.....

I wish to make some comments on the draft Council Plan 2021-2025.

- As with the Council's draft Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 I am pleased that Council is opening the document up to citizen comment. I am also very pleased to see the Easy English version, which makes the consultation more genuinely inclusive.

However...

- This document should be explicitly linked with the vision 2040 document. Which will be easier if that document were more purposefully articulated. And that leads me to...
- As with the vision document, this plan includes **so many worthy 'supporting strategies, policies and plans', all given equal weight** (when they are words of very different scope) that it is very hard to see which way Council might actually jump. It looks as though it's hoped that adding together a number of ad hoc ideas will result in something coherent.
- I've said in my other submission that given the world we now live in, and the recent IPCC report ('Code Red for Humanity'), **we need a starkly clear statement of priorities, with climate change front and centre – indeed we should declare a climate emergency.**
- I'm happy to see that 'We take decisive action on climate change' is number one item under Place and space; but it's so vague! In a four-year plan surely there should be something more specific than the next statement 'We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation.' What about a target? Net zero by when? Work not just on Council emissions but household emissions? **Where are the statements about the Council solar farm that we heard about a little while back, encouragement of solar energy for households and businesses and/or microgrids, policies on EVs, campaigns for energy efficiency and such like?**
- Further on this: the climate section on the Council website mentions some admirable notions, following the example of the Cities Power Partnership, but they are not widely publicised so I am not sure whether they have been put into practice. An instance of greenwashing?
- Similarly, if the Shire is most notable as the Green Wedge shire par excellence (and sadly, other Green Wedges are being whittled away), preservation and regeneration of the natural environment should be a very high priority too. At the moment it is merely one of 13 items listed.

- Also under Place and space, you have 'Supporting strategies, plans and policies • Climate Action Plan • Economic Development Strategy • Integrated Water Management Plan • Pandemic Recovery Plan.' It isn't self-evident that these will all lead in the same direction. What if the economic development strategy runs counter to the climate action plan, for instance?
- As another instance of how all policies and plans are apparently given the same weighting, the strategic indicators for Place and Space list **Number of participants in environmental programs and events** and **Percentage of kerbside waste collections diverted from landfill but nothing that looks really serious about climate and biodiversity and Green Wedge values.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this document.



SUBMISSION 44



While the draft Council Plan is an improvement on the previous Plan in its focus on the environment and sustainability, the following overall issues are of concern:

- It makes very little reference to climate change, and does not use language appropriate to the severity of the problem (e.g. climate crisis, climate emergency, moral responsibility to future generations and the biodiversity of Nillumbik).
- It makes no reference at all to a Declaration of Climate Emergency.
- It makes no mention of setting carbon emissions targets.
- The general focus of the document strongly favours an adaptation response to the climate emergency rather than mitigation, i.e. prepare for and mop up after the fact, rather than try to stop it happening in the first place. (which is just not appropriate given the severity of what is predicted)
- It fails to convey a sense of urgency about the nature of the crisis.
- It fails to convey a strong commitment to climate action, e.g. lack of clear climate action priorities, and ways to achieve them.
- It uses general aspirational terms such as 'seek to' and 'favour' rather than strong goals.
- When forming policy on the climate emergency, the purpose of a document such as the Council Plan is to provide leadership to the community, in line with the most recent IPCC report (which provides guidelines for policy makers for all levels of government). The current draft document fails to demonstrate such leadership on the climate crisis; instead, it simply reflects community opinion.
- Concern with overall lack of weighting given to climate issues. For example, under the theme Sustainable and Resilient, which you would assume to be focused on climate and the environment, there is a section entitled Business and Tourism, which contains four dot points, while the section entitled Climate Action contains only two. Furthermore, the section 'Business and Tourism' does not seem to fit the description of Sustainable and Resilient, as three of the four dot points in this section make no mention of sustainability at all. The last four

strategic indicators also relate to business or employment indicators with no connection to sustainability or resilience.

- Strategic indicators related to climate action are scant.

Listed below are some points that I believe should be included in the Council Plan. They outline the type of goals, objectives, strategies and strategic indicators that NCEAT would like

to see embedded within the Council Plan to convey a strong sense of urgency and commitment to address the issue of the climate crisis.

Council Plan - points to include:

- Use the term 'goal' rather than themes. The term goal sets a target to reach an outcome, as opposed to a general description.

Sustainable and resilient

- In place of the theme Sustainable and Resilient, substitute the goal of an Environmentally Sustainable Future. This goal must be the number one priority of the Council Plan. Placing this goal first communicates a recognition that the health of the natural environment is absolutely crucial to a community's health and wellbeing, with climate change described by the World Health Organisation as the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. All Council policies and actions need to be implemented with this primary goal in mind.

-The objective for this goal would become 'to preserve the health of the environment and the community by working towards a carbon neutral and biodiverse municipality'. The link between the health of the environment and the health of the community, as well as the risks to both if not enough is done, needs to be clearly spelt out here. For references, see the latest IPCC report, Climate Council Report, World Health Organisation list of 13 greatest threats to global health.

- Strategies and/or strategic indicators that follow on from this would be:

o Actively work towards declaring a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat confronting Nillumbik's natural environment and community.

o Set emissions targets for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030 at the latest, with clear interim targets to reach that goal.

o Strongly commit to energy efficiency programs, renewable energy

programs and upgrades for residential and commercial properties and sporting facilities, towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.

- o Utilise the Declaration of Climate Emergency and environmental sustainability to aid in the promotion of business and tourism within Nillumbik Shire.

- o Set up a climate advisory committee comprised of community members, business leaders and climate experts to help advise on climate emergency mobilisation and implementation of climate emergency strategies, with particular reference to how community emissions targets could be met.

SUBMISSION 45

"Submission on the draft Council Plan 2021- 2025 by [REDACTED]
Executive Summary

The draft Council Plan is an unwieldy and formidable document to use as a tool to assist councillors and council staff meet to community expectations as it describes goals in arbitrary and ambiguous terms and does not align with the community priorities defined in the Council Vision. Recommendations are made in this submission to address these deficiencies.

Alignment with community priorities

Under the Local Government Act 2020, the Council Plan must align with a community vision, which is an aspirational description of what a community values and wants for the future.

This statement of key community priorities is extracted verbatim from the draft Council Plan:

The Our People Our Place Our Future community engagement, where we heard from more than 2,000 community members, has helped shape this plan. The community has identified a number of key short term priorities, including action on climate change, responsible urban housing development, protection of the green wedge, reducing waste, greater recycling and community consultation and leadership.

The following declaration of 'What we will do' follows immediately:

What we will do...

As the Council Plan is a summary of our priorities, it will be used by Councillors and Council staff to guide our work, decisions and efforts.

In order for this Council to play an effective role both now and into the future, we will:

- Focus on delivering Council services in line with transparent service level standards
- Deepen our understanding of Nillumbik's communities, listening and engaging in different ways to reflect community diversity
- Have the courage to embrace future challenges to take informed risks and embrace better ways of working
- Empower Council and our communities to make decisions through greater access to information
- Promote local networks, businesses, goods and services to enhance economic sustainability

- Promote local and regional partnerships that address local issues at a local, state and federal level.

Unfortunately, the community priorities statement and the declaration do not align. The Council Plan firstly nominates the key short term priorities identified by the community, reaffirms that the Council Plan is a summary of these priorities, then outlines unrelated action in generic, unmeasurable terms.

The Local Government Act 2020 also, "promotes an integrated approach to strategic planning and reporting to ensure a strong alignment between the Community Vision, Council Plan 2021-2025 and other Council documents that direct and influence initiatives, activities and projects undertaken by Council'.

The dot points above need to reflect the community's key priorities expectations to credibly meet the requirements in the Local Government Act.

Recommendation: The declaration, 'What we will do...' needs to be rewritten in meaningful terms to indicate how and what councillors and the council will do to align with the key priorities of the Council Vision to meet the community's expectations.

Strategic Indicators

There are 55 Strategic Indicators in this draft document that measure the performance of the councillors and council in meeting community key priorities. A significant number (18) of these performance indicators are based on an Annual Community Survey.

Results from Community Surveys are often skewed and fickle as they depend on the prevailing mood of the respondents. Opinions are subjective and are often influenced by other factors such as political persuasion, apathy, disinterest, mistrust of authority figures, etc,

Performance assessment needs to be evidence-based using facts and figures, deadlines, dates, etc not based on vague, unspecified targets and subjective opinions.

An upward arrow symbol is used in the Strategic Indicators to indicate an increase in a parameter is the desired outcome and similarly a downward facing arrow is used to indicate a decrease is desired. This system is vague and open to interpretation. A minor increase or decrease can be construed to have met the target.

Using this notation, if there is a one per cent increase in a particular target, that is technically an increase and the strategic indicator can be deemed to be met. This system is open to interpretation, unacceptable and unprofessional. It is unfair to the

community and for council and councillors to meet and be judged by such unrealistic standards.

The strategic indicators short change the community and set up the council and councillors to fail and a fairer approach needs to be taken.

Recommendation

Strategic Indicators need to be firmed up and targets expressed in clearer and more discrete terms. Targets need to meet the SMART test, that is, be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. An example of a target that meets the SMART test could be, ' the council will declare a climate emergency in the November sitting; another example, ' council will introduce a program to control invasive species on private and council land before end FY 22/22'.

Green Wedge

The first priority of the Government's 'Plan Melbourne 2017-2050' for the Green Wedge is to 'Maintain and enhance the diversity of indigenous flora and fauna habitats and species and achieve a net gain in the quantity and quality of native vegetation'

The draft Council Plan neglects to mention gains in the quantity and quality of native vegetation and how it will enhance the diversity of indigenous flora and fauna habitats and species.

A Green Wedge protection culture in Nillumbik Council is essential to meet community expectations as protection of the Green Wedge and responsible urban housing development and have been identified as high priority in the Council Vision.

However, unprecedented staff turnover over the 4 year term of the previous council seriously depleted the environment expertise and undermined the green wedge protection culture.

The Green Wedge Management Plan needs to be reviewed after the damage caused to it by the fiasco initiated by the previous pro-development councillors who squandered \$500,000 of ratepayers' money to produce the cumbersome and unworkable document we have today.

Recommendation: To review the Green Wedge Management Plan into a document that is fit for purpose and restore a Green Wedge prioritisation culture by training of council staff and recruitment of senior strategic planners and experienced officers with sound environmental credentials."



Nillumbik Climate Emergency Action Team

Nillumbik Climate Emergency Action team (NCEAT) is a group of local community members dedicated to the aim of lobbying Nillumbik Shire Council to declare a Climate Emergency. We recognise that we need to take emergency action to secure a future for our planet, and we advocate for strong action at the local government level to help deal with this emergency. We have facilitated and engaged in a number of community events, including a climate forum, *The Climate Emergency & Nillumbik Shire: What's the Story*, presentations to Council on the need to declare a Climate Emergency, and participation in St Margaret's Church *Climate in Crisis* series.

Submission for the Draft Nillumbik Council Plan 2021-2025

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback into the draft Council Plan 2021-2025. The Council is to be commended for its attempt to meet the broad and diverse needs of the community in this wide-ranging document, under the four themes of Community and Connection, Place and Space, Sustainable and Resilient, and Responsible and Accountable.

Issues with the draft Council Plan:

Overall Issues.

While the draft Council Plan is a definite improvement on the previous Council Plan in its focus on the climate, the environment and sustainability, the following overall issues are of concern:

- The draft Council Plan makes no reference at all to a **Declaration of Climate Emergency**. Councils and the Community in the Climate Emergency ([CACE](#)) states that the rationale for getting local councils to declare a Climate Emergency is twofold: 1. To create a campaigning beachhead from which to get the nation and the world to declare a climate emergency (that would drive the necessary action to solve the problem at emergency speed); and 2. To help build a broadly-based societal commitment to the necessity for *emergency climate goals* and commensurate follow-on action. In the light of the recent [IPCC Sixth Assessment Report](#) on climate, it is clear from the expert evidence cited there that emergency action is required. One of the key messages from this report states: *The most important climate science update for almost a decade shows there is a narrow path to avoiding climate*

catastrophe, but only through immediate, deep and sustained emissions reductions. This may be our final warning. The window to act is closing.

- It makes no mention of setting carbon emissions targets.
- It makes very little reference to climate change, and does not use language appropriate to the severity of the problem (e.g. climate crisis, climate emergency, moral responsibility to future generations and the biodiversity of Nillumbik).
- The general focus of the document strongly favours an adaptation response to the climate emergency rather than mitigation, i.e. prepare for and mop up after the fact, rather than try to stop it happening in the first place.
- It fails to convey a sense of urgency about the nature of the crisis.
- It fails to convey a strong commitment to climate action, e.g. lack of clear climate action priorities, and ways to achieve them.
- It uses general aspirational terms such as 'seek to' and 'favour' rather than strong goals.
- The Council survey, *Our People, Our Place, Our Future* identified three main priorities of the community. They were: 1. Preservation of the Green Wedge; 2. Protection of environment and biodiversity; 3. Action on climate change. In the *Taking Action on Climate Change* survey, 90% of residents expressed concern about climate change, and 82% of online respondents thought Council should consider climate change in its decisions. When forming policy on the climate emergency, the purpose of a document such as the Council Plan is to provide leadership to the community, in line with the [IPCC Sixth Assessment Report](#) (which provides guidelines for policy makers for all levels of government). The current draft document fails to demonstrate such leadership on the climate crisis; leadership that is sought and desired by the Nillumbik community.
- Concern with overall lack of weighting given to climate issues. For example, under the theme *Sustainable and Resilient*, which you would assume to be focussed on climate and the environment, there is a section entitled Business and Tourism, which contains four dot points, while the section entitled Climate Action contains only two. Furthermore, the section 'Business and Tourism' does not seem to fit the description of *Sustainable and Resilient*, as three of the four dot points in this section make no mention of sustainability at all. The last four strategic indicators also relate to business or employment indicators with no connection to sustainability or resilience.
- Strategic indicators related to the measurement of climate action are scanty.
- We would prefer to use the term 'goal' rather than themes. The term goal sets a target to reach an outcome, as opposed to a general description.

Listed below are some points that we recommend be included in the Council Plan. They outline the type of goals, objectives, strategies and strategic indicators that NCEAT would like to see embedded within the Council Plan to convey a strong sense

of urgency and commitment to address the issue of the climate crisis. Suggested actions to be included for each strategy are marked with an open bullet, and strategic indicators are marked with a dash. These actions and strategic indicators are summarised in a table as an appendix to this submission (last two columns in italics).

Sustainable and resilient

- In place of the theme *Sustainable and Resilient*, substitute the goal of an ***Environmentally Sustainable Future***, in line with the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#), a set of goals that all individuals and organisations should follow in order to fulfil international and humanitarian obligations. The climate related goals that should be adhered to in Nillumbik's instance include:

Goal 7 - Affordable and clean energy: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Goal 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

Goal 11 - Sustainable cities and communities: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, resilient and sustainable

Goal 15 – Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

And most importantly:

Goal 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

We consider that the goal of an Environmentally Sustainable Future must be the **number one priority** of the Council Plan. This goal in turn reflects a Community Vision that asserts strong action on climate change as an overarching principle. Placing the goal of an Environmentally Sustainable Future first in the Council Plan communicates a recognition that the health of the natural environment is absolutely crucial to a community's health and wellbeing, with climate change described by the World Health Organisation as the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. The Council's draft [Health and Wellbeing Plan](#) also states that '*Councils are ideally positioned to take action to help mitigate and adapt to climate change and its impacts on health at the local level, and to contribute to state and national actions.*' The latest [IPCC report](#) reinforces the need to take urgent action to mitigate the threat of climate catastrophe. This connection between climate, the health of the environment, and the mental and physical health of the community needs to be reflected in the priorities

of the Council Plan. All Council policies and actions must be implemented with the primary goal of an Environmentally Sustainable Future in mind, with provision of financial resources allocated for this purpose in the Financial Plan.

- The objective for this goal would become ‘to preserve the health of the environment and the community by working towards a carbon neutral and biodiverse municipality’.
- Actions and strategic indicators that follow on from this would be:

Climate Action

- Actively work towards declaring a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat confronting Nillumbik’s natural environment and the community.
- Use emergency language in all Council documents, meetings, media releases, Council website, community newsletters and other communications to convey urgency of the climate situation to all of council, the Nillumbik community and higher levels of government.
- Set an overall emissions target for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030 at the latest, with separate targets of zero emissions for Council operations by 2025, and zero community emissions by 2030. (In Victoria at present, [20 local government jurisdictions](#) have set carbon reduction targets that equal or exceed these targets.) Set clear interim targets to reach these goals.
- Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they align with the above strategy for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030.
- Establish a baseline of carbon emissions across all sectors of the Shire to measure Council, residential, commercial and transport emissions.
 - Strategic Indicator: reduction in Council emissions
 - Strategic Indicator: reduction in community emissions
- Develop a *carbon neutrality plan* (as part of the more comprehensive Climate Action Plan) to create initiatives and set priorities for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030
- Set up a climate advisory committee comprised of First Nations custodians, climate scientists and other experts, environmental legal advisors, business leaders and other community members to develop clear and effective initiatives on climate emergency mobilisation, advocacy, risk analyses and implementation of climate emergency strategies, with particular reference to how community emissions targets could be met.
- Facilitate a campaign to build community awareness and engagement on the urgency of the climate crisis.
 - Strategic Indicator: number of climate crisis events held
 - Strategic Indicator: number of participants in climate programs and events

- Strategic Indicator: community satisfaction with Council meeting its responsibilities towards climate action

Sustainability

- Develop a waste management program that focuses on reduction of GHG emissions such as methane, and utilises the principles of a circular economy.
- Encourage the development of innovative food techniques which increase resilience to climate change, embrace regenerative agriculture principles, and protect and enhance biodiversity.
- Strongly commit to energy efficiency programs, renewable energy programs and upgrades for all Council operations, and for residential and commercial properties and sporting facilities, towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.
 - Strategic Indicator: Uptake of [Environmental Upgrade Finance](#) program, which offers loans to households and small businesses, to be repaid through the local council rates system.
 - Strategic Indicator: Increased uptake of Solar Savers program and other renewable energy and energy efficiency programs.
 - Strategic Indicator: Number of participants in energy conservation programs such as the Cool Shade program.
 - Strategic Indicator: Increased replacement of gas appliances with electric.
 - Strategic Indicator: Positive response to awareness campaign for use of existing split-system air conditioners for space heating in lieu of gas heating.
- Investigate the possibility of establishing a community solar farm.
- Develop a policy for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies and projects, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions.
 - Strategic Indicator: increased divestment from financial institutions which support and fund fossil fuel industries.
- Develop a procurement policy that assesses environmental and social credentials of tender applicants and their services/supplies, and publish the environmental credentials of successful applicants.
- Create a planning policy that mandates Environmentally Sustainable Design in planning applications for new commercial and residential developments, with new developments built to an 8 star rating or more.
 - Strategic Indicator: all new buildings built to an energy efficient rating of 8 stars, including a prohibition on new gas connections.

Business and Tourism

- Utilise the Declaration of Climate Emergency and environmental sustainability to aid in the promotion of business and tourism within Nillumbik Shire, while maintaining the integrity of the Green Wedge.
 - Strategic Indicator: increased uptake of ecotourism enterprises
 - Strategic Indicator: increased uptake of environmentally sustainable businesses in Nillumbik
 - Strategic Indicator: increase in number of jobs in the shire related to mitigation of climate crisis i.e. in renewable energy, waste and recycling initiatives.
- Provide incentives and programs to agricultural food producers to engage in regenerative agriculture practices and practices which protect biodiversity.
 - Strategic indicator: Increase in number of Land Management Incentive Program grants provided to the rural landowners for adoption of regenerative/holistic farming practices which encourage biodiversity.
 - Strategic Indicator: Increase in number of council programs focussing on regenerative or holistic agriculture

Place and Space.

- Objective - *To plan, design and maintain places and spaces that strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility, encourage social connection and respect the environment.* We would like to see the phrase '*respect the environment*' replaced with the phrase, ***maintain and enhance the biodiversity values of the Green Wedge.***

- Strategies

Open spaces.

Amend first strategy dot point to; *We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity, **biodiversity values and carbon storage potential** of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife.* Virginia Young from the *Australian Rainforest Conservation Society* points to the role of biodiversity in maintaining the integrity of carbon storage ecosystems, and the need to maintain this ecosystem integrity in order to build the resilience required to tackle action on climate change in an integrated fashion *Australian Forest Network Summit, 26 July 2021.*

Add the following priority actions and strategic indicators:

- Build in a targeted tree planting program for urban areas.
 - Strategic Indicator: increased number of trees planted.

- Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme to preserve and protect existing bushland and wildlife.
 - Strategic Indicator: Increase in the health, diversity and area of native bushland maintained and preserved.
- Provide incentives and programs to rural landowners to engage in bushland regeneration, e.g. Shire of Yarra Ranges' [Ribbons of Green](#) program.
 - Strategic Indicator: increased participation in Ribbons of Green program or similar.
- Develop a program focused on connecting paths and trails across the municipality to remove barriers to active transport.
 - Strategic Indicator: increase in number of people using active transport (e.g. walking and cycling)

Movement and Place

Add the following priority actions and strategic indicators:

- Partner with state transport authorities to improve efficiency of the public transport network within the shire. Develop a coordinated service to connect buses and trains.
 - Strategic Indicator: increase in number of people using public transport.
- Transition to electric buses, and increase number of mini-buses.

Responsible and Accountable

Risk Management. Add to this section the strategy dot point and action –

- Actively work to mitigate the risk to people, property and the environment caused by catastrophic weather events due to the climate emergency by setting strong emissions targets, with clear steps to reach these.
 - Ensure that the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy aligns with biodiversity maintenance and drawdown initiatives that support a zero carbon target.

Nillumbik Climate Emergency Action Team

Appendix: Summary of Suggested Actions and Strategic Indicators for NCEAT Submission to Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

Note: The goal 'An Environmentally Sustainable Future' has been placed at the top of this table, as this indicates it must be a priority goal for Council, and needs to inform all areas of Council policy, planning and action. The first four columns conform to the structure of the draft Council Plan (with suggested alterations highlighted in red). The remaining two columns (in italics) are suggested additions to the draft Council Plan by NCEAT.

Theme/Goal	Objective	Strategy	Strategy Dot Point	Suggested Action	Strategic Indicator
Sustainable and resilient (Substitute the goal: <i>An Environmentally Sustainable Future</i>)	<i>To preserve the health of the environment and the community by working towards a carbon neutral and biodiverse municipality</i>	Climate Action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Actively work towards declaring a Climate Emergency, in recognition of the seriousness of the threat confronting Nillumbik's natural environment and the community.</i>	- <i>Declare a Climate Emergency</i>
		Climate Action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Use language appropriate to the severity of the problem (e.g. climate crisis, climate emergency, moral responsibility to future generations and the biodiversity of Nillumbik) in all Council communications.</i>	
		Climate Action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Set an overall emissions target for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030 at the latest, with separate targets of zero emissions for Council operations by 2025, and zero community emissions by 2030. Set clear interim targets to reach these goals.</i>	
		Climate Action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they align with the above strategy for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030.</i>	
		Climate Action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Establish a baseline of carbon emissions across all sectors of the Shire to measure Council, residential, commercial and transport emissions.</i>	- <i>Reduction in Council emissions</i> - <i>Reduction in community emissions</i>
		Climate Action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Develop a carbon neutrality plan (as part of the more comprehensive Climate Action Plan) to create initiatives and set priorities for a carbon neutral municipality by 2030.</i>	
		Climate Action	We work with our community, <i>First Nations custodians</i> , partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change mitigation and adaptation	<i>Set up a climate advisory committee comprised of First Nations custodians, climate scientists and other experts, environmental legal advisors, business leaders and other community members to develop clear and effective initiatives on climate emergency mobilisation, advocacy, risk analyses and implementation of climate emergency strategies, with particular reference to how community emissions targets could be met.</i>	
		Climate Action	We work with our community, <i>First Nations custodians</i> , partners and all levels of government to	<i>Facilitate a campaign to build community awareness and engagement on the urgency of the climate crisis.</i>	- <i>Number of climate crisis events held</i> - <i>Number of participants in climate programs and events</i> - <i>Community satisfaction with Council meeting its responsibilities towards climate action</i>

			develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change mitigation and adaptation		
		Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Develop a waste management program that focusses on reduction of GHG emissions such as methane, and utilises the principles of a circular economy.</i>	
		Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Encourage the development of innovative food techniques which increase resilience to climate change, embrace regenerative agriculture principles, and protect and enhance biodiversity.</i>	
		Sustainability	We favour sustainable and innovative investment; focussing on renewable energy initiatives	<i>Strongly commit to energy efficiency programs, renewable energy programs and upgrades for all Council operations, and for residential and commercial properties and sporting facilities, towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uptake of Environmental Upgrade Finance program, which offers loans to households and small businesses, to be repaid through the local council rates system. - Increased uptake of Solar Savers program and other renewable energy and energy efficiency programs. - Number of participants in energy conservation programs such as the Cool Shade program. - Increased replacement of gas appliances with electric. - Positive response to awareness campaign for use of existing split-system air conditioners for space heating in lieu of gas heating.
		Sustainability	We favour sustainable and innovative investment; focussing on renewable energy initiatives	<i>Investigate the possibility of establishing a community solar farm</i>	
		Sustainability	We favour sustainable and innovative investment; focussing on renewable energy initiatives	<i>Develop a policy for Council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies and projects, and to invest in and bank with environmentally and socially ethical financial institutions.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased divestment from financial institutions which support and fund fossil fuel industries.
			We favour sustainable and innovative investment; focussing on renewable energy initiatives	<i>Develop a procurement policy that assesses environmental and social credentials of tender applicants and their services/supplies, and publish the environmental credentials of successful applicants.</i>	
		Sustainability	We seek to embed sustainability initiatives in the planning scheme	<i>Create a planning policy that mandates Environmentally Sustainable Design in planning applications for new commercial and residential developments, with new developments built to an 8 star rating or more</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All new buildings built to an energy efficient rating of 8 stars, including a prohibition on new gas connections.

		Business and Tourism	We support businesses, industries and events, and encourage investment within Nillumbik	<i>Utilise the Declaration of Climate Emergency and environmental sustainability to aid in the promotion of business and tourism within Nillumbik Shire, while maintaining the integrity of the Green Wedge.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased uptake of ecotourism enterprises - Increased uptake of environmentally sustainable businesses in Nillumbik - Increase in number of jobs in the shire related to mitigation of climate crisis i.e. in renewable energy, waste and recycling initiatives.
		Business and Tourism	We support sustainable agricultural pursuits and their contribution to Nillumbik and the broader community	<i>Provide incentives and programs to agricultural food producers to engage in regenerative agriculture practices and practices which protect biodiversity.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in number of Land Management Incentive Program grants provided to the rural landowners for adoption of regenerative/holistic farming practices which encourage biodiversity. - Increase in number of council programs focussing on regenerative or holistic agriculture
Place and space	To plan, design and maintain places and spaces that strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility, encourage social connection and <i>maintain and enhance the biodiversity values of the Green Wedge</i>	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity, <i>biodiversity values and carbon storage potential</i> of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Build in a targeted tree planting program for urban areas.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in number of trees planted.
			We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity, <i>biodiversity values and carbon storage potential</i> of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme to preserve and protect existing bushland and wildlife.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in the health, diversity and area of native bushland maintained and preserved.
		Open Spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity, <i>biodiversity values and carbon storage potential</i> of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Provide incentives and programs to rural landowners to engage in bushland regeneration, e.g. Shire of Yarra Ranges Ribbons of Green program.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased participation in Ribbons of Green program or similar.
		Open Spaces	We continue to enhance the Shire's shared trail network, working proactively to improve connectivity	<i>Develop a program focused on connecting paths and trails across the municipality to remove barriers to active transport (walking and cycling)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in number of people using active transport (walking and cycling)
		Movement and Place	We prioritise and actively advocate for new and better public transport options and a reduction of	<i>Partner with state transport authorities to improve efficiency of the public transport network within the shire. Develop a coordinated service to connect buses and trains.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in number of people using public transport.

			private car use and dependence		
		Movement and Place	We prioritise and actively advocate for new and better public transport options and a reduction of private car use and dependence	<i>Transition to electric buses, and increase number of mini-buses.</i>	
Responsible and Accountable	To facilitate the best possible outcomes for our community, by demonstrating strong leadership and working actively to achieve the community's objectives.	Risk Management	<i>Actively work to mitigate the risk to people, property and the environment caused by catastrophic weather events due to the climate emergency by setting strong emissions targets, with clear steps to reach these.</i>	<i>Ensure that the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy aligns with biodiversity maintenance and drawdown initiatives that support a zero carbon target.</i>	



Comments on the Draft Council Plan

From [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

I expect that a serious council plan would focus on the major issues facing the Shire, and describe the approach the council proposes taking with them. The draft therefore is a disappointment.

The structure of the document is not fit for purpose. The four so-called 'themes' within which the content is organized are abstractions which relate only vaguely to the major activities of council.

The important content is missing, and despite the claimed role of 'What we've heard' in generating the draft, there is content which runs counter to the community's values as revealed in the community engagement program conducted earlier this year.

An important example of this is the gratuitous focus on business and the 'local economy'. There are performance indicators to do with creating jobs, having residents work within the Shire, and even 'Gross Regional Product'. The notion of an economy at local government level is unsound. Councils have neither the tools nor the responsibility for job creation.

The community did not nominate this area as a priority, so why is business emphasized in the draft Plan? Could it be aimed at justifying the approval of inappropriate development applications like the 150 seat restaurant in Bannons Lane, Yarrambat?

But the major problem with the draft Plan for our Shire, supposedly the shire with the green wedge as its 'strategic focus', is the lack of any serious content relating to the green wedge. In fact it attempts to devolve responsibility for green wedge planning to the deservedly discredited GWMP. This document too was created after an expensive community consultation program but failed to incorporate several important community values.

Following are some areas which I suggest deserve consideration in the plan.

Undersized lots. Small lots are a well recognized planning problem. \$115,000 was set aside last year to research the issue, but no results have been made public. There is no easy solution to this problem, but without pre-emptive action there will be continuing disputes, unhappy owners and potentially, degradation of the green wedge. Council should attack this issue strategically, considering varieties of consolidation program, changes to the local planning scheme and, if necessary, advocating to the Minister for Government assistance.

Melbourne Water's Christmas Hills proposal. Council has already correctly responded negatively to this, but the proposal continues on its way towards the Government Land Standing Advisory Committee. This land has been protected from development for fifty years, and MW is proposing to cut it up into the maximum number of housing blocks. The proposal is wrong in principle, in effect unprotecting a large swathe of rural Nillumbik. There is no guarantee that DELWP will look out for the wedge at the Committee hearings. I suggest that Nillumbik Council must take on that task.

This is a very significant issue and will continue to be so for some time. Council needs to create a team to focus on this.

Fill Dumping. This is an ongoing problem in the Shire. C131, even if it survives the Planning Panel, is not the answer, and may even exacerbate the problem by giving landowners the erroneous impression that the dumping of volumes of fill less than 100m3 is OK.

There needs to be an enforcement regime, with all reports investigated and where fill is being imported for disposal purposes rather than for legitimate earthworks, enforcement action should always follow.

Replace the GWMP. DELWP have foreshadowed a revised practice note to cover GWMPs, but Council should not wait for that to begin the review process.

Thank you,



Some comments on Nillumbik Draft Council Plan 2021 – 2025

Name: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Date: 26/8/2021

Introduction

- The snapshot of Nillumbik on Council’s website indicates a current population of 65,094
- The 2019-2020 Annual Report indicates that there are 23,627 rateable properties.
- The number of responses to the Annual Community Survey shows a declining trend since at least 2017 and in 2021 was the lowest yet – with 621.
- Less than 1% of the population have responded to the Survey representing less than 3% of Ratepayers, yet fulfilment of many “Strategic Indicators” is based on responses from an ever diminishing sample rather than hard evidence.

My general impressions are that :

- ❖ The “Plan” has many vague Strategies & Strategic indicators that lack rigour and fail to ensure that the Council rigorously fulfils its responsibilities.
- ❖ The Council promotes the Green Wedge but (*especially under the former Council*) doesn’t do much to protect and enhance the Green Wedge, nor pursue offenders and enforce restitution.

Theme: Place and Space

Note that virtually the only mention of the Green Wedge is here: “We admire and value our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance”

Comments

- 8 out of 18 “Strategic Indicators” are based on the Annual Community Survey i.e based on an increasingly unrepresentative Survey with no effort by the Council to determine rigorous measures.
- While there is a measure of “Trees planted in Streets and Parks”, **there are no measures aimed at showing the overall health of the non-urban Green Wedge and whether it is improving or not!**
While there are many aspects (the forests, grasslands, the creeks, the ecosystems and native birds & animals) one would expect Council could tap relevant expertise to devise some measures eg the total area of tree cover
- There is a measure of the number of grants provided for control of noxious and environmental weeds – **but no measure of the extent of noxious and environmental weeds!**

- Clear damage to the Green Wedge has regularly occurred (Chapel Lane, Camelot Close, landowners operating budget clearing businesses who stockpile rubbish, etc) but where are the measures that hold the Council to account for dealing with these and other breaches?

Theme: Sustainable and Resilient

- 4 out of 11 “Strategic Indicators” are based on the increasingly unrepresentative Annual Community Survey with no effort by the Council to determine rigorous measures.

Theme: Responsible and Accountable

- 5 out of 15 “Strategic Indicators” are based on the increasingly unrepresentative Annual Community Survey with no effort by the Council to determine rigorous measures (with another two based on a Biennial Survey).
- An Environmental Health measure applicable to North Warrandyte was the sewerage backlog program. How many properties have failed to **either** connect to the sewer **or** lodged an Application with the Council’s Environmental Health Team to Retain a Septic System, and complied with the requirements to do so? There are no Strategic Indicators to demonstrate how well the Council follows through with programs like this.
- A more recent program is the Swimming Pool and Spa Barrier program. Why doesn’t the Council publish statistics on the website of how many Pools/Spas have been registered in each date range, and then formulate an Indicator showing the extent of Compliance the Council achieves by each deadline.

Construction Date	Compliance deadline
On or before 30 June 1994	1 November 2021
1 July 1994 to 30 April 2010	1 November 2022
1 May 2010 to 31 October 2020	1 November 2023

Theme: Community and Connection

- This theme has another 2 out of 11 “Strategic Indicators” based on the Annual Community Survey

Nillumbik Council
Response to Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

Summary

The draft Community Vision - Nillumbik 2040 says, and appears to reasonably reflect, what is important to the Nillumbik community. Similarly, the Councillors, in their section in the Council Plan, reinforce what they have heard from the community as most important: better delivery of Council's core services ('the basics'), action on climate change, responsible urban housing development, protection of the green wedge, reducing waste, greater recycling and community consultation and leadership.

The draft Council Plan is, conversely in my view, structured around themes which are highly generic and difficult to align to Council functions and important priorities as stated above. Consequently, the objective(s) in each are so broad they become meaningless and almost any action by Council could be subjectively construed as meeting them.

The themes are further explained with a wide range of general 'strategies' (which I could not in any way call strategies, and many which seemed to be ill-fittingly shoe-horned into the theme); and 'strategic indicators' that did not cover many of the most important things in the draft Vision, or what the councillors stated as important to the community, or even in the 'strategies'.

The draft Council Plan is a disappointing agglomeration of many issues not related to the priorities of the community as reflected in the Vision or the commitment of councillors, is too complex, and is without focus.

It needs a major revision.

Draft Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040

It is interesting to note that in the case of three of the themes, aspirations relating to the Green Wedge, environmental protection, sustainability and climate change are prominent, viz:

“OUR PEOPLE – Aspirations - Our connection to the Green Wedge is celebrated by all who live, work or enjoy their time in it..

OUR PLACE – Aspirations - Our Green Wedge and its environmental integrity are protected to ensure a safe haven for native wildlife, thriving biodiversity and native vegetation, [and] - A considered approach to planning and development ensures that Nillumbik's unique environment and neighbourhood character is retained and enhanced.

OUR FUTURE – Aspirations - **A commitment to sustainable living, enhanced environmental practices and action on climate change is evident in all that we do.**” (My emphasis, but it seems pretty important when you state – “...IS EVIDENT IN ALL THAT WE DO”.)

Relating to the theme of OUR COUNCIL, the further aspiration is that: “Council delivers programs and services in line with its commitment to a great customer experience.” I'm reading this as aligning with the councillors' view that Council gets better at delivering 'the basics'.

Other elements are also important as stated in the Vision, including waste reduction, connected transport systems, education and action on climate change, and dealing with environmental and health emergencies.

I do not see where the strength of these **priorities** in the Vision are reflected in similar priorities in the Council Plan.

Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

Following on from the above comments, the draft Council Plan has a Message from the Council, that details: 'What we have heard', 'What we've done', and 'What we will do', followed by the statement “As the Council

Plan is a summary of our priorities, it will be used by Councillors and Council staff to guide our work, decisions and efforts.”

Turning to the objectives for each of the themes, which one of these objectives reflects that 'delivery of Council's core services is of **most importance** to the community. As such, we want to improve service delivery and get better at 'delivering the basics.'? Or is it all of them? This is very opaque to me.

Regarding the various 'Strategies' and 'Strategic indicators', I'll focus on two themes and relevant priority areas stated by the councillors:

- Space and Place. The objective includes '...and respect the environment"? What does that mean? How does that protect the Green Wedge - one of the short term priorities stated by council? One would expect to see some specifics in the relevant 'strategies', such as preserve and protect biodiversity, enhance our wildlife corridors, or address invasive species, but none are mentioned. Instead there is a statement relating to Identity: 'We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance.' As a strategy, I think that's meaningless. Similarly, there are no 'Strategic indicators' that relate to the Green Wedge. Given it's stated importance and priority to Council, this is disappointing. Surely, given there is a Biodiversity Plan and a Green Wedge Management Plan (however flawed, surely some specific commitment could be made to the environment.
- Sustainable and Resilient. 'Strategies: We take decisive action on climate change', and 'We work ... to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation'. Wonderful. The supporting strategies include the Climate Action Plan, but there are precisely zero 'Strategic indicators' relating to climate change. Can I suggest a firm commitment to zero net carbon emissions by 2030? Can I also suggest a commitment and 'Strategic indicators' to various means of adaptation to climate change, of which one is our Bushfire Mitigation Strategy (interestingly under the Responsible and Accountable theme). Further, given the councillors' statement to 'reprioritise commitments and actions when we need to' (given the current COVID-19 pandemic), and mention of the Pandemic Recovery Plan in the supporting strategies for this theme, it is a surprise to see, again, precisely zero 'Strategic indicators' relating to pandemic recovery.

Proposal

I'd like to suggest that Council revise its Council Plan to:

- Structure the Plan around the functions and services of Council, so that it is readable and readily transparent as to what is intended.
- Nominate priority objectives, strategies and targets that reflect the views and priorities of the community as stated in the draft Vision, and in the Message from Council, that will be the focus for the next four years.



Introduction

The Green Wedge Protection Group (GWPG) was formally incorporated in 1995, following municipal amalgamations. Less formally, the Group has existed since the early 1970s. The Purposes of the Green Wedge Protection Group include:-

- Working to ensure that residents and public officials of the Shire of Nillumbik act together to protect the environment; develop a high quality urban lifestyle within limited designated areas; and promote a rural lifestyle with sensitive farming and enhanced conservation objectives.
- Ensuring the Green Wedge is the strategic focus of the Shire of Nillumbik.
- Providing input to the Shire of Nillumbik and other decision making bodies on any matter considered relevant to the Green Wedge.

The Green Wedge Protection Group is heavily involved in state and local planning issues, both currently and prior to the group's formal inception, and will continue to provide advice and direction to authorities to ensure the intent of our Green Wedges is upheld at all levels of Government, and the values protected.

The Green Wedge Protection Group thank you for the opportunity to place this submission on the Draft Council Plan before Council.



Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

The Council Plan is the most powerful document a Council produces. It is the basis for decisions on Council policy, direction, actions, expenditure and the planning scheme.

The Council Plan is dictated by a robust community-driven vision. Presenting the community with both a draft on the Vision and the Council Plan simultaneously creates difficulties in aligning the documents with appropriate rigour.

As the production of the Vision and the Council Plan are known Statutory requirements for all councils and are to be delivered within a set timeline, why was this exercise not initiated earlier? The rush to complete these tasks now denies the community the opportunity to consider fully the Vision presented and to then craft an appropriate Council Plan based on the adopted Vision.

We applaud the Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners at the outset of the document. It is our assertion that the work of countless people over half a century to protect the underlining reason for the existence of our Shire should also be recognised. Nillumbik is not just lines on a map, it is the only Shire created based on planning principles in the State of Victoria. Our Green Wedge and eventually our Green Wedge Shire was supported from the outset by the community who grasped Sir Rupert Hamer's vision for Melbourne of Growth Corridors interspersed by Green Wedges. Nillumbik was "created as a conservation council with the Green Wedge as its strategic focus" (Leonie Burke Chair of the Local Government Restructure Board 1994).

While the Draft Plan outlines Objectives and Strategies along with strategic indicators and acknowledges relevant Supporting strategies, policies and plans, it does not actually name one action, speak of implementation or touch on a timeline for an outcome. These are fundamental attributes of a PLAN.

Without specific actions tied to each "thematic area", all we have is a document of motherhood statements without any real consequences. The Nillumbik community is literate, involved and active. Reaction to this "plan" will range between those who glance at the draft and its pleasant wording and think it is okay, to those that read and understand the intent, or lack of, and respond more harshly. It is hoped that all input is considered as constructive and that the resulting Council Plan is one that all can be proud of.

We do note the mention of an Annual Action Plan (P.4) that will "detail the specific actions we commit to delivering each year". As it is Council that "operationalises the Council Plan" it is assumed that the 'we' is Council staff and not the community who decides on the "specific actions". Without community input into the priority of these "specific actions", we (the community) are effectively excluded from the decision process. This is definitely not open, transparent and inclusive.

It goes without saying that decisions emanating from the Council Plan will have an influence on the structure and bottom line of the Financial Plan. It is difficult to conceive as to why these three draft documents (Community Vision, Council Plan and Financial Plan) are put out at the same time, all needing to be pushed through to meet the Local Government Act timeline. Surely the required sequence is to develop the Community Vision, as it informs the Council Plan which in turn, informs the Financial Plan.

What we will do....(P.8)

We would like to see a commitment within this section to address the three major priorities outlined by the community. In short – protect and enhance the Green Wedge and our biodiversity, and take action against climate change.

The second dot point – “Deepen our understanding of Nillumbik’s communities...”, requires deliberation.

Gaining respect, knowledge and understanding, and developing relationships and a common direction between community and Council takes time to establish. To “deepen” these aspects requires commitment, from both an organisation and its staff and from the communities they serve. Nillumbik has lost hundreds of years of “memory” and eroded community linkages in the recent staff turnovers - this is tragic for the organisation and the community. It is little comfort for a resident when speaking to an enforcement officer that Smiths Gully is an unknown and that they were unaware of the existence of a Shire Biodiversity Officer. This does not instil confidence.

We look forward to some “deepening”!

Structure of the plan and alignment to the (unadopted) Community Vision. P 9

Community consultation ‘Our People, Our Place, Our Future, conducted earlier this year revealed that the top 3 things valued in Nillumbik were

1. Preservation of the Green Wedge
2. Protection of environment and biodiversity
3. Action on Climate Change

These should be seen as priorities and reflected in the four year draft Council Plan. It is impossible to discern where these strident community priorities have been “slotted” within either of the structures outlined on page nine. “Aspirations”, as alluded to, are NOT the PRIORITIES as set out by the community. The three priorities give emphasis on the direction and the importance of actions required to address these issues.

Sadly, this is not reflected in the diagrams or in either document.

Council has a multitude of strategies, policies and plans, all of which require updating/reviewing at set intervals. Inclusion of a table indicating the status (timeline) of each strategy, policy and plan would assist the community in flagging items they believe should be reviewed.

Place and Space

Strategic indicators

“Percentage of VCAT decisions upholding Council’s determined position” - this has inherent problems due to the inconsistent and often myopic outcomes from VCAT cases. Nillumbik needs to stand behind its decisions that support the Green Wedge and the planning scheme. For example, Nillumbik recently lost a VCAT case for 50 Watery Gully Rd, Kangaroo Ground for residential development of an undersized Lot. Nillumbik’s determination was correct, and needs to be supported. Nillumbik must maintain its planning position on these undersized allotments even if it affects the percentage outcomes.

There are several indicators which could provide important information on the success – or failure – to protect/enhance/expand vital flora and fauna habitat within Nillumbik, et have not been included. For example:

- Area of permitted vegetation loss
- Area of non-permitted vegetation loss
- Area of revegetation
- Area or vegetation/habitat under protective covenant

WHAT IS MISSING from the Draft Council Plan

This is a plan, so where are the Actions, Implementation schedule and Timelines for completion?

Proposed priority actions recommended for addition to the Council Plan 2021-2025 (arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft Council Plan 2021-2025) include:

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	Review the Green Wedge Management Plan to fit the new structure after the Review of Planning for Green Wedges and Agricultural Lands is complete. Review all Council strategies, policies and plans when they come due, to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	Support and promote Landcare
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.

Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire, including development of an urban tree canopy strategy
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	Manage weeds and invasive species
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	Develop a strategy to control invasive species
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.
Place and space	Neighbourhood Character	We respect and enhance the unique neighbourhood character in our communities to ensure a considered approach to planning and development	Develop a Municipal Planning Statement including the development of a policy on undersized Lots
Place and space	Neighbourhood character	We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan, including the mapping of habitat and biolinks to improve connectivity.
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	Create a cohesive Plan with the community to ensure long term planning principles are upheld in the sell-off of Melbourne Water land in Christmas Hills.
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	Review Roadside Management [The Review of the Roadside Management Plan is relevant within several Themes and Strategies]
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	Declare a Climate Emergency.
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.

Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.
Responsible and accountable	Services and Programs		Create a dedicated Environment Department to manage and direct environmental strategies and outcomes, provide environmental planning responses, and coordinate land management and biodiversity works.
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council’s responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community.



**NILLUMBIK SHIRE COUNCIL
COMBINED SUBMISSION
26 August 2021 on:**

Community Vision / Nillumbik	2040
Council Plan	2021 – 2025
Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan	2021-2025
Financial Plan	2021-2031

This submission is made on behalf of Nillumbik Pro-active Landowners (PALS).

NILLUMBIK SHIRE COUNCIL

COMBINED SUBMISSION on:

Community Vision/Nillumbik 2040
Council Plan 2021 – 2025
Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
Financial Plan 2021-2031

This submission is made on behalf of Nillumbik Pro-active Landowners (PALs)

PALs represent approximately 1600 members and their families - mainly across rural and semi rural areas of the Shire.



INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

PALs are appalled that Nillumbik Shire Council ("NSC") would release 4 plans – particularly plans described as "our key strategic documents" – with prospective application for periods of up to a decade - - to the public for "consultation" at the one time.

The release of these documents coincides with several other "consultation processes" including consultation for :
"Future of Agriculture in Nillumbik"
"Eltham Area Community Hospital",
"Council By Laws" and the imminent release of the
"Municipal Planning Strategy"

In general, PALs consider that the "Community Vision / Nillumbik 2040", "Council Plan 2021 – 2025" and the "Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan" are not only a significant embarrassment for this Shire but reflect very poorly on the legislated role of Local Government within the broader community.
PALs apprehension is that no PALs response to these plans may well be taken as our tacit approval by NSC, without which PALs may well not have considered the process worthy of serious consideration and a response worthy of preparation and submission.

PALs consider all four documents, sandwiched together in this combined "consultation" process, as a clear and definitive demonstration of the low standards being set by this Council. PALs deplores the devolution of the community consultation process on matters of such considerable import to such a perfunctory level.

It appears that the responsibility to the entire community of Councillors to preside over the development of a suite of key strategic documents which should properly set the framework for NSC to appropriately guide the workings of Council for Nillumbik into the future, has been subverted to present as a mix of virtue signalling along with apparent preference for selective and biased personal agendas instead.

PALs consider that a Vision document that seeks to direct or control the future narrative of councils for up to 4 full council terms is a nonsense – bordering on a disgrace. It clearly will not be binding on future councils, let alone differing conditions and circumstances that may occur over the ensuing years that almost certainly would render this document totally redundant. It is unsophisticated in the extreme to purport or expect to influence or control what future elected representatives are able to do, without a basic understanding that future councils will run their own agendas anyway.

With a total population of approximately 65,369, of which approximately 12,360 (19%) live within the Green Wedge and considered rural residents, the above documents only consider, pursue and satisfy the requirements of the suburban population (those that do NOT live in the Green Wedge). That is, 81% of the population seek or purport to exert control over the entire shire landmass of approximately 432km², despite occupying themselves only 9% of that landmass.

RURAL LANDOWNERS DESERVE AND DEMAND CONSIDERATION

- *The single biggest issue that residents and landowners recorded in the seriously flawed “consultation” – **Our People – Our Place – Our Future – Our Council** was undoubtedly bushfire and bushfire mitigation. Yet none of the above documents address this issue in any way, let alone any meaningful way.*
- *Council has a legislative requirement to provide real and genuine bushfire mitigation strategies and implementation plans to actively and continuously minimise the impacts of major fire events. In fact NSC already has an approved Bushfire Mitigation Strategy. To date not only has it failed to implement any of its requirements, but also has it failed to deliver an active Bushfire Mitigation Implementation Plan.*
- *There is no action, no reporting on goals and benchmarks, no meaningful on ground works. None of the plans released for consultation even mention this fact, let alone address the requirements. NSC must understand that it will be held accountable and potentially legally liable when the next major bushfire event occurs, due to the lack of works done to date and into the foreseeable future. Class actions may well result.*
- *PALs suspect that suburban residents have poor if any understanding of the potential bushfire threat. They do not comprehend that if a fire gets over and past Kangaroo Ground and heads towards Warrandyte and Research, a disaster will result. An attitude of denial appears prevalent – that “it cannot happen to us”, or that “there is no way a fire will ever get to Eltham / Warrandyte”.*
- *The major rural ward is represented by a Councillor with effectively no lived experience or first hand understanding of the potential threat.*
- *The above flawed consultation process resulted in participants views being presented to inform the current processes. There were approximately 2000 respondents to this initial consultation. This was reported as outstanding by council as they eagerly used only the selected responses that suited the narrative that council was always going to pursue, to form the basis of the documents now here for the next round of “consultation”.*
- *2000 respondents only represents 3% of the resident population. Similarly, that would suggest that 81% of that 3% (1,820) responses would have been generated by the suburban population and only 9% of that 3% (180) would have come from rural residents. Hardly representative or fair. Considering the rural landmass comprises 91% of the total Shire that does not equate to fair and reasonable consideration of the needs, aspirations or policy equity for rural landowners.*
- *The views of 3% of the resident population should not properly inform nor dictate the policies and future direction of the entire Shire. It is clearly inequitable and biased towards a suburban view of rural land and rural requirements – or worse still simply ignores consideration of them.*
- *Rural landowners and residents do not look forward to ANY realistic or actual council consideration in these plans. There is effectively nothing in these documents for rural residents. Hidden in their drafting amongst motherhood statements lies an agenda that is directly opposed to rural landowners and their right to live and exist on their land. This combined with likely imposition of ever-increasing restrictions, burdens and punishments. This has been seen in the preview of the council attempts to introduce draconian controls over rural landowners through the non-legislative controls established through council by laws.*
- *Rural landowners form approximately 19% of the Shire population, yet receive no mention in the documents in contrast to our indigenous population which forms approximately 0.4% of the Shire population and receives extensive consideration in each document. This disregard suggests that rural landowners are not considered to be of value. This has been an historically consistent position of NSC (with the exception of the previous term of Council) with repeated attacks on rural landowners through the introduction of ever increasing restrictions, controls, overlays and punishments sought by council being common.*

NSC PLANS THE SCORECARD

Community Vision / Nillumbik 2040

This document comprises 20 pages of text, photos, tables and language that effectively says little.

It wreaks of appropriateness for its own sake. PALS would prefer to see a significantly shorter time frame, limited to 2025, that actually provides concrete information about where the Shire MAY be going, still subject to future unknown factors and circumstances, but which sets clear operational directions.

No clear indication of any future policy direction, no indication of how Council might get there and how it might achieve certain policy settings in order to deliver a direction are presented.

There is no vision nor indication, about how NSC might balance the needs of rural landowners whilst preserving the landscapes and ambience we all now enjoy. It is not even acknowledged that rural and agricultural pursuits form a critical component not only of the overall landscape, but also how they provide a vital contribution to minimise the risk of major bushfires.

Preserving and enhancing the open pastures and the ability of landowners to manage and maintain their rural properties deliver an invaluable contribution to a fire safe environment that preserves the bushland, farmland and rural enterprises as well as maximising the ability of wildlife to survive.

SCORE: 0(ZERO)/10

Council Plan 2021 – 2025

This document includes a host of attractive images, a few facts and a long list of matters derived from the flawed initial consultation process that appear to have been selectively chosen to fit an agenda.

The strategic indicators selectively choose matters that appear "woke".

There is no strategic indicator related to bushfire mitigation, roadside maintenance and minimisation of fuel loads, all matters considered to be of major importance in the initial consultation but now troublingly omitted.

The methodology used with an indicating (very small) arrow to supposedly demonstrate where council may act at some undetermined point in the future is simplistic at best, but totally inadequate.

PALS would prefer to see some genuine indications of what council intend to do and how they intend to achieve an outcome resulting in improved performance over the council cycle.

The community deserves to know details about how the council will achieve improved outcomes,

SCORE: 3(THREE)/10

NSC PLANS THE SCORECARD

Nilumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

The quality of the suite of plans under consideration is not improved with this proposed plan.

"To reduce health inequalities and create strong communities in which everyone can make a contribution and feel included, our approach is underpinned by human rights principles of freedom, respect, equality and dignity outlined in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

Human rights recognise the inherent value of each person, regardless of background, where we live, what we look like, what we think or what we believe. They are about being treated fairly, treating others fairly and having the ability to make genuine choices in our daily lives.

Through this plan, we will work towards creating an inclusive community, where human rights are respected, participation is facilitated and diversity is celebrated."

The above quote from the plan is indeed exactly what NSC should be ensuring across the Shire. It is apparent that it is not being applied universally. It does not apply to rural landowners.

With a suburban population purporting to dictate what rural landowners can and cannot do on their land, to restrict and control their uses of the land, to prohibit any reasonable bushfire maintenance and thereby diminish their human rights to stay alive and thrive, there is a clear policy of human rights for some and not for others.

By denying rural landowners the ability to protect their properties, their livestock and their infrastructure as well as having a reasonable degree of freedom (as applies to suburban residents) to construct and landscape their immediate property surrounds, the claim above is meaningless and only represents virtue signalling and a poor interpretation of actual legislative requirements.

There is clear hypocrisy in these documents characterised in several statements about what a wonderful Shire we live in, that we have 30% bush cover, that our wildlife is thriving and that we have a wonderful environment - all while NSC (and dark green activist) condemnation of ALL rural landowners as desecrators of the bush, seeking only to tear it down or degrade it with livestock, denude it and only seek to subdivide for personal profit, persists as an "urban myth"

This mischaracterisation of rural landowners as irresponsible environmental vandals will always be countered by the reality on the ground of the dedicated custodianship of the land by most PALs.

There is significant commentary in relation to the benefits of physical activity, but it is restricted to exclusively suburban interpretations of that activity. Rural landowners are physically active on their rural properties and often do not require structured activity. NSC could encourage and supplement that activity by providing assistance to rural landowners to maintain their properties as the sheer scale of maintenance requirements can be challenging.

The community resilience aspects of this plan include references to the percentages of the community that suffer from depression and anxiety.

"More than a third of Nilumbik residents have been diagnosed with depression or anxiety. This has been increasing since 2008 and is higher compared to North Eastern Victoria and Victoria. The incidence is higher among females (39%) than males (26%). 13 per cent of Nilumbik residents reported experiencing high or very high psychological distress".

NOTE 1 TO NSC

Emphasis on positivity rather foreboding while recognising and addressing matters such as climate change and encouraging the harnessing of innovation and the innate ability of industry to deliver a better future.

NOTE 2 TO NSC

Provide rural landowners and residents with confidence that they can live their lives free of harassment and intimidation. Remove unreasonable restrictions and controls and allow landowners to actually enjoy their lives.

Anxiety and psychological distress will certainly decrease in our demographic.

The absence of serious consideration of the longterm effects of the Covid-19 global pandemic is appalling.

SCORE: 4(FOUR)/10

NSC PLANS THE SCORECARD

Financial Plan 2021-2031

Purporting to develop a Financial Plan for a decade from 2021-2031 is risible – particularly given the financial realities we all have experienced in the past 18 months due to the pandemic.

It is evident from the draft Financial Plan that NSC will be unable to resource, enable and enact a very significant number of projects, implementation plans and policies. The future of NSC will apparently rely on Government handouts. It is not acceptable to blame this situation on the previous council.

It is also not acceptable to increase rates above the Government mandated limits as it will only demonstrate to the community that NSC fails to appreciate the hurt that will result in a post pandemic Nillumbik. NSC should always operate within its means, as should the rest of society. It is not acceptable to present apparently personal agendas under the guise of new council policy and expect the rate payers to foot the bill.

All council initiatives, future projects and policy direction requiring funding should always be restrained by what is affordable, what is practically achievable and what is of genuine importance rather than particular political whims.

It is imperative that council must fulfil their legislated obligations first and foremost. This includes allocating, spending and reporting on budget allocations for critical works such as roads, footpaths, parklands, waste management and, most importantly, bushfire mitigation works which includes actual fuel reduction works as well as roadside maintenance.

SCORE: 4(FOUR)/10

CONCLUSION

Nillumbik PALs thanks NSC for the opportunity to contribute to this consultation process and commends this submission to all Councillors and council officers for their consideration.

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Name]

Chair
Working Group - Nillumbik PALs
26 August 2021

SUBMISSION 52

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
26 August 2021

Dear Councillors

Re: Submission on Draft Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Draft Council Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these documents.

I was quite surprised at their content given the extensive consultation process that took place earlier this year. I understood that the results of this consultation *Our People, Our Place, Our Future* were intended to inform the Community Vision and Plan as well as other key strategic documents that Council was to prepare.

However, when I read the vision the important issues to the people of Nillumbik seem to have been downgraded in some cases and not mentioned in others. Just to remind you that the key findings that Nillumbik residents think are the most important issues facing us in our future are:

1. Preservation of the green wedge
2. Protection of environment and biodiversity
3. Action on climate change

Please ensure that these issues are effectively given prominence in both the vision and the plan.

I support the submissions made by the Bend of Islands Conservation Association and also the submission made by [REDACTED]

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Submission on Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

Introduction

We thank Council for its efforts in the preparation of the draft Council Plan 2021-2025.

However, the current draft Plan gives insufficient attention to the 3 top priorities identified as the most important to the community, in its feedback to the Council's survey 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future': -

- Preservation of the Green Wedge
- Protection of environment and biodiversity
- Action on climate

To provide adequate focus on these issues, we request that the following suggestions be incorporated into the Plan.

General Comments

- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to make an explicit link back to the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040* by inclusion of the concise vision summary statement such as: -
In 2040 Nillumbik is a world leader in
 - ***biodiversity protection and reinvigoration***
 - ***community stewardship of the environment;***
 - ***climate change mitigation and adaptation;***
 - ***sustainable urban design and living;***
 - ***community inclusiveness, equity and connection;***
 - ***community participation in the arts and celebration of its cultural heritage;***
 - ***economic systems that are responsive to, and protective of, the environment, in keeping with the Community's statements of priority.***
- All existing supporting strategies, policies and plans need to be reviewed to reflect the values and direction established in the *Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040*, the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* and the *Financial Plan 2021-2025*.
 - Nillumbik is a Green Wedge conservation Shire and this needs to be evident in all Council documentation, including the
 - The Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review)
 - Climate Action Plan.
 - Biodiversity Strategy;
 - Bushfire Mitigation Strategy;
 - Open Space Strategy;
 - Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy;
 - Integrated Water Management Plan;
 - Recreation and Leisure Strategy;
 - Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy;
 - Advocacy Plan;

- The *Council Plan 2021-2025* needs to include **priority actions** against each strategy that:
 - take significant steps towards the *Community Vision* and each theme's objective
 - have been identified so that Council will implement these priority actions during the four years of the plan (as in Banyule and Yarra Ranges' Draft Council Plans - rather than as part of a later *Annual Action Plan* devised by Council only, which would be contrary to Council's commitment to community consultation).
 - Have the resources needed to implement these priority actions allocated in the financial plan as required by the Local Government Act 2020.

Refer to Attachment 1 for the priority actions that should, as a minimum, be included to cover Environmental/Planning issues.

Other priority actions, relating to the other aspects of the Plan, should be developed and included to supplement these.

Regards,



26/8/2021

Attachment 1 - Sheet 1 of 2

Proposed priority actions to be added to the *Council Plan 2021-2025* (arranged by theme, strategy subheading and strategy dot point as per the draft *Council Plan 2021-2025*):

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Community and connection	Equity and inclusion	We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	<i>Establish and resource a Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung advisory group (to strengthen relationships and advise Council on strategic cultural heritage matters).</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Review all Council strategies, policies and plans to ensure they reflect the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire. These may include the Green Wedge Management Plan, (including consideration of the outcomes of the Planning for Melbourne’s Green Wedges and Agricultural Land review); Open Space Strategy; Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Biodiversity Strategy; Integrated Water Management Plan; Bushfire Mitigation Strategy; Recreation and Leisure Strategy; Integrated Transport Statement and Strategy; Advocacy Plan; Climate Action Plan.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Advocate for the protection, enhancement and stewardship of our natural environment for the long term.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Strengthen environmental protections within the planning scheme.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Identify new areas that should be covered by Environmental Significance Overlays and Significant Landscape Overlays to support the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Protect and reinvigorate tree canopy and understory throughout the Shire.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Manage weeds and invasive species.</i>
Place and space	Identity	We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	<i>Implement measures from the Yarra Strategic Plan.</i>

Attachment 1 - Sheet 2 of 2

Theme	Strategy subheading	Strategy dot point	Proposed priority action
Place and space	Neighbourhood character	We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	<i>Create a Bend of Islands Environmental Living Plan, a Research Township Plan and a North Warrandyte Township Plan in consultation with these communities and reflecting the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Place and space	Open spaces	We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community’s unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	<i>Create a Shire-wide wildlife protection plan.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We take decisive action on climate change	<i>Implement the Climate Action Plan consistent with IPCC recommendations recognising the interconnectedness of community health and wellbeing with environmental health and wellbeing.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Climate action	We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation	<i>Ensure all Council infrastructure and operations reflect environmental best practice in line with the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040 and Nillumbik Shire Council as a “conservation council” for the Green Wedge Shire.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	<i>Create a waste plan that includes technical notes to specify materials and other products to minimise environmental impact. The waste plan should apply to internal workings of Council AND community education and action.</i>
Sustainable and resilient	Sustainability	We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	<i>Where Council will explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik, ensure these are regenerative processes which protect biodiversity.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We continue to meet Council’s responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	<i>Ensure the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy prioritises the principle that managing fire in the landscape is about caring for the land and all the life forms it supports, including, but not limited to, people.</i>
Responsible and accountable	Risk management	We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	<i>Ensure adherence to Council strategies, policies and plans within Council and community. (With allocation of sufficient Council resources for follow-up monitoring procedures to ensure <u>effective compliance</u>.)</i>

SUBMISSION 54



COUNCIL MEMBERS

I commend the Council for preparing this plan and taking the time for real consultation to occur.

I agree with the main thrust of the statements and would like to see the following recommendations added in support of sustainability and climate control.

The latest scientific predictions for the world's temperature frightens me. Generalised statements need to be backed up with action commitments.

The kind of actions I'm thinking of not without cost. They are designed to help property owners to become more active, and therefore less depressed, about climate change.

1. Council to provide professional help for tree planting, shrub and grass maintenance to contribute to emission reduction. This will cost money.
2. Assistance in purchasing and planting trees - and more trees. I know this isn't new but renewing our awareness and action is.
3. Subsidise hydronic heating or other sustainable forms and helping people get rid of wood heaters, especially old ones.
4. Find effective ways of increasing water storage, public and private. Maybe enlarge existing farm dams.
5. Wherever possible make wildlife-safe fencing compulsory.
6. Reduce the use of pesticides, inside and outside, in the shire through educational programs. The demise of insects is horrifying.
7. Employ local artists to make attractive road signs for protecting wildlife.

Thank you,



SUBMISSION TO DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2021 - 2025

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Please refer to comments in my submission for Nillumbik Council Vision 2040 – applicable to this submission as well.

It is crucial that ALL aspects of the Council Plan are shaped by, and make reference to, the purpose of the Green Wedge and the Shire of Nillumbik as described by the Local Government Review Board:

the new Shire of Nillumbik is to be a conservation Shire with the Green Wedge as its strategic focus.

The Council Plan must be consistently shaped by, and refer to, the 'top three things valued' by the Community as outlined in the consultation process, 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future'. The top three things valued are:

- Preservation of the Green Wedge
- Protection of environment and biodiversity
- Action on climate change

Common sense tells us that the three things of greatest value to the community must be prioritised and given utmost consideration, protection and invigoration. Council must lead the way!

As such, the Vision, Themes, Objectives, Strategies and Strategic Indicators in the Council Plan must be informed and shaped by these priorities. Currently, they do not. Biodiversity needs to be included in its many forms [and this must include the land and waterways on which ALL life depends].

The extremely dominant anthropocentric view in the Draft Plan needs to be reconsidered, and the environment brought into greater focus, its care planned for, and written in.

The Community consultation report also states that the environment is the community's top priority for increased spending.

The report also demonstrates how conscious the community is of the connection between environmental health, human health, and the impact of ALL decisions made by Council and the community. These must be incorporated in the Council Plan.

For example:

- housing that is eco-friendly and protects local heritage – this must include the heritage of the Wurundjeri people as Traditional Custodians, acknowledging that the land, waterways, flora and fauna are part of cultural heritage [Note: this is nicely articulated in the Draft Council Plan: *We recognise and value the distinctive and special spiritual and material relationship that First Nations people have with the land and the water, including trees, rocks, hills and valleys, creeks, rivers and flood plains in our Shire.*]
- reductions in waste and energy consumption and increases in reuse and recycling;
- more supportive of active transport [walking cycling] and public/community transport options rather than individual reliance on cars;
- agriculture that is sustainable/regenerative and building of habitat, therefore respectful of the land and its waterways with better health outcomes for people as well.

All Council documents - including the Council Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan, and Public Health and Wellbeing Plan – must reflect the community's desires, values, and commitment.

This means that *protection of biodiversity and environment, protection of the Green Wedge, and action on climate change* all heavily inform strategies, policies and plans, with descriptions for how these will be achieved and maintained.

This is also a requirement if Nillumbik is to be a conservation Shire with the Green Wedge as its strategic focus.

The Draft Council Plan must be amended to respectfully reflect these priorities.

Currently, the Strategies do not boldly describe ACTIONS to be undertaken. According to the Plan's glossary, 'Strategies – Provides additional information that details what we will do in order to achieve our objectives'. Note the DOING for achievement.

For example, One Strategy reads: *We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance.*

This does not tell us anything about what actions have been considered, prioritised, and committed to [ie what will Council DO other than value and admire something? What does it mean to value and admire something if appropriate knowledge of it does not widely exist, if plans are not made for its optimum health, and if finances are not committed to achieving this?]

The Council Plan ought to be a Plan for how to enable and maintain a HEALTHY community – in all possible ways, and for all. The Nillumbik Council Plan must reflect the common knowledge that human health is directly connected to environmental health, and that human well-being depends on personal connection to 'nature'. Not only is this articulated in innumerable scientific papers, but it has been clearly presented by the Community itself. The Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan must be reflective of this, in the same way the Financial Plan, Vision and Council Plan must do the same.

All Council policies/documents must be reviewed to ensure they reflect these priorities.

Where policies/documents and/or processes are failing to provide adequate action on, or have lost focus of, these top priorities [of protection of biodiversity, action on climate change and preservation of the green wedge] they must be reviewed and updated.

Policies/documents must present bold strategies to achieve best possible outcomes for these priorities.

Council must describe key indicators of success, financial commitment, and diverse educational approaches throughout the community to ensure individuals and groups can be better informed and effectively participate.

Through the process, Council must be cautious of assumptions or inadequate investigation. For example, one 'strategic indicator' listed in the Draft states: '*Number of dead animals collected by Council*'. This does not really indicate anything as this observation may be the result of less animals being killed because of greater awareness and care, or perhaps there are less animals in the area so it is likely less will be on the roads and therefore less killed, or perhaps less people are making phone calls for collection, or any other reason.

Strategic Indicators must be clear, relevant, and in line with Nillumbik being a conservation Shire!

The Financial Plan must reflect greater support for actions that will ensure achievement of these desired outcomes. If it does not, the Council Plan must outline a review of Financial Plan [and other policy documents].

If Nillumbik Council is to become a leading conservation Shire and protect the top three values as expressed by the Community, the Council Plan must articulate effective priority actions/strategies such as:

- As stated above, a review of all Council policies/documents, to be in line with the top priorities/values
- The development of much stronger connections to the Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung people via diverse approaches. This must be via genuine conversation with the community, along with respectful responses. There must be greater opportunities for the broader community to learn the area's history and understand an ethos of land stewardship – all of which would be developed through the respectful relationship with the Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung people. At all times, an ongoing relationship must be active and *responsive*, not only an acknowledgement/valuing.
- Planning Scheme to be reviewed to ensure greater protections of the environment, as currently it is failing to achieve stated objectives.
- Develop innovative ways to increase in-Council [all staff] and community awareness to ensure the top values and priorities are appropriately cared for. This must include care for soils, waterways, fungi, fauna, and flora - from the smallest native herbs to great canopy trees.
- Develop Shire-wide actions for weeds and invasive species. These must be responsive to species and place, with significant commitment to community education and financial inputs. These strategies must also integrate the true costs of all actions – for example, where chemical use is common on roadside verges to control weeds, the flow on effects is poisoning of wildlife [who often feed in those areas] and

contamination of waterways – as demonstrated by current scientific data. We must be innovative and thorough in our assessments, taking a bigger view than the immediate human environment.

- Ensure that Council has a strong Wildlife protection plan, that includes strategies to enable more widespread, connected, and numerous populations. This is essential – even more so with the added pressures of climate change.
 - Implement a strong Climate Action Plan – in line with best international practice.
 - Assess ALL Council activity to reflect best environmental practice – everything Council does has an impact, and if we are to be a conservation Shire and a leader in environmental care and biodiversity reinvigoration, we must ensure that every effort is made to reduce waste, reduce consumption, reduce chemical inputs, reduce reliance on vehicles, improve sustainability of Council infrastructure etc etc. This would mean we calculate and factor in the embedded/true costs in all materials and activities, for their complete life-span, from extraction to transformation/disposal and all associated implications].
 - Consider our role in the context of refugees. This is particularly important given our role as a highly polluting nation [per capita], our inaction on climate change, and our role in overseas conflict.
 - Ensure that plans for Bushfires [including the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy] prioritises the principle that managing fire is about caring for the land and *all* life it supports, and has been in this land for millennia.
 - Ensure that any food production systems that are currently operating or are to begin operating, must do so with regenerative farming practices that reduce salinity, erosion, chemical inputs, and increase natural soil health, increase biodiversity and habitat connectivity across the Shire. Given these elements, agricultural practices must be appropriate for the climate and limitations on access to water.
 - Take bold actions to increase habitat connectivity across the Shire.
- Ensure Township Plans are created for all townships, and that these are inspiring documents with a focus on the top values as stated by the Community, therefore celebrating and protecting our indigenous flora and fauna, promoting indigenous gardens, educating current and new residents so they can understand why indigenous plants are crucial, encourage broader awareness beyond the Shire.

There's much more to this Shire than humans and the built environment. The Council Plan 2021 – 2025 must address this significant and grave omission as it currently presents in the Draft. The objectives and strategies are an important opportunity to do this.

It is worth noting the selection of images also reflects the current tone of the Drafty Council Plan, with its overwhelmingly anthropocentric view: 11 photos include people, yet only one of those shows humans somewhat connected with the 'natural environment'. Also, out of more than 14 images in the document, only *one* shows wildlife [rainbow lorikeets].

We have an incredible opportunity to be a nation-wide leader in the protection of the environment, and to show how humans can live sensitively with a great diversity of other life forms, sustained by healthy soils and healthy waterways – from billabongs and creeks to rivers and extensive wetlands. These opportunities are current while the indigenous seed bank remains in the soil in many places, while we have the potential to take bold action, while there are creatures living here able to increase their populations if supported. Many plants and animals have become locally extinct. The Council Plan must demonstrate absolute commitment to ensuring no more local extinctions occur, and significantly greater commitment to the reinvigoration of populations of the important and wonderful biodiversity of Nillumbik.

SUBMISSION 56

Submission to Nilumbik Council

Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial

Plan August 2021

V2: Legend added at Appendix D

The Community Vision - *Engagement*

Amongst other things, a Council Vision must describe the community's aspirations for at least the next 10 years. The Vision must be developed in accordance with deliberative engagement principles [**Local Government Act (LGA)** S55] and Council policy (**Community Engagement Policy (CEP)** Feb 2020) . Both stress that Council must provide objective, relevant and timely information for the benefit of participants, and ensure that the participants are representative (a cross section) of the population affected by the matter.

Representative Sample?

The best hard data about the deliberative engagement project is available in an Officer's Report, tabled at last May's Council meeting. It reports that the surveyed individuals were not part of a structured sample in the statistical sense. Taken as a whole, the group that completed the questionnaire did not match the Nil- lumbik population from a demographic or geographic perspective. The '*General Version*' of the Questionnaire was completed by 728 individuals in either hard copy or digital form.

Deliberative?

Deliberative is not defined in the Act, and therefore from a legal point of view takes on its dictionary or common meaning¹. The CEP defines it in two ways - '*open dialogue and discussion, access to information*' and '*Deliberative Polling*'. S55 describes 4 central principles including '*Participants ... must have access to objective, relevant and timely information to inform their participation*'.

The main source of information for the survey topics was published on 7 fact-sheets. Appendix A assesses the level of objectivity and relevance of a selection. The assessment finds some fact sheets created misleading impressions, provided erroneous data/information, omitted central concepts/ideas for example. Some of the information on the fact sheets was not relevant to the resources levels and jurisdictions of Council.

Weight of Reported Data

If the group was truly representative and all questions were responded to, a sample of 728 participants would have generated a margin of error of 3.59% at a confidence level of 95% ² . Meaning that Council could be 95% certain that the parent population result is 3.59% more or less

the sample results. In practice this means that the selection and ranking procedures for virtually all the responses cannot be applied to the population. For example whereas the survey group ranked the top 3 healthy behaviour issues at 19%, 17% and 15%, statistically speaking, the first is as likely as the third, and so on.

Insofar as the open questions are concerned, there is less doubt given that the 29 points separate first ('*Pro-tection of the Green Wedge*'), from second '*Protection of environment and biodiversity*'.

Structure of the Engagement Framework

'Shire Plan 2040' was implemented as Phase 1 of the engagement process, culminating in June 2020 with the publication of a background paper. Extracts from the paper entitled '**Towards a Community Vision for Nillumbik**' (TCVN) have since been used to support participants. TCVN included extensive Councillor and

Executive workshops and proposed a 6 topic Framework to support the deliberative engagement phase of the project. Table 1 (below) lists the topics and compares that Framework with others used applied to subsequent documents during Phase 2 of the project.

1: Deliberative: From the word deliberate meaning done consciously, careful and unhurried, fully considered not impulsive

Page 2

PHASE 1	PHASE 2		
TCVN	SURVEY	VISION	PLAN
Community Health and Well Being	Healthy Behaviours Resilient safe	7 and 3 shared	Equity and Inclusion (5) Health and Well being (2) Ages and Stages (4)
Social Infrastructure	Inclusion Employment and Learning Connected and Engaged Resilient and Safe	3 and 3 shared	Identity (3) Neighbourhood Character (4) Open Spaces (4) Resilience and Recovery Risk mgt. 2 shared Svs & Progs 1 shared.
The Economy and Employment	Expenditure Allocations Capital expenditure priorities	1 shared	Business and Tourism (4)
Climate change		2 shared	Climate action (2) Risk mgt. 1 shared
Transport	Accessible Transport	1 shared	Movement and Place (5)
The Role of Local Government		6 and 8 shared	Good Governance (6) Risk Management (3 shared) Services and Programs (5, 1/shared)
Ungrouped	Healthy Environments Housing Open Space and Sustainability		Sustainability

Table 1: Topics in subsequent documents related to the Phase 1 Framework

- Our People (Survey) Community & Connection (Plan)Our
- Place (Survey) Place and Space (Plan)
- Sustainable and Resilient (Plan)
- Good Governance (Plan)

The Shifting Framework

Table 1 shows a significant paradigm shift at two key points in the evolution of the Framework. It began as a cross section of priorities typical of Interface Councils, built on a basis of social research, in-house work-shops and high level deliberation. The framework was narrowed for the survey. **Social Infrastructure** and **Community Health and Well Being** became dominant and **The Economy and Employment** and the **Role of Local Government** took a back seat. **Climate Change** found associates in 'behaviour' 'resilience and safety' 'sustainability' and 'environment'.

Then Framework for the Vision maintained the focus on **Community Health and Well Being**, and strengthened the place of the **Role of Government**. There was with occasional reference to transport, climate change and two pages on financial priorities. The Council Plans shows a shift back to **Social Infrastructure** and **Governance**, with a revived interest in **Climate Change** with **Health and Well-being** retaining its strength. The plan portends to have found a way of integrating some of these focal points with ordinary everyday Council functions like *Waste Management* and *Family Health*, while keeping the implementations under wraps. Noticeably the Green Wedge,

which after all is the Councils logo, and the single most valid data point and preferred value in the Community Engagement data, is barely mentioned in the draft plan.

While the framework is expected to change organically between the top down efforts of consultants, the ex-ecutive and Councillors, the point here which I hope is self evident, is that no one has taken responsibility for or explained the shifts. Shifts that must be explained if the engagement process is to have integrity.

Page 3

The Community Vision Content

Deconstruction of what the Council ‘heard’ from the municipal community reveals 26 elements, 10 of which approximate calls to action. The frequency of referenced priority categories is set out in Table 3 (see Appendix B for details). Table 3 also estimates how many imply funded projects.

Category	Frequency (all)	Frequency (action type)
Social Capital	9	2
Waste	5	1
Infrastructure	4	2
Environment	3.5	1
Housing	2	0
Climate Change	1.5	1.5
Education	0.5	0.5
Finance	0.5	0.5

Table 2: Elements of engagement ‘heard’ by Council’ (Vision P. 4)

Guidance interprets the Act requires the Vision go further than the mere repetition of the aspirations of the community. It should build on those aspirations to develop ‘relevant service, asset and land-use programs to develop an achievable Community Vision.’ This process can be detected in a close examination of the aspirations attributed to the community in the sectioned parts of the Vision.

For example the single reference to education in the survey: ‘education for climate change’ evolves into ‘Education and lifelong learning are valued as key contributors to social connection, personal development and well-being’. The movement towards new programs is evident in 11 of the 27 dot point (dp) aspirations:

- Our People: Dp 7
- Our Place: Dp 1, 4, 5, 6, & 7
- Our Future: Dp 2, 3, 6.
- Our Council: Dp 2, 6 (Community Vision pages 9-13).

For the rest of the original aspirations, as in the case of most of the Social Capital priorities, they are restated in new language and remain languishing sentiments to the end. About 4 of the others have progressed, but appear as restatements of aspirations of Councils past, already well on their way to fulfilment: (Our future DP 4, 5 & 7; Our Council Dp 5).

Guidance also interprets the Act to require that the Community Vision ‘describe the social, economic, cultural, and environmental aspirations for the future of the municipality’. The first failings in this respect are in the second of the four fundamental forces that will shape Nillumbik’s future regardless of the aspirations of its residents - Economic. Economic issues are represented from labour’s point of view, whereas it’s the development of land and capital resources that will help determine the future, and have largely been ignored. This is in part due to the failure of the chart based Finance section to stimulate anticipated responses, as well as the awkward and largely irrelevant content of the associated Fact Sheet.

The second failing is in respect of the environment. The fact sheets and closed survey questions gave little exposure to the many facets of the challenges facing the Nillumbik's natural environment, choosing to focus on waste disposal and land use instead.

Page 4

The Council Plan.

The 21/25 Council Plan is the shortest plan in the Shire's history, and the first to headline Health and Well Being outcomes. It's the first to face the challenge of integrating a mix of medium and long-term strategic plans with a community vision based on deliberative engagement principles. I am not sure, but it may face the highest debt against operational expense ratio as well.

The plan is built upon a two phase process. The first was an initiative of the previous Council with the purpose of establishing a framework for the deliberative engagement process. A Framework was published in June 2020, after a major investigative study and Executive/Councillor workshops (Table 1 Column 1).

Selected material from that publication informed the subsequent deliberative community engagement process in the form of 7 Fact Sheets and various staged workshop content.

SHIRE PLAN 2040 – PROJECT APPROACH



Council describes the development of the Council Plan in different terms (P.4), without acknowledging the originating 'Background Paper', or justifying the use of the Annual Community Survey (ACS).

NOTE: The ACS is not conducted in accordance with deliberative engagement practices (DEPs). S90 requires that the plan must be prepared according to Council's DEPs.

The Vision and the Plan are dated contemporaneously, yet describe what each has 'heard' from the community in quite different terms. The Plan expresses it this way:

- (According to the results of our ACS) *delivery of Council's core services is of most importance to the community. As such, we want to improve service delivery and get better at 'delivering the basics'.*
- (According to the deliberative engagement process) *The community has identified a number of key short term priorities, including action on climate change, responsible urban housing development, protection of the green wedge, reducing waste, greater recycling and community consultation and leadership.*
- (Un sourced) *Our community wants Council to operate both effectively, maintaining current service levels, and be fiscally responsible.*

Content

Section 90 requires the plan include 6 content areas:

1. Strategic direction
2. Strategic objectives
3. Strategies for achieving objectives over 4 years
4. Strategic indicators for each objective
5. Description of 'initiatives and priorities.'
6. Other matters prescribed by regulation

LGV provides an authoritative interpretation of implementation (Appendix C) which informs the following.

26 August 2021

Strategic Direction of Council

Objectives should include 'a strong narrative of the opportunities and challenges facing Council and how these will be addressed or realised' (LGV). There is no such narrative in Nillumbik's draft plan. There are lists of threats 'the current COVID-19 pandemic, and the social, environmental and financial uncertainty it presents' (P.6) However there is no strategy for managing Pandemic related threats.

I submit that a Strategic Direction may exist in shadow form. It does not take the form of a 'strong narrative', nor does it adequately describe the environmental challenges and opportunities ahead (ie it is not strategic). Given its dubious statistical basis and the 'limitations' expressed in the Officer's report¹ it is reasonable to expect such limitations to be part of the required narrative. Further, in its shadow form it does not explain a response to community aspirations. There are notable deviations in the Plan relative to the Vision Statement. For example, the list of aspirations at page 4 of the Vision is Statement is markedly different from those developed in the Plan.

Strategic Objectives

The plan includes 4 objectives, one for each of its 4 themes. Table 3 de-constructs the objectives from two points of view. Firstly, an attempt to understand the multi-layered quality of objectives 1 and 2. Organisations typically develop single layer objectives. This makes it easier to measure performance. Reminiscent of the multi-layering of single focus aspirations in the Vision Statement, these dual purpose objectives complicate Council's mission and threaten the efficiency of delivery. They share a common internal logic:

We will resource programs for the delivery of X in a particular way (Y) so that the program also achieves Z.

Objectives 3 and 4 are different and from some points of view, redundant. For example, objective 3 is already regulated by principles at S9 (2b, c & h) as well as the State Climate Change Act. The fundamental purpose of objective 3 is also clouded by its phrasing. It is hard to understand how a Council can 'compromise future community needs'. It is possible that Council's ability to meet future needs could be compromised by its meeting of current needs. Otherwise the meaning and need for objective 3 escapes me.

Objective 4 is also a restatement of the essential functions of managers of any large organisation, and is therefore redundant. Note that the management role is normally broken into 4 functions not 2 - Planning, Organising, Leading and Controlling. Omitting Council's intention to Plan strategically and Control performance meticulously may come back to bite this Council.

OBJECTIVE	X	Y	Z
1. To encourage inclusion and participation to support health and well being and ensure that all our residents have equitable access to services, programs, events and initiatives.	Support Health and Well-being	encourage inclusion and participation	Ensure all residents have equitable access to services, programs, events and initiatives
2. To plan, design and maintain places and spaces that strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility, encourage social connection and respect the environment.	Plan, design and maintain places and spaces	Not stated	strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility ... social connection and respect (for) the environment.
3. To ensure that we are able to meet the present needs of our community without compromising its future needs.	Requirement already embedded in the Local Government Act (S9) and the Climate Change Act		
4. To facilitate the best possible outcomes for our community, by demonstrating strong leadership and working actively to achieve the community's objectives.	Required under the LGA, as are particular approaches to plan and control management functions.		

Table 3: Deconstructing the Objectives of the Council Plan

Discussion Points

- It is not clear that by promoting inclusion and participation in the kind of activity and functional area that normally preoccupy local Councils, there will be a significant impact on the health and well-being of the Shire. There needs to be conceptual and experiential evidence that what is proposed, in general theoretical terms, is an established, tested and proven approach.
- The additional direct and indirect costs of these untested multi layered relationships may prove prohibitive, especially given the parlous state of Council's books. It needs to be modelled within the plan in accordance with S89 (c) - identify and address the risks to effective implementation
- The extra human and capital resources required to deliver the 'business as usual' outcomes of objectives 1 and 2, risk work against the efficiencies and effectiveness implied in Objective 4
- Performance against multi faceted objectives are difficult and expensive to measure
- Council needs to explain why it is committing to intergenerational and anti discrimination as a Council outcome when legislation and regulation already require high level performance against each..
- The Act requires the strategic objectives relate back to the strategic direction (S90 2(d)). They do not.

Strategies

According to organisational theory a strategy is a plan of action involving an assessment of an organisation's strengths and weaknesses and the evident and emerging threats and opportunities in its operating environment. Competing strategies are selected on the basis of high level cost benefit analyses, with budgeted costing and a timeline of implementation.

The Council plan lists 53 strategies. They are grouped according to 14 themes. Some of the themes are identical to those of the engagement process, most are new. Some of the thematic sub headings of the Vision have been excised, others have been renamed and moved between groups. In any case there is no explanation as to why the structure of the plan and that of the vision are at such variance. In the interests of transparency, and LGV guidance ('strategies must be respondent to community engagement and aspirations') such whole-sale shifts in framework must be explained.

Each of the 53 strategies can be characterised as one of three types

1. Aspirational: These are statements of how an individual or group would like the world to be. The out-comes of this kind of strategy cannot be measured in any meaningful way.
2. Qualitative: Designed to produce subjective changes in an individual or group's beliefs, values or attitudes. Typically measured through the use of focus groups and/or surveys.
3. Quantitative. Generate outcomes that are observable and measurable in time and space.

Table 4 (Appendix D) audits the 53 strategies against these three types. It finds that 13 are aspirational 20 are Qualitative and 20 are Quantitative.

Aspirational strategies can be extremely effective when applied to sporting activities and lifting morale within an organisation. A Council needs to justify their use in a strategic planning context. Qualitative strategies can lead to behaviour change but outcomes are typically erratic and temporary. A Council with the debt levels of Nillumbik risks wasting precious resources on potentially futile attempts to change attitudes.

The excision of aspirational and qualitative strategies denudes the strategic lists considerably.

'Community and Connection':	1 quantifiable strategy (within equity),
Place and Space:	7, mostly in the management of open spaces.
'Sustainable and Resilient',	9, mostly in the category of Business and
Tourism. Responsible and Accountable:	4 quantifiable strategies

I submit that Council should conduct its own audit and ensure that the strategies designed for each objective are fit for purpose. It should also consider the risks associated with implementing its four objectives.

Initiatives

Section 90 2 (e) requires Councils to describe its *initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure and amenity*. This is phrased as '*major activities and activities*' in the guidance (LGV). Frustratingly and in contrast to the pro-activity of adjacent Councils, Nillumbik has not listed one activity/initiative to support any of its 53 strategies.

Indicators

The new Act stresses the importance of integrating of all elements of the plan. This is especially so when designing performance indicators for Council Plan outcomes. Nillumbik has seen a recent trend towards the use of population survey results as indicators of Council performance. The previous Council relied on population surveys for 57% of its indicators – all from the ACS. The current Council figure is less - 40% - and includes a diverse range of surveys.

The governance, transparency and engagement principles of the new Act provide an opportunity for Council to review its use of population surveys. Issues include:

- Interpreting population survey results is complicated. For example the 2015 survey report for MentalWell being include the indicator 'Perceptions of neighbourhood – people are willing to help each other'. The result for the Nillumbik sample was 86.1% agree. Given the parameters of the survey, (margin of error, level of certainty) This meant that there was 95% certainty that 'perceptions' result for the parent population was somewhere between 80.8% and 90.3% (Appendix D). Few people understand this, and fewer bother to check the small print qualifications surrounding survey results.
- Surveys that measure beliefs, impressions and attitudes typically give unreliable results that are subject to manipulation, and are often temporary.
- Population surveys such as the VPHS are not annual. While they may publish inter survey results, these are typically adjusted in line with population growth.
- Results dependent upon census figures (via Remplan eg) may be adjusted for inflation in non census years, but are only truly reliable once every 4 years.
- Some of the proposed indicators are difficult to find in the public arena (VPHS), while Council is already outperforming in others (Maternal Health Care).
- It is not possible to account for the reasons for change in survey results. The nominated surveys do not measure the influence of local Council initiatives.

The Financial Plan.

For the first time Council is required to develop a financial plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices. Page 6 'engagement principles' declares the plan to be informed by the 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future' (OPOPOF) initiative. This influence could be evident directly via the engagement around spending and resource allocation decisions. It could also occur indirectly as Council priorities change and aspirations grow and shift.

Inputs from the Community and the Council Plan

Apparently the Financial Plan was informed by social media and local news outlets. Unfortunately what Council gleaned from these sources has not been published.

The indirect input from the OPOPOF initiative includes Council's plans to

- Increase the complexity of service delivery by building in certain health and well being outcomes.
- Expand its waste collection functions
- Promote sustainability
- Expand Business and Tourism function
- Strengthen emergency preparedness
- Modify Council's planning for neighbourhood character
- Improve safety, accessibility and enjoyability
- Enhance Shire's trail network
- Facilitate participation in sports, leisure and recreation
- Improve local transport systems
- Continue sustainable and responsible financial management
- Develop new partnerships with state and federal government.

However there is no evidence of these being costed in either the Council or the Financial Plan.

Content

The Financial Plan should show how the viability and financial sustainability of Council will be achieved and maintained over the 10-year period. The focus is on providing stability, predictability and effective mitigation and management of strategic financial risk. Legislators intend that it explain underlying assumptions, set out key financial statements and explain its underlying strategic rationale. The draft meets some of these elements.

Assumptions

Page 7 contains a list of 14 'escalators'. These imply but do not justify the underlying assumptions. Given the uncertainties surrounding the Covid Pandemic, global economic health and the increasing debt levels of grantors (ie the Federal and State treasuries), it is surprising that Council is willing to commit to central assumptions - CPI and Interest rates eg) without comment and rationale.

Council's CPI interest rates are aligned with the State budget, but are already out of alignment with ABS forecasts. Inflation/interest rates are fundamental to Council's budgeting process but are not included amongst the escalators.

Strategic Planning

Financial modelling over the 10 year time-frame is hobbled by that nature of the community vision statement. The vision makes few definitive statements about that can be tied to a financial plan. Where it does the language is unhelpful. For example it predicts a 13% increase in 'dwellings' over 15 years. It is silent on the 10 year period and it remains unclear if these dwellings are assessable for rating purposes, and what rate categories they are likely to be in.

The most disappointing (and self defeating) feature of the plan is what happens to the forecasts after 2025.. Nothing! That is where the plan needs input from the vision. But there,s none evident. What's missing is a concise vision of Nillumbik 2031. Given such a vision the executive are meant to generate an appropriate financial strategic response.

Deliberative Engagement

The plan's so called 'Engagement Principles' (P.4) challenges many of the principles enunciated in Council's engagement policy, for example

- provide participants in community engagement with relevant, objective, accessible and timely information and resources such as leaflets, rates notice, newspapers, Nillumbik News, social media, direct stakeholder engagement, stalls at community events to allow informed participation.
- recognise barriers to participation and increase opportunities by engaging in meaningful and supportive ways.
- report back to the community on the outcome of the community engagement and how the community's input influenced decision-making.

The act requires that The Financial Plan must include 'information about the decisions and assumptions that underpin (its) forecasts' (S91(b)). LGV guidance states that this should include 'Council's strategic financial planning context and drivers (demographic, economic, community, contextual) as well as financial planning drivers (policy).

A policy statement appears on page 5, but there is no reference to contextual drivers outside of the assumptions (escalators) listed at page 7. That list includes explicit forecasts for CPI and an unexplained flat rate forecast for assessments growth. This shows a minimal attempt to use context to forecast the first 4 years, and a minimalist effort to explain its forecasts, especially those beyond 2025. It basically duplicates of the annual budget predictions, and introduces no new information for Councillors and residents to use in the formulation, through deliberative engagement or otherwise, of a 10 year plus resource allocation plan.

The previous Council ran the underlying surplus down from +5.56% in 2017 to an underlying deficit of -32.8% in 2019/20. This was reduced to an underlying deficit of -0.17% last year with the help of a multi million dollar loan. Further recovery was expected in 21/22, but a substantial and unexplained increase of \$3.1m in the expense 'materials and services' has thwarted that prospect. In turn this converts the +1.9% underlying surplus into an underlying result for the current year of -1.01% . This alone raises serious questions about the impact of the Council Plan, and Council's failure to address a persistent underlying financial imbalance (see debt projections below).

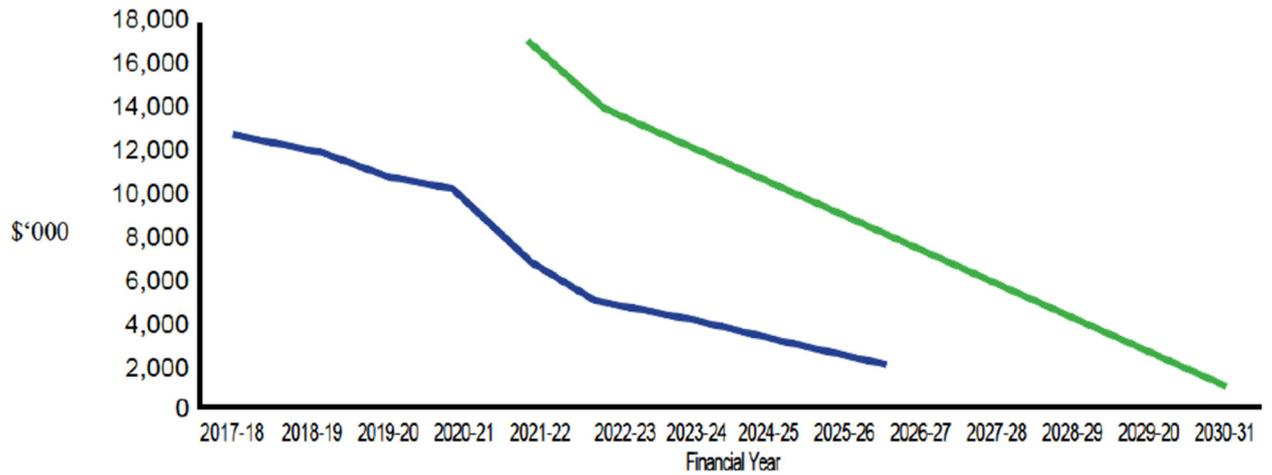
While I would like to follow the subsequent and other impacts of the plan on the budget there is inadequate information. Whereas the deliberative engagement principles and the new integrated planning process-

es were meant to make it easier to de-construct the relationship between the vision, the financial plan and the Council, this is not the case in Nillumbik. In my experience the draft Financial Plan, when considered in conjunction with the Council plan, fails to deliver the information required under S91(a) – 'statements

describing the financial resources required to give effect to the Council plan and other strategic plans of the council.'

Debt

The debt graph (page 5) is eerily familiar as is its rationale. Such a chart was presented upon the election of the previous Council with the promise to repay all debt before the end of its term. That never happened, and the current iteration shows debt continues to increase at disturbing rates. The previous Council inherited a debt held against a productive asset (Eltham Leisure Centre). The current debt is most commonly associated with non productive assets (landfill rehabilitation) and appears to be a systemic problem for Council that is inadequately explained in this plan.



Appendix E discusses the relationship between asset expansion and debt

Integration

The Community vision *'must describe the municipal community's aspirations'* (S88(3)). The aspirations are to be ascertained via Council's deliberative engagement process, which must include *'a process for informing the municipal community of the outcome of the community engagement'*. The Council Plan must be prepared in accordance with strategic planning principles which in turn must address the Community Vision (S89(b)).

The Financial Plan must be developed *'in accordance with its deliberative engagement practice'* [S91(4)] and must describe *'the financial resources required to give effect to the Council Plan'* (S91(3 a)). The Financial Plan *'is informed by and informs the Council Plan'* (LGV Guidance). Together these linkages are central to the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework which is central to the new Act.

Engagement to Vision

Council says *'is representative of feedback received from over 2,000 community participants in the Our People, Our Place, Our Future community engagement program undertaken in early 2021'*. An Officer's report was tabled at Council's May meeting and is available on line (if you know where to look!). It summarises what had been 'heard' in its Vision statement in 9 dot points. Does this satisfy the spirit and letter of the Act, state guidance and its own community engagement policy? I submit that it has fallen short in respect of some key elements of its own principles:

Clear Objectives

'Ensure that all information will be captured in a succinct summary and be available to the community'.

The Officers' Report summarised the raw data without co relations, or detailing how many respondents to the "General Survey" answered each question. Council released the raw data and some observations but I have been unable to locate a succinct summary of the entire OPOPOF Project findings.

Representative*:

See page 2 this submission.

Inclusive and Diverse:

'Provide participants in community engagement with relevant, objective, accessible and timely information and resources such as leaflets, rates notice, newspapers, Nillumbik News, social media, direct stakeholder engagement, stalls at community events to allow informed participation'.

Some of the Fact Sheets circulated in conjunction with the survey fail the relevance and objectivity test. See Appendix A.

Transparent:

Commit to providing participants with updates at key stages throughout the project and why certain feedback may or may not have been taken into account.

Demonstrate that all community contributions and relevant data have been considered, prior to making any decisions that affect the local community.

The previous Council spent a great deal of ratepayers money on the development of a Framework for Engagement, (Phase 1) the content and outcomes of which are not explicitly evident in the development of the Vision, and consequently the Council and Financial Plans (see Table 1 page 3). Table 1 indicates how the Framework is reorganised and how the content shifts from one stage to the next. While the changes in the framework is to be expected in a complex process such as this, a commitment to transparency should entail an explanation of the reasons for the changes.

*Council policy uses the term 'cross section' which is different from 'representative' S56 (c)

While the drift is subtle at times, they are occasionally monumental. Economic and Environmental themes drop away to such an extent that the word 'Economic' appears only once, in the narrow context of factors of health. Despite the clear priorities expressed in the OPOPOF survey, reference to the green wedge is also referenced once, and in anthropocentric terms.

Report back to the community on the outcome of the community engagement and how the community's input influenced decision-making.

Given the drift in the framework, representational and transparency issues, such a report back is sorely need-ed but has not (yet?) been provided.

The Vision, the Community and the Financial Plans

The Act and LGV guidance describe ways in which the vision and the two plans should be interrelated. How-ever the Financial Plan provides no evidence of a serious and dedicated deliberative planning process specific to its scope and depth. Further when searching for the financial impacts that the Council Plan there is no statement to that effect. However there is a lift in line item 'Materials and Services' forecast for next year.

This is potentially linked to Council's plans to integrate health and well being outcomes into the delivery of its services, making them less efficient and therefore more expensive. However the failure to provide notes against the line items, and the failure of the Council Plan to describe the operation of the new layers in its service delivery outcomes, makes it impossible to conclude impacts. The same applies to other aspects of the inter relationship, meaning Council has failed to meet this fundamental transparency principle.

Appendix A

Fact Sheets - Objectivity, reliability and relevance

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

The overview says: 'certain widespread health inequalities persist within the municipality.'

SEIFA: Definition and level of index compared to Greater Melbourne in 2016.

Health Determinants: Food Environment, Alcohol, tobacco and drugs, current smokers data is 3 to 10 years old. Trends and comparisons indicate negative status.

Mental Health: Reported anxiety and depression 2011 – 2017.

Family Violence: Rate per 100,000 residents

Community Safety: Perceptions day and night.

SEIFA: Definition is technically incorrect/incomplete. The score of 1099 in the 2016 census refers to **Socio Economic Relative Disadvantage** only. Three other indices make up the composite index including **Education** and **Economic Resources**.

Selected determinants of health statistics and comments: Not representative of their absolute and relative status compared to VicHealth Indicators (see over extract from Nillumbik LGA Profile VicHealth Indicators Survey 2015 Results).

So what? Readers may have understood that relative health status is poor (and therefore need to be prioritised)

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is mentioned once in a list of 13 priorities under the sub heading Open Space and Sustainability. The fact sheet presents 1 – 3 sentence statements with data about 4 topics.

Tree Canopy: Data on the extent relative to Metropolitan Melbourne.

Waste Diversion: Percentage diverted to landfill in 2019/20 and statement of trend ('relatively constant')

Solar Panels: Current installation status per household for the Shire and 5 selected communities.

Council emissions: tCO₂-e emissions (no definition), water use, electricity consumption e2018 and 2019 Summary

So what? Selection of indicators does not accurately reflect the portrayal in the source document and underplays potential impacts especially loss of flora and fauna and threat of bushfire.

LEARNING, EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY

2 stats on education status, 5 on employment status and workforce distribution, 5 sentence overview of trends in employment. Several sentences on opportunities (heritage, arts culture, tourism).

So what? Fails to represent the emphasis and content of the source document.

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Stats and short statement about 5 categories:

Community Health (1), schools and childcare (2), sport and recreation (3) Local library (2) Arts and cultural participation (1). Text summarises geographic distribution and rates of use.

So what? Average distances ignores actual issues, especially in townships and rural areas. Trends in selected stats rates would have better matched the content of the text.

Indicator results

Crude rates, also known as non-standardised rates, have been presented here to help inform localised planning. Crude rates are not appropriate for comparison between LGAs, as estimates have not been age-standardised and therefore differences may be due, at least in part, to differing age profiles. Details of questions can be found in the full report at: www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/indicators

Indicator	Measure	LGA estimate	LGA estimate confidence interval	Victorian estimate	Victoria least favourable	Victorian range	Victoria most favourable
General wellbeing							
Subjective wellbeing [range 0–100]	average	78.3	[76.3, 80.3]	77.3	74.1		84.0
Satisfaction with life as a whole [range 0–10]	average	7.9	[7.7, 8.1]	7.8	7.6		8.5
Perceptions of safety – walking alone during day	% agree	95.5	[92.8, 97.4]	92.5	84.9		98.9
Perceptions of safety – walking alone after dark	% agree	67.4	[60.6, 73.8]	55.1	36.3		86.9
Mental wellbeing							
Resilience [range 0–8]	average	6.7	[6.5, 7.0]	6.4	5.5		6.9
Perceptions of neighbourhood – people are willing to help each other	% agree	86.1	[80.8, 90.3]	74.1	63.0		96.8
Perceptions of neighbourhood – this is a close-knit neighbourhood	% agree	73.0	[68.3, 79.1]	61.0	45.3		91.9
Perceptions of neighbourhood – people can be trusted	% agree	73.0	[68.3, 79.1]	61.0	45.3		91.9
Low gender equality score							
Physical activity							
0 days per week	%	13.2	[9.1, 18.4]	18.9	32.7		7.4
4 or more days per week	%	49.5	[42.3, 56.8]	41.3	28.6		56.2
organised physical activity							
Participation in any organised physical activity	%	36.4	[29.4, 43.7]	28.7	15.7		39.9
Organised by a fitness, leisure or indoor sports centre	%	15.3	[10.2, 21.7]	9.2	0.0		16.3
Organised by a sports club or association	%	9.8	[6.0, 14.8]	9.8	4.8		21.9
Non-organised physical activity							
Participation in any non-organised physical activity	%	77.0	[70.5, 82.7]	70.5	56.9		85.7
Activity type – walking	%	58.2	[50.8, 65.3]	51.2	43.0		65.1
Activity type – jogging or running	%	12.4	[7.8, 18.4]	14.0	2.4		27.6
Activity type – cycling	%	15.4	[10.2, 21.9]	11.8	3.6		25.2
sedentary behaviour at work							
Time spent sitting on usual work day (Base: Those aged 16–64 years who are working 35 or more hours)	average (hrs. mins)	4:26	[3:48, 5:05]	4:29	5:58		2:21
healthy eating							
Number of serves of vegetables per day*	average	2.6	[2.4, 2.8]	2.2	1.7		2.7
Number of serves of fruit per day*	average	1.7	[1.5, 1.8]	1.6	1.3		1.9
Eats take-away meals/snacks at least three times a week	%	7.1	[3.6, 12.4]	10.2	19.8		1.7
No water consumed per day	%	1.6	[0.6, 3.4]	3.1	11.3		0.2
Number of cups of water consumed per day	average	5.4	[5.0, 5.9]	5.4	4.1		6.6
Alcohol							
At risk of short-term harm each month	%	43.5	[36.2, 51.0]	29.4	51.6		13.3
At very high risk of short-term harm each month	%	12.4	[7.1, 19.6]	9.2	20.6		3.6
Alcohol culture – getting drunk every now and then is okay	% agree	30.8	[23.9, 38.3]	27.9	47.7		15.2
smoking prevalence							
Current smokers**	%	10.7	[6.8, 16.3]	13.1	29.7		5.2



Legend

-  LGA value significantly more favourable than Victorian estimate
-  LGA value significantly less favourable than Victorian estimate
-  LGA value not significantly different from Victorian estimate
-  Sampling variability high, use with caution (relative standard error 25-50%)
-  Victorian estimate

 Range of results across all LGAs

* See Victorian Population Health Survey 2014 for estimates of compliance with the 2013 Australian fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines

** Data from Victorian Population Health Survey 2014

The Victorian Population Health Survey 2014 can be viewed at www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/population-health-systems/health-status-of-victorians/survey-data-and-reports/victorian-population-health-survey/victorian-population-health-survey-2014

No data Relative standard error above 50%, estimate not reported

Relationship between Economics and Health(Australia)

Why Economic Development Strategies are key to Community Health and Well-being

- The 20% of Australians living in the lowest socioeconomic areas in 2014–15 were 1.6 times as likely as the highest 20% to have at least two chronic health conditions, such as heart disease and diabetes(ABS 2015a).
- Australians living in the lowest socioeconomic areas lived about 3 years less than those living in the highest areas in 2009–2011 (NHPA 2013).
- If all Australians had the same death rates as people living in the highest socioeconomic areas in 2009–2011, overall mortality rates would have reduced by 13%—and there would have been 54,000 fewer deaths (AIHW 2014d).
- People reporting the worst mental and physical health (those in the bottom 20%) in 2006 were twice as likely to live in a poor-quality or overcrowded dwelling (Mallett et al. 2011).
- Mothers in the lowest socioeconomic areas were 30% more likely to have a low birthweight baby than mothers in the highest socioeconomic areas in 2013 (AIHW 2015a).
- A higher proportion of people with an employment restriction due to a disability lived in the lowest socioeconomic areas (26%) than in the highest socioeconomic areas (12%) in 2012 (AIHW analysis of ABS 2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers).
- Unemployed people were 1.6 times as likely to use cannabis, 2.4 times as likely to use meth/ampheta-mines and 1.8 times as likely to use ecstasy as employed people in 2013 (AIHW 2014e).
- Dependent children living in the lowest socioeconomic areas in 2013 were 3.6 times as likely to be exposed to tobacco smoke inside the home as those living in the highest socioeconomic areas (7.2% compared with 2.0%) (AIHW analysis of the 2013 National Drug Strategy Household Survey).
- People in low economic resource households spend proportionally less on medical and health care than other households (3.0% and 5.1% of weekly equivalised expenditure, respectively, in 2009–10)(ABS 2012).
- People living in the lowest socioeconomic areas in 2014–15 were more than twice as likely to delay seeing—or not see—a dental professional due to cost compared with those living in the highest socio-economic areas (28% compared with 12%) (ABS 2015b).

Appendix B Community Vision 'What we heard'

Element	Category	Action?
Our Green Wedge is valued,	En	
Our Green Wedge is admired,	En	
Our Green Wedge is protected,	En	y
Inclusion is championed in all areas of community life	SC	
participation is championed in all areas of community life	SC	
reconciliation is championed in all areas of community life	SC	
equitable access to services is championed in all areas of community life	SC	
equitable access to opportunities, is championed in all areas of community life	SC	
The mental well being of our residents is supported through targeted, evidence based initiatives	SC	
The physical wellbeing of our residents is supported through targeted, evidence based initiatives	SC	
We facilitate education on climate change	Ed/cc 1	y
We facilitate action on climate change	cc 1	y
Housing diversity promotes quality lifestyles	H	
Housing diversity protects the local character and environment	H 2	
Connected transport systems, are accessible to all residents	I (t)	
public and active transport, are accessible to all residents	I (t)	y
appropriate (transport) infrastructure is accessible to all residents	I (t) 4	y
There is a greater emphasis on a reduce approach to waste management	W	y
There is a greater emphasis on a refuse approach to waste management	W	
There is a greater emphasis on a reuse approach to waste management	W	
There is a greater emphasis on a repurpose approach to waste management	W	
There is a greater emphasis on a recycle approach to waste management	W 5	
An increased focus on minimising energy use,	En/fi 4	y
An increased focus on minimising local, renewable energy production	I (e) 1	y
Environmental emergencies are managed effectively	SC	y
health emergencies are managed effectively	SC 9	y

Community has told us that these 26 elements are particularly important in Nillumbik

APPENDIX C: Content of the Council Plan

The Council Plan must (include):

- the strategic direction of Council
- strategic objectives for achieving that direction
- strategies for achieving the objectives (for at least 4 years)
- strategic indicators for monitoring achievement
- description of initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure, and amenity
- developing background papers and gathering data
- ensuring linkages are made to adopted strategies, policies, and plans
- planning and commissioning community engagement processes
- analysing inputs and information from a broad range of sources regarding priorities and emerging issues
- framing and proposing broad strategic objectives, strategies, and major initiatives in draft form for Council and community consideration.

In fulfilling these content requirements, the plan:

- outlines the strategic agenda for the Council during its term including the steps it will take to implement the Community Vision
- will contain a strong narrative of the opportunities and challenges facing Council and how these will be addressed or realised
- must be respondent to community engagement and aspirations
- demonstrates linkages and connections to relevant regional, state, and national plans
- does not address all the things that Council does, but it will reflect the major challenges facing Council and community and outline objectives, strategies, and initiatives to deliver change and positive improvement.
- is a major influence on the Budget process with transparent links through strategies, initiatives, and performance indicators
- must consider Financial Plan opportunities and constraints but will also contemplate growing the pool of available resources through partnerships, advocacy, or regional collaboration
- is informed by, and informs Councils 1 plus 3-year Budget, Rating and Revenue Plan and Workforce Plan
- has a dynamic relationship with mandated (MSS / MPPH) and other major policies, strategies, and plans
- performance against strategic indicators and progress on initiatives and major activities in the Council Plan must transparently link through the Budget, Annual Report, and other reporting mechanisms
- consideration of what parts of the Community Vision will translate into the Council Plan
- how will the Council Plan be structured and what are the Council's strategic objectives for the next 4-years?
- how the community will be engaged in the Council Planning process?
- how will strategies be developed, tested, and then scheduled across the 4-year period?
- what are the major initiatives and activities that will be included?
- what strategic indicators and performance measures will be included to enhance accountability?

Local Government Victoria

Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework (ISPRF) 2021
Via Engage Victoria online.

Appendix D- Audit of Council Strategies for Type

COMMUNITY AND CONNECTION	
EQUITY AND INCLUSION	
We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	L
We actively work towards reconciliation and the process of healing with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and recognise them as the Traditional Owners of the land and waterways of Nil-lumbik	A
We protect Aboriginal cultural heritage, and through building trust, education and celebration, we respect all First Nations people	N
We aim to make Council's programs, services, processes and information accessible and inclusive	L
We encourage and support volunteering to enable community participation opportunities and active-ly celebrate these contributions.	N
HEALTH AND WELL BEING	
We address the social, environmental and economic factors of health to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for our communities	A
We work with our local partners, government and non-government agencies to respond to health and wellbeing priorities in Nillumbik.	A
AGES AND STAGES	
We work towards creating an age-friendly community where all people regardless of their age or ability can live a good quality of life	A
We actively engage people of all ages and stages in decisions that affect them, ensuring that initiatives meet current and emerging needs	A
We ensure people of all ages and stages have access to inclusive services that respond to their individual needs	L
We focus on lifelong learning as a way to support our residents through key life stages.	L
PLACE AND SPACE	
Identity	
We celebrate and prioritise the protection of our heritage, arts and culture, places and spaces by focusing on the diversity of experiences that have shaped our shared history	L
We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	A
We recognise and celebrate our community's significant contributions to art and culture.	A
Neighbourhood character	
We respect and enhance the unique neighbourhood character in our communities to ensure a considered approach to planning and development	N
We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	L
We value everyday arts and cultural experiences through the development of public art	
We champion good design in our public buildings and developments that is consistent with local character.	A
Open spaces	

We carefully protect, plan, maintain and improve open spaces, streetscapes and places to ensure that they are safe, accessible and enjoyable	N
We continue to enhance the Shire's shared trail network, working proactively to improve connectivity	N
We facilitate participation in sports, leisure and recreational activities.	N
Movement and place	
We work to understand what residents, businesses and visitors need from modes of transport, to ensure that getting around is easy, accessible, safe and sustainable	N
We champion the notion of living locally; making it easier for people to meet most of their daily needs within the Shire	A
We continue to deliver on our road management responsibilities; working to enhance infrastructure that aligns with the character of the neighbourhood	N
We prioritise and actively advocate for new and better public transport options and a reduction of private car use and dependence	N
We work with our community, neighbouring councils and transport and planning agencies to advocate for improved transport solutions.	N
SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT	
Climate action	
We take decisive action on climate change	N
We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation.	N
Sustainability	
We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	N
We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	A
We favour sustainable and innovative investment; focussing on renewable energy initiatives	A
We seek to embed sustainability initiatives in the planning scheme	A
We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and government agencies to promote sustainability.	N
Business and tourism	
We promote Nillumbik's unique offerings; supporting a vibrant local economy and encouraging tourism	N
We support businesses, industries and events, and encourage investment within Nill	N
We support sustainable agricultural pursuits and their contribution to Nillumbik and the broader community	N
We provide spaces, places and opportunities that develop, and actively support our creative industries.	N
Resilience and recovery	
We support individuals, families and the community to be mentally and physically healthy, safe and enabled to participate in relief and recovery processes arising from crisis or emergency	A
We strengthen emergency preparedness, prevention, response and recovery through the sharing of emergency management information and capabilities	N
We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and government agencies to develop processes that are flexible, tailored, relevant and adaptive to the changing needs of the community.	L
RESPONSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE	
Good governance	

We maintain good governance and transparency; clearly defining and communicating the role of Councillors and Council	L
We are forward-thinking, data-driven and evidence-led in our decision making, always looking to identify new opportunities	A
We will continue to be an employer of choice	A
We foster a positive organisational culture, from the top down.	A
Risk management	
We continue to meet Council's responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	N
We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	A
We acknowledge our role in managing the significance of global risks.	A
Services and programs	
We aim to ensure that Council's service delivery is equitable, accessible and inclusive	L
We enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our services, prioritising a great customer experience	L
We communicate clearly and regularly, taking the time to listen and engage with our community	N
We source alternative and innovative funding sources to support and complement Council services and infrastructure	N
We partner with state and federal governments to advocate in our community's best interests	L
We work with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung to develop strategies and projects that deliver meaningful acknowledgement as Traditional Owners.	N

LEGEND A: Aspirational L: Qualitative N: Quantitative

Appendix E

The relationship between Infrastructure and Debt Sample of high level strategic assessment

Integrating infrastructure planning with land use is a critical factor, but striking a balance between major newbuilds and initiatives that reduce demand and get the most of out of Nillumbik's existing infrastructure is just as important. Achieving this balance will require open conversations with residents and ratepayers about the level of infrastructure that is expected, and the extent to which they are willing to pay for access to improved infrastructure and the trade-offs between the two. Crucial to these discussions will be evidence-led policies, robust data and careful analysis to support investment proposals and to base decisions on.

To ensure Council realises full value from its assets, Council will need to effectively plan for, manage, and effectively utilise existing assets. Effective management of these assets requires the collection of appropriate information, including their value, cost to maintain and operate, condition, performance, risk and utilisation. Adequate planning for established areas such as Nillumbik requires an appreciation of the existing services and facilities, including capacity, condition and the potential to increase, decrease or modify the services that are offered here.

With the introduction of a rate cap in 2016, many councils implemented efficiency reforms to reduce costs including organisation restructures, asset sales, collaborative purchasing, reviews of discretionary services and fleet vehicle reductions. However, evidence is emerging of an under investment in capital infrastructure by financially-constrained smaller councils.³⁹ Over time, the under-investment in social infrastructure renewal by councils will have long-term negative impacts on the quality and safety of local roads, and the availability of community facilities across Victoria.

A number of Nillumbik's facilities managed by or on behalf of Council are ageing and will require significant expenditure to upgrade them to contemporary standards, both in terms of community expectations and current design standards. Further, local conditions present a number of infrastructure challenges for Council. Nillumbik has steep topography and is heavily treed, which both add to infrastructure and maintenance costs.

One of Council's biggest challenges in relation to the provision of infrastructure is the ability to adequately address the funding gap for renewal and maintenance of existing infrastructure assets. Underspending on renewal is not a saving, as higher costs will eventually be borne by future ratepayers.

Social infrastructure in the future: what we can expect

Changing demographics will impact on the provision of social infrastructure. The funding gap for social infrastructure renewal and maintenance will widen as less traditional funding is available. Partnerships, co-location and innovative delivery solutions to the provision of social infrastructure will become more important in the future. Under-supply of services and infrastructure will mean the broader community will have lower quality of life and economic opportunities.

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Submissions

Submitter Number	Contribution ID	Submitter Name	Submission	Officer Response
1	17793	[REDACTED]	<p>There appears to be an underlying reliance on asset sales and one would assume primarily land sales. One can only hope that Council is not intending to try and sell off the deeply valued and highly important parks and reserves which the community fought so hard to retain in community hands in the recent 5 years.</p> <p>While the Local Government Act 2020 does not require the Asset Plan to be endorsed until June 2022, it seems incongruous that there can be true alignment between these two documents when they are not developed and endorsed simultaneously.</p> <p>Greater explanation around projections - specifically projected asset sales - would be appropriate. As it is, this Financial Plan is unsatisfactory because of these gaps.</p>	<p>No land sales are forecast in the financial plan projections.</p> <p>The underlying assumptions and principals of the Financial Plan are disclosed in sections 2.3 and 1.4 respectively, and are in compliance with the Local Government Act 2020, the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions Financial Plan Better Practice Guide and Model and the Australian Accounting Standards Board standards.</p>
2	17792	[REDACTED]	<p>Given long-known impacts of climate change and the need to significantly MITIGATE and ADAPT, Council's Financial Plan MUST acknowledge this and allocate appropriate funds to these actions [of mitigating and adapting]. The financial plan must also forecast costs associated with pressures of climate change, and these must be applied to all sectors - from environment and health, to changes in transport and more. The plan ought to consider likely benefits of transitioning to zero carbon.</p> <p>This is essential if we are to develop a sustainable economy; reverse ongoing declines in biodiversity and reinvigorate ecosystems; ensure the well being of all life; and enable healthy agriculture. As clearly stated in recent community consultations that are meant to shape Council documents, top priorities are Preservation of the Green Wedge, Protection of environment and biodiversity and Action on climate change.</p> <p>Awareness of climate change and likely impacts must be at the heart of the financial plan, as currently it is presented as though we can proceed 'as normal'. This leaves Nillumbik in an extremely precarious position.</p> <p>There are many documents that ought to be referred to, such as Local Government Climate Change Adaptation Roles and Responsibilities under Victorian legislation: https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0030</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p> <p>The Financial Plan is a guiding document intended to demonstrate Council is financially able to support the Community Vision and the Council Plan, while maintaining current levels of service to the community.</p> <p>Throughout the projected period, the Financial Plan has maintained the agility to financially respond to changes in service level requirements, cost shifting, or new projects as required.</p>

			/490476/Local-Government-Roles-and-Responsibilities-for-Adaptation-under-Victorian-Legislation_Guidance-Brief.pdf	
3	17790	██████████ ██████ PALS	Attachment 1.1	<p>Council's overall financial sustainability is not underpinned by grant funding.</p> <p>The grants forecast in the Financial Plan projections relate to the delivery of specific services and projects, and also includes the annual Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants, which all Australian councils are eligible to receive.</p> <p>There is no assumption in the Financial Plan to exceed the State Government rate cap.</p> <p>The overall assumption of the Financial Plan is to continue to provide services to the community at their current levels and undertake capital works programs within the scope of available funding.</p>
4	17781	██████████	<p>It is vitally important to invest in clean energy + protecting the environment for a more economical + safe future.</p> <p>We can not deny climate change !</p>	Submission noted.
5	17772	██████████	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>I have lived and paid rates in Nillumbik council for 28 years. I am disappointed that there was no acknowledgement of climate action in your plan for our Green Wedge Area. Think future generations.</p> <p>This is just an absolute joke and I am sure that 90% of people who live in this area would</p>	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
6	17770	██████████ ██████████	Is there a budgeted amount for climate action? I saw no mention of it in the financial plan	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.

7	17769	████████	<p>I have made a submission to the Draft Community Vision - Nillumbik 2040, where I outlined that the Vision appears to be "business as usual" and doesn't take anywhere near sufficient account of the effects that the accelerating climate emergency is having and will have on the planet and our lives. Because the Vision to inform climate action is insufficient, the Draft Council Plan is insufficient, and therefore, how can I expect the Draft Financial Plan 2021-31 to be sufficient? It is imperative that an ambitious Climate Action Plan is backed up by allocation of funds and resources for climate mitigation and adaptation measures. This needs to be a priority for Council so it can do the best to protect the community against the times that lie ahead.</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p>
8	17766	████████	<p>I am dissappointed that there was no mention of climate action and or finance to support after the recent IPCC report was released. For a Green Area council I would think this would be one of the top priorities for our current and future generations.</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p>
9	17749	████████ ████████	<p>Where is the funding for climate action?</p> <p>We are the green wedge, you need be leading the charge.</p> <p>We pay massive rates, use some of that for sustainability and climate action plans.</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p>
10	17745	████████	<p>There appears to be a lack of funding to help mitigate the effects of the Climate Emergency we are currently living through. The funds and resources accumulated must be allocated within the Council Financial Plan to address the Climate Emergency; via reduction of carbon emissions throughout council operations, and through increased community awareness.</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p>
11	17742	████████ ████████	<p>Where is the funding for climate action coming from?</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual</p>

				budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
12	17738	██████████	<p>Feedback for the Draft Financial Plan 2021-2031</p> <p>A search of the draft Financial Plan 2021-2031 appears to contain no mention of allocation of funds for climate action. As we have stated in our submission for the draft Council Plan 2021-2025, and the draft Community Vision 2040, it is imperative that financial resources be allocated in the Financial Plan to address the accelerating climate crisis. The urgency of the situation (see Sixth IPCC report) is such that funds need to immediately be made available to ensure an adequate mitigation and adaptation response to the worst effects of a dangerously warming climate. This must be the number one priority of Council, in order to ensure the health and well-being of all living things in the shire, human and non-human alike.</p> <p>Nillumbik Climate Emergency Action Team</p>	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
13	17731	██████████ ██████████	The draft Financial Plan contains no mention of allocation of funds for climate action. This is a serious oversight and should be considered. Climate change is already with us and will only get worse. It is not an if, it is locked in. It is the only responsible thing to do is to ensure this is recognised on your financial plan so please include where the funding for climate action is coming from.	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
14	17728	██████████	There is no mention of allocation of funds for climate action. Where is the funding for climate action coming from?? In light of the IPCC report this is very distressing for our high-risk (think bushfires) locality.	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
15	17714	██████████	Where is the funding for climate action coming from?	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the

				document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
16	17704	██████████ ██████████	I love the lack of clarity about where funding for climate action is coming from! So good! Love the amount of climate anxiety it gives me! Get your act together.	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
17	17694	██████████	Please see attached document. Attachment 1.2	<p>One of the key underlying assumptions of the Financial Plan is to continue to provide services to the community at their current levels and undertake capital works programs within the scope of available funding.</p> <p>The Financial Plan has maintained the agility to respond to differing service level requirements, new projects and unforeseen events throughout the projected period. Any required financial response can be addressed either through the annual budget process or at the time it arises.</p> <p>The underlying assumptions and principals of the Financial Plan are disclosed in sections 2.3 and 1.4 respectively, and are in compliance with the Local Government Act 2020, the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions Financial Plan Better Practice Guide and Model and the Australian Accounting Standards Board standards.</p> <p>The Financial Plan does, within the underlying assumptions, take into account current market conditions, including impacts of the pandemic.</p> <p>There is no correlation between setting discretionary fees and charges and the rate cap. Movement in fees and charges are based on cost recovery, benchmarking against other Council's and similar offerings in the market.</p> <p>The reserves are captured in the balance sheet (Equity, Reserves). The Financial Statements contained within the financial plan are prepared in</p>

				compliance with the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions Financial Plan Better Practice Guide and Model and the Australian Accounting Standards Board standards.
18	17689	██████████ ██████████	As money is so cheap now I think the emphasis should be on borrowing to build. The paying down of debt should not be a priority in this financial climate. Because we are such a small rate base with residents who have high expectations for services and amenities , each expenditure needs to support a vision and a real outcome and should be able to pass the pub test. There are many past expenditures that have failed such a test, for example the unnecessary redesign of the Shire Logo.	<p>Council's current loan portfolio has been established to support capital works projects. Considered on an annual basis as part of the budget cycle, Council approaches borrowings with the intent of maintaining overall financial sustainability and capacity to repay.</p> <p>The forecast repayment of borrowings is based on current loan agreements. No assumption is made on accelerated repayments or additional borrowings beyond those currently budgeted the 2021/2022 financial year.</p>
19	17685	██████████	<p>The Draft Financial Plan, while meeting its statutory requirements, does not provide any clear link to the Community Vision or the draft Council Plan to inform the community on how the Vision or Plan are prioritised and funds allocated. This should be a critical addition to the Financial Plan, to engage with and inform us, and enable our meaningful contribution. I recognise there are risks in doing this - Council can be held to account for funds spent or not spent, but how else do we know?</p> <p>For example, how are we meant to identify what, if any, funds are allocated to implementing the Climate Action Plan or the Pandemic Recovery Plan. Where, when and how is the 'decisive action on climate change' to be funded, both for mitigation and adaptation? What programs exist under the Green Wedge Management Plan and what funds have been allocated - both operating and capital?</p> <p>I strongly suggest that Council prepare and include a supplement that provides direct links to the Council Plan and its priorities to make the process transparent. This will also highlight flaws in the Council Plan that propose 'strategies' that are typically very generic without specific actions. I recognise that many strategies can be implemented through 'business-as-usual' activities and are difficult to pinpoint in funding and resource terms, but in all cases to implement a strategy requires effort that needs to be funded and accounted for.</p>	<p>There is an annual allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions, which are reviewed and prioritised through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p> <p>The Financial Plan is a guiding document intended to demonstrate Council is financially able to support the Community Vision and the Council Plan, while maintaining current levels of service to the community.</p> <p>Throughout the projected period, the Financial Plan has maintained the agility to financially respond to changes in service level requirements, cost shifting, or new projects as required.</p> <p>The Planning Scheme does not provide for, as of right, dwelling approval or lot yields based on land size. Instead, each planning application for either house developments or subdivision, must be assessed on their merit against the relevant policies within the Planning Scheme.</p> <p>Nilumbik has a very low growth rate, the lowest in Metropolitan Melbourne. The underlying growth assumption is based on historical and current growth data.</p>

			<p>I have also made comment on the draft Community Vision and draft Council Plan that align with my comments above.</p> <p>That said, the proposed budgets and increases in revenues are reasonable and appropriate for Nillumbik.</p> <p>One final comment - the assumption regarding the number of new dwellings is constant at 130 per annum for 10 years. Where is the end point? How many dwellings can be accommodated under the current planning scheme and what is the projection for this in the long term?</p>	
20	17648	██████████	<p>Has any funding been allocated to combat Climate Change? To encourage residents to change behaviours?</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p>
21	17638	██████████	<p>The draft financial plan contains no mention of allocation of funds for climate action. Funds are essential, especially over the next 5 years, to undertake works to limit the negative effects climate change will have on our community.</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p>
22	17637	Eltham Community Action Group Inc	<p>Attachment 1.3</p>	<p>The Financial Plan has been prepared in compliance with the Local Government Act 2020, the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions Financial Plan Better Practice Guide and Model and the Australian Accounting Standards Board standards.</p> <p>The overall assumption of the Financial Plan is to continue to provide services to the community at their current levels and undertake capital works programs within the scope of available funding.</p> <p>The Financial Plan has maintained the agility to respond to differing service level requirements, new projects and unforeseen events throughout the</p>

				<p>projected period. Any required financial response can be addressed either through the annual budget process or at the time it arises.</p> <p>There is an annual allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions, which are reviewed and prioritised through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p> <p>The ten year capital works program is informed through programmed works and prioritised projects. Through the annual budget process, specific projects are identified and works can be prioritised where need is identified. As new funding opportunities become available, additional projects may be added to the program.</p> <p>Investment in Council's asset portfolio is reviewed on an annual basis which will be further strengthened by the establishment of an integrated asset management system which will inform future decisions on renewal and maintenance.</p> <p>The Financial Plan and the annual budget are separate documents. The budget document and strategic resource plan is prepared annually, reviewing resources required for services, projects and actions. The Financial Plan is a guiding document, the intent of which is to demonstrate Council's financial sustainability in order to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and the Council Plan.</p>
23	17634	██████████	<p>Please can you flesh out where the funds for implantation of Climate Action plans are coming from? I can't see any details. Thanks, ██████████</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p>

24	17629	██████████	I am wondering where the allocation of funds for climate action is located in this plan? That is something I, as a rate payer in Nillumbik, would expect to see here. Thank you.	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
25	17627	██████████	“1.1 Strategic Planning Principles b) The Financial Plan addresses the Community Vision by allocating funds towards the actions in the four year Council Plan.” Does the Council Plan not then have any Climate Change mitigation actions included, as I can see no reference to funding for this?	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
26	17625	██████████	I submitted earlier today but have had no acknowledgement of receipt. I am resending. ██████████	Duplicate submission. Refer to submission 35.
27	17619	██████████ ██████████	The Draft Financial Plan 2021-2031 does not refer to costs needed to try to mitigate the climate emergency. The Council must do all it can to mitigate the climate emergency, which will require financial costs. This should be factored in to all council and the broader community operations.	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
28	17612	██████████	Where is the funding for climate action coming from???	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
29	17611	██████████	As the current Climate Emergency is the fundamental crisis of our times, it is imperative that Council be prepared to act to mitigate its effects and to bring carbon emissions down by both council operations and to enable the community to play their part. This will require priority funding at all levels and departments of council, but I fail to see any funding for this in the financial plan!	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the

				document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
30	17609	██████████	<p>Look I am not an accountant, but I used the "find" search mechanism, and put in "climate", "energy", "carbon", "wind", "bushfire" - and got no matches at all.</p> <p>Is Council really planning to spend zero \$\$ on climate change related matters - be they for mitigation efforts or re adaptation to the crisis, not even solar panels for Council infrastructure...? If we have a summer like the one the northern hemisphere has just had, it's hard to believe there would be no \$\$ required from Council in support of the community.</p> <p>If Council wishes to work towards reducing its carbon footprint, which I sincerely hope it does, it's hard to believe that intention is real if no \$\$ are allocated towards those efforts.</p> <p>Please take the climate crisis seriously.</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p> <p>Council has invested in solar panels across Council buildings and infrastructure over the last three years and is currently investigating further solar-related opportunities.</p>
31	17608	██████████	<p>Where is the funding for climate action coming from? This needs to be fixed! We need Council to take strong action, and we need it funded!</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p>
32	17606	██████████	<p>My Comment on the Draft Financial Plan. It is hard to understand how, in the year 2021, with world wide recognition of the dire state of the planet, there appears to be no funding allocated toward a climate action plan! Nillumbik Council could be leading the community ... SHOULD be leading the community, and setting an example both with it's actions and on-line and face to face advice. As this is a draft, I hope those responsible will correct this incredibly irresponsible omission. I am 76 years old. I have lived in Nillumbik for 40 years. I always believed Nillumbik was a leader in environmental responsibility ... this is very disappointing! Thank you</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.</p>
33	17604	██████████ ██████████	<p>There should be provision for the most important issue that our community faces Climate Change</p>	<p>There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is</p>

				reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
34	17601	██████████	<p>Why is there no mention of climate action? We live in the green wedge and there is no indication of worthwhile sustainable practise? This is severely disappointing given that we live in the 'green wedge'. It is also very disheartening to see coming from a young persons perspective.</p> <p>Why are you not following the latest scientific advice in the IPCC report that was published just a few weeks ago? It is also pure fact and scientific based evidence that action must me taken. It would be extremely ignorant and inhuman to not follow this advice...</p> <p>This is quite embarrassing for the Nillumbik Shire. Nillumbik is far behind and backwards compared to many other shires in Victoria and is starting to obtain a reputation for not being forward with climate action. It would definitely be advisable for this plan to be amended and climate action to be acknowledged if you want Nillumbik to still remain an attractive and growing area to live in.</p>	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
35	17594	██████████	Attachment 1.4	There is an annual funding allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions and any projects which are in addition to current services provided. The funding allocation is reviewed and prioritised each year through the annual budget process. Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period.
36	17422	██████████ ██████████	<p>This plan locks in 1.5% rate increase this year increasing to 2.34% rate increases in line with Victorian Government CPI Index projections over the next 10 years.</p> <p>The plan strategy includes several statements and strategies that rely on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borrowings to renew assets • Leaving open the option of increasing rates further to fund operational increases <p>This is not consistent with the election commitments of five of the seven councillors where campaigns focused on reducing high</p>	<p>Council is guided by the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) financial sustainability indicators which includes considerations regarding minimising the renewal gap and investing in assets to maintain pace with depreciation (useful life of the asset).</p> <p>There is no assumption in the Financial Plan to exceed the State Government rate cap over the projected period.</p> <p>Council's current loan portfolio has been established to support capital works projects. Considered on an</p>

		<p>council costs, not borrowing funds to leave debt to future generations, and operating transparently and sustainably. Given the tight council budget, how does council intend to renew infrastructure to meet obligations to residents and law without passing on these costs to residents?</p> <p>The Council Plan and Council Strategy commit to the importance of the environment and the significant increase in the management of public land, parks and street scapes for our safety as one of the priority areas. The budget that is used to fund these activities is the parks and street scapes budget. Can council explain how they are going to achieve a significant increase in management for safety at the same time as they report a significant reduction in the budget that pays for these activities please (ie, the budget is being cut by more than half)? Can council confirm the breakdown in allocation of this planned expenditure across rural and urban areas please?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021-22 \$967,000 (\$2,238 per square km) • 2022-23 \$561,000 • 2023-24 \$413,000 • 2024-25 \$546,000 • 2025-26 \$486,000 (\$1,125 per square km) <p>Road and roadside management in rural areas is, for the most part, the responsibility of council and is a priority focus area in many council plans. Rural road condition is so poor in many areas it now requires more frequent attention as surfaces have delaminated. Can council explain how they are going to deliver this attention at the same time as they report a significant reduction in the budget that pays for these activities please? Can council disclose the allocation of budgeted funds across urban and rural roads and bridges for transparency please?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021-22 \$5,113,000 (\$6,640 per linear km assuming 770 linear km roads & bridges) • 2022-23 \$3,378,000 • 2023-24 \$3,344,000 • 2024-25 \$3,949,000 • 2025-25 \$3,677,000 (\$4,775 per linear km *assuming 770 linear km roads & bridges) <p>Rural residents significantly under use council facilities, services, amenities, leisure facilities and other services and costs compared to urban residents. Council plans commit council to significantly improving management of council facilities. Can council confirm which recreational, leisure and community facilities will be missing</p>	<p>annual basis as part of the budget cycle, Council approaches borrowings with the intent of maintaining overall financial sustainability and capacity to repay.</p> <p>The forecast repayment of borrowings is based on current loan agreements. No assumption is made on accelerated repayments or additional borrowings beyond those currently budgeted the 2021/2022 financial year.</p> <p>Council services, operational and capital expenditure are not based on geographic locations.</p> <p>The capital works program is informed by a combination of criteria set out by regulatory bodies, community need, overall usage and safety requirements.</p> <p>The overall allocation to the capital works program remains stable throughout the projected period. Current projections forecast fluctuations in spend by category year on year, these forecast allocations are reviewed annually as part of the budget process and if necessary programmed works and projects are reprioritised accordingly.</p> <p>Investment in Council's asset portfolio is reviewed on an annual basis which will be further strengthened by the establishment of an integrated asset management system which will inform future decisions on renewal and maintenance.</p> <p>The level of services provided to the community are not forecast to change throughout the projected period. Should there be any change in the level of services required this will be reviewed as part of the annual budget.</p>
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			<p>out on this management because of planned budget cuts included in the plan? Can council also report the breakdown of expenditure by urban facilities and rural facilities so that this is transparent? Can council also report the breakdown of expenditure by urban service users and rural service users so that this is transparent?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021-22 \$14,617,000 (\$223 per resident) • 2022-23 \$8,178,000 • 2023-24 \$5,210,000 (\$79 per resident) • 2024-25 \$4,604,000 • 2025-26 \$4,123,000 (\$63 per resident) <p>The budget forecasts include a significant "other" infrastructure growth expense, the purpose of which is not disclosed in the budget and the source of funding is not clear. Can council disclose the purpose and funding source for this expense? Can council also report the breakdown of the expenditure of these funds by urban and rural residents please so that this is transparent?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021-22 \$1,204,000 (\$18.41 per resident) • 2022-23 \$3,346,000 • 2023-24 \$3,876,000 • 2024-25 \$4,967,000 • 2025-26 \$5,294,000 (\$80.98 per resident) <p>Despite significant funding cuts to Council services used by rural residents who graze and hobby farm in Nillumbik, and a commitment by council to better manage council assets and infrastructure for safety and amenity (without the budget allocations that will allow this to occur) Council still projects a declining asset renewal performance. How is council going to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver it's stated action objectives – to improve management action for safety and amenity and • Steady declining asset renewal performance? 	
37	17361	██████ ██████	<p>Wow. I have said it for years and this plan has not changed my views. Broadly speaking as a rural resident I don't need my rates spent on continued upgrades to little used facilities like playgrounds the hub, and libraries. The amount spent on these and other facilities is ridiculous, while all the while the money spent on our rural roads goes down and down. Less money to spend on eradicating the weeds like blackberries. Less money to take care of roadsides. What this means is the roads become less safe. And people will die, when trees block their access out in the next black Saturday. Stop wasting money on things like reviewing things that don't need review. And paying consultants. And</p>	<p>The ten year capital works program is informed through programmed works and prioritised projects. Through the annual budget process, specific projects are identified and works can be prioritised where need is identified. As new funding opportunities become available, additional projects may be added to the program.</p> <p>Investment in Council's asset portfolio is reviewed on an annual basis which will be further strengthened by the establishment of an integrated asset management</p>

			<p>upgrading things that are perfectly good to begin with. And provide ratepayers with safer rural areas.</p>	<p>system which will inform future decisions on renewal and maintenance.</p> <p>The overall assumption of the Financial Plan is to continue to provide services to the community at their current levels and undertake capital works programs within the scope of available funding.</p>
38		<p>██████████ ██████</p>	<p>Attachment 1.5</p>	<p>Within the construction of the document there is no specific reference to any of the Council Plan actions over the projected period. There is an annual allocation contained within the financial plan to support the delivery of Council Plan actions, which are reviewed and prioritised through the annual budget process.</p> <p>The underlying assumptions and principals are disclosed in sections 2.3 and 1.4 respectively, and are in compliance with the Local Government Act 2020 (including s91b), the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions Financial Plan Better Practice Guide and Model and the Australian Accounting Standards Board standards.</p> <p>Council's borrowings are underpinned by large capital works projects, informed by renewal gap requirements, external regulations (e.g. Environmental Protection Agency requirements) and ongoing safety measures.</p> <p>Growth assumptions are 130 assessment per year, which when based on the 2021/2022 forecast, is growth of 8 percent over 15 years.</p> <p>The underlying driver of the 2019/2020 financial year deficit was attributable to the recognition of grant income as unearned income in the balance sheet rather than as income in the income statement under AASB 1058. The increase in employee entitlement provisions and the increase in the provision for landfill rehabilitation also impacted the final result. Forecasts show a stabilising trend, reflecting limited growth in own-source revenue and maintenance of operational expenditure in line with service levels.</p>

				<p>The budgeted and forecast results for the 2020-2021 financial year are yet to be confirmed through the annual financial statements. The underlying result is impacted by the interest expense associate with borrowings, but not the principal loan balance. Loan balances are recognised within the balance sheet.</p> <p>Council's current loan portfolio has been established to support capital works projects. Considered on an annual basis as part of the budget cycle, Council approaches borrowings with the intent of maintaining overall financial sustainability and capacity to repay.</p> <p>The forecast repayment of borrowings is based on current loan agreements. No assumption is made on accelerated repayments or additional borrowings beyond those already budgeted the 2021/2022 financial year.</p> <p>Investment in Council's asset portfolio is reviewed on an annual basis which will be further strengthened by the establishment of an integrated asset management system which will inform future decisions on renewal and maintenance.</p> <p>The overall assumption of the Financial Plan is to continue to provide services to the community at their current levels and undertake capital works programs within the scope of available funding.</p>
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**NILLUMBIK SHIRE COUNCIL
COMBINED SUBMISSION
26 August 2021 on:**

Community Vision / Nillumbik	2040
Council Plan	2021 – 2025
Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan	2021-2025
Financial Plan	2021-2031

This submission is made on behalf of Nillumbik Pro-active Landowners (PALS).

NILLUMBIK SHIRE COUNCIL

COMBINED SUBMISSION on:

Community Vision/Nillumbik 2040
Council Plan 2021 – 2025
Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
Financial Plan 2021-2031

This submission is made on behalf of Nillumbik Pro-active Landowners (PALs)

PALs represent approximately 1600 members and their families - mainly across rural and semi rural areas of the Shire.



INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

PALs are appalled that Nillumbik Shire Council ("NSC") would release 4 plans – particularly plans described as "our key strategic documents" – with prospective application for periods of up to a decade - - to the public for "consultation" at the one time.

The release of these documents coincides with several other "consultation processes" including consultation for :
"Future of Agriculture in Nillumbik"
"Eltham Area Community Hospital",
"Council By Laws" and the imminent release of the
"Municipal Planning Strategy"

In general, PALs consider that the "Community Vision / Nillumbik 2040", "Council Plan 2021 – 2025" and the "Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan" are not only a significant embarrassment for this Shire but reflect very poorly on the legislated role of Local Government within the broader community.
PALs apprehension is that no PALs response to these plans may well be taken as our tacit approval by NSC, without which PALs may well not have considered the process worthy of serious consideration and a response worthy of preparation and submission.

PALs consider all four documents, sandwiched together in this combined "consultation" process, as a clear and definitive demonstration of the low standards being set by this Council. PALs deplores the devolution of the community consultation process on matters of such considerable import to such a perfunctory level.

It appears that the responsibility to the entire community of Councillors to preside over the development of a suite of key strategic documents which should properly set the framework for NSC to appropriately guide the workings of Council for Nillumbik into the future, has been subverted to present as a mix of virtue signalling along with apparent preference for selective and biased personal agendas instead.

PALs consider that a Vision document that seeks to direct or control the future narrative of councils for up to 4 full council terms is a nonsense – bordering on a disgrace. It clearly will not be binding on future councils, let alone differing conditions and circumstances that may occur over the ensuing years that almost certainly would render this document totally redundant. It is unsophisticated in the extreme to purport or expect to influence or control what future elected representatives are able to do, without a basic understanding that future councils will run their own agendas anyway.

With a total population of approximately 65,369, of which approximately 12,360 (19%) live within the Green Wedge and considered rural residents, the above documents only consider, pursue and satisfy the requirements of the suburban population (those that do NOT live in the Green Wedge). That is, 81% of the population seek or purport to exert control over the entire shire landmass of approximately 432km², despite occupying themselves only 9% of that landmass.

RURAL LANDOWNERS DESERVE AND DEMAND CONSIDERATION

- *The single biggest issue that residents and landowners recorded in the seriously flawed “consultation” – **Our People – Our Place – Our Future – Our Council** was undoubtedly bushfire and bushfire mitigation. Yet none of the above documents address this issue in any way, let alone any meaningful way.*
- *Council has a legislative requirement to provide real and genuine bushfire mitigation strategies and implementation plans to actively and continuously minimise the impacts of major fire events. In fact NSC already has an approved Bushfire Mitigation Strategy. To date not only has it failed to implement any of its requirements, but also has it failed to deliver an active Bushfire Mitigation Implementation Plan.*
- *There is no action, no reporting on goals and benchmarks, no meaningful on ground works. None of the plans released for consultation even mention this fact, let alone address the requirements. NSC must understand that it will be held accountable and potentially legally liable when the next major bushfire event occurs, due to the lack of works done to date and into the foreseeable future. Class actions may well result.*
- *PALs suspect that suburban residents have poor if any understanding of the potential bushfire threat. They do not comprehend that if a fire gets over and past Kangaroo Ground and heads towards Warrandyte and Research, a disaster will result. An attitude of denial appears prevalent – that “it cannot happen to us”, or that “there is no way a fire will ever get to Eltham / Warrandyte”.*
- *The major rural ward is represented by a Councillor with effectively no lived experience or first hand understanding of the potential threat.*
- *The above flawed consultation process resulted in participants views being presented to inform the current processes. There were approximately 2000 respondents to this initial consultation. This was reported as outstanding by council as they eagerly used only the selected responses that suited the narrative that council was always going to pursue, to form the basis of the documents now here for the next round of “consultation”.*
- *2000 respondents only represents 3% of the resident population. Similarly, that would suggest that 81% of that 3% (1,820) responses would have been generated by the suburban population and only 9% of that 3% (180) would have come from rural residents. Hardly representative or fair. Considering the rural landmass comprises 91% of the total Shire that does not equate to fair and reasonable consideration of the needs, aspirations or policy equity for rural landowners.*
- *The views of 3% of the resident population should not properly inform nor dictate the policies and future direction of the entire Shire. It is clearly inequitable and biased towards a suburban view of rural land and rural requirements – or worse still simply ignores consideration of them.*
- *Rural landowners and residents do not look forward to ANY realistic or actual council consideration in these plans. There is effectively nothing in these documents for rural residents. Hidden in their drafting amongst motherhood statements lies an agenda that is directly opposed to rural landowners and their right to live and exist on their land. This combined with likely imposition of ever-increasing restrictions, burdens and punishments. This has been seen in the preview of the council attempts to introduce draconian controls over rural landowners through the non-legislative controls established through council by laws.*
- *Rural landowners form approximately 19% of the Shire population, yet receive no mention in the documents in contrast to our indigenous population which forms approximately 0.4% of the Shire population and receives extensive consideration in each document. This disregard suggests that rural landowners are not considered to be of value. This has been an historically consistent position of NSC (with the exception of the previous term of Council) with repeated attacks on rural landowners through the introduction of ever increasing restrictions, controls, overlays and punishments sought by council being common.*

NSC PLANS THE SCORECARD

Community Vision / Nillumbik 2040

This document comprises 20 pages of text, photos, tables and language that effectively says little.

It wreaks of appropriateness for its own sake. PALS would prefer to see a significantly shorter time frame, limited to 2025, that actually provides concrete information about where the Shire MAY be going, still subject to future unknown factors and circumstances, but which sets clear operational directions.

No clear indication of any future policy direction, no indication of how Council might get there and how it might achieve certain policy settings in order to deliver a direction are presented.

There is no vision nor indication, about how NSC might balance the needs of rural landowners whilst preserving the landscapes and ambience we all now enjoy. It is not even acknowledged that rural and agricultural pursuits form a critical component not only of the overall landscape, but also how they provide a vital contribution to minimise the risk of major bushfires.

Preserving and enhancing the open pastures and the ability of landowners to manage and maintain their rural properties deliver an invaluable contribution to a fire safe environment that preserves the bushland, farmland and rural enterprises as well as maximising the ability of wildlife to survive.

SCORE: 0(ZERO)/10

Council Plan 2021 – 2025

This document includes a host of attractive images, a few facts and a long list of matters derived from the flawed initial consultation process that appear to have been selectively chosen to fit an agenda.

The strategic indicators selectively choose matters that appear "woke".

There is no strategic indicator related to bushfire mitigation, roadside maintenance and minimisation of fuel loads, all matters considered to be of major importance in the initial consultation but now troublingly omitted.

The methodology used with an indicating (very small) arrow to supposedly demonstrate where council may act at some undetermined point in the future is simplistic at best, but totally inadequate.

PALS would prefer to see some genuine indications of what council intend to do and how they intend to achieve an outcome resulting in improved performance over the council cycle.

The community deserves to know details about how the council will achieve improved outcomes,

SCORE: 3(THREE)/10

NSC PLANS THE SCORECARD

Nilumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

The quality of the suite of plans under consideration is not improved with this proposed plan.

"To reduce health inequalities and create strong communities in which everyone can make a contribution and feel included, our approach is underpinned by human rights principles of freedom, respect, equality and dignity outlined in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

Human rights recognise the inherent value of each person, regardless of background, where we live, what we look like, what we think or what we believe. They are about being treated fairly, treating others fairly and having the ability to make genuine choices in our daily lives.

Through this plan, we will work towards creating an inclusive community, where human rights are respected, participation is facilitated and diversity is celebrated."

The above quote from the plan is indeed exactly what NSC should be ensuring across the Shire. It is apparent that it is not being applied universally. It does not apply to rural landowners.

With a suburban population purporting to dictate what rural landowners can and cannot do on their land, to restrict and control their uses of the land, to prohibit any reasonable bushfire maintenance and thereby diminish their human rights to stay alive and thrive, there is a clear policy of human rights for some and not for others.

By denying rural landowners the ability to protect their properties, their livestock and their infrastructure as well as having a reasonable degree of freedom (as applies to suburban residents) to construct and landscape their immediate property surrounds, the claim above is meaningless and only represents virtue signalling and a poor interpretation of actual legislative requirements.

There is clear hypocrisy in these documents characterised in several statements about what a wonderful Shire we live in, that we have 30% bush cover, that our wildlife is thriving and that we have a wonderful environment - all while NSC (and dark green activist) condemnation of ALL rural landowners as desecrators of the bush, seeking only to tear it down or degrade it with livestock, denude it and only seek to subdivide for personal profit, persists as an "urban myth"

This mischaracterisation of rural landowners as irresponsible environmental vandals will always be countered by the reality on the ground of the dedicated custodianship of the land by most PALs.

There is significant commentary in relation to the benefits of physical activity, but it is restricted to exclusively suburban interpretations of that activity. Rural landowners are physically active on their rural properties and often do not require structured activity. NSC could encourage and supplement that activity by providing assistance to rural landowners to maintain their properties as the sheer scale of maintenance requirements can be challenging.

The community resilience aspects of this plan include references to the percentages of the community that suffer from depression and anxiety.

"More than a third of Nilumbik residents have been diagnosed with depression or anxiety. This has been increasing since 2008 and is higher compared to North Eastern Victoria and Victoria. The incidence is higher among females (39%) than males (26%). 13 per cent of Nilumbik residents reported experiencing high or very high psychological distress".

NOTE 1 TO NSC

Emphasis on positivity rather foreboding while recognising and addressing matters such as climate change and encouraging the harnessing of innovation and the innate ability of industry to deliver a better future.

NOTE 2 TO NSC

Provide rural landowners and residents with confidence that they can live their lives free of harassment and intimidation. Remove unreasonable restrictions and controls and allow landowners to actually enjoy their lives.

Anxiety and psychological distress will certainly decrease in our demographic .

The absence of serious consideration of the longterm effects of the Covid-19 global pandemic is appalling.

SCORE: 4(FOUR)/10

NSC PLANS THE SCORECARD

Financial Plan 2021-2031

Purporting to develop a Financial Plan for a decade from 2021-2031 is risible – particularly given the financial realities we all have experienced in the past 18 months due to the pandemic.

It is evident from the draft Financial Plan that NSC will be unable to resource, enable and enact a very significant number of projects, implementation plans and policies. The future of NSC will apparently rely on Government handouts. It is not acceptable to blame this situation on the previous council.

It is also not acceptable to increase rates above the Government mandated limits as it will only demonstrate to the community that NSC fails to appreciate the hurt that will result in a post pandemic Nillumbik. NSC should always operate within its means, as should the rest of society. It is not acceptable to present apparently personal agendas under the guise of new council policy and expect the rate payers to foot the bill.

All council initiatives, future projects and policy direction requiring funding should always be restrained by what is affordable, what is practically achievable and what is of genuine importance rather than particular political whims.

It is imperative that council must fulfil their legislated obligations first and foremost. This includes allocating, spending and reporting on budget allocations for critical works such as roads, footpaths, parklands, waste management and, most importantly, bushfire mitigation works which includes actual fuel reduction works as well as roadside maintenance.

SCORE: 4(FOUR)/10

CONCLUSION

Nillumbik PALs thanks NSC for the opportunity to contribute to this consultation process and commends this submission to all Councillors and council officers for their consideration.

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Name]

Chair
Working Group - Nillumbik PALs
26 August 2021

Comments on Draft Financial Plan 2021 – 2031

██████████, 26 August 2021

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft of Council's *Financial Plan 2021-2031*. My comments on the draft Plan can be categorised as criticisms, observations and recommendations.

I have only one **explicit criticism** of the plan, but I believe it is a major one. It is that the Plan seemingly makes no allowance for the uncertainties we face due to climate change and the coronavirus pandemic.

Responsible people have for long recognised that climate change is an existential threat to humanity, and it must be clear now to even the most stubborn denialists that global heating is truly upon us. If the Australian bushfires of late 2019 were not enough of a reminder, this year's weather extremes and wildfires raging through much of Europe and North America are another reminder. Moreover, the latest IPCC report makes it clear Australia along with the rest of the world must take decisive action right now if we are to avoid going beyond a tipping point for the climate and the Earth.

In these circumstances, insurance companies are factoring climate change into their business assessments. And major firms are marked down if they don't do likewise.

As a major business undertaking it would be irresponsible for Nillumbik Shire Council to omit explicit consideration of and contingency planning for climate change as a critical part of its long term financial plan.

The coronavirus pandemic, now raging in NSW, is another reason for explicit contingency planning. We all hope we can learn to live with the COVID-19 virus. But its mutant Delta strain is more virulent than its predecessor which means we are likely to see new waves of virus outbreaks from time to time.

These two risks, bushfires – and other climate risks – and the coronavirus both pose risks to the wellbeing of our community and to the Council budget's bottom line.

I **suggest** one fiscally responsible way of allowing for the sorts of risks I have identified would be to establish an explicit **Emergencies and Disasters Contingency Reserve** as part of the financial plan. Such a reserve would protect against the need for unusually large rates increases to deal with shorter term emergencies and would protect against interruptions to the Council's underlying programs.

I expect it will be necessary to defer acceptance of the financial plan to allow time to re-cast the projections in the context of a contingency reserve.

The preamble to the figures in the draft plan shows the budget and the plan as central elements of the Council's integrated planning framework. That's as it should be because the Plan and annual budget provide the resourcing needed to implement the vision for Nillumbik.

At a quick glance it appears that the Financial Plan's figures are just the Budget 2021-2022 numbers repurposed. But closer scrutiny reveals that the numbers have been amended. That's reasonable given the time interval between the calculations for the Budget and this Plan.

I suggest, however, it would be useful to indicate in the document how the assumptions – about rate capping, the CPI, future EBA(s), etc – differ from those underlying the Budget. After all, one of the main reasons for publishing these sorts of documents is to remove the veil from Council's activities and through that promote good governance through ensuring that the community remains well informed about the Council's activities.

As someone who has been involved in the past in making and using medium and longer term projections, I cannot resist a somewhat cynical comment. It is that the numbers for the first one or two out years have some chance of being realised, but beyond that the numbers are just extrapolative. That said, of course, I find it hard to see how Council could do anything else realistically without an enormous and unwarranted expense.

I am pleased to see the targets under 2.1: Financial Policy Statements because they provide a form of KPI's against which Council's performance can be judged. In my experience explicit KPI's are rare in Council policy documents so I doubly welcome them here.

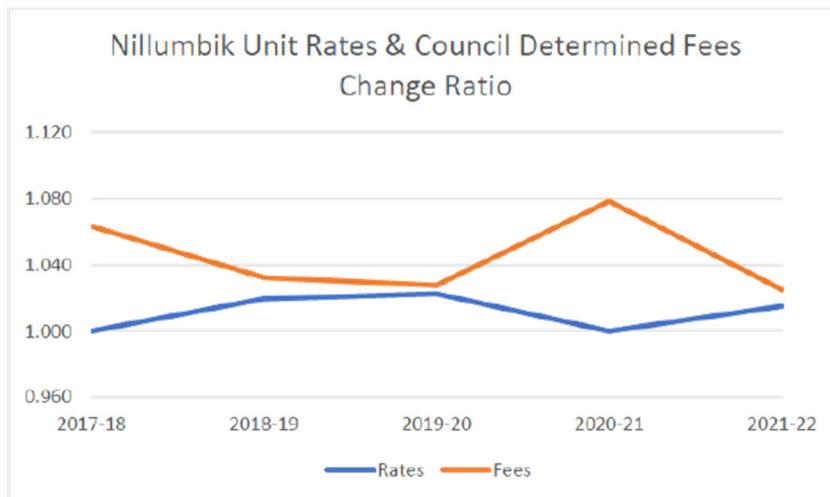
For the same aim of supporting good governance as indicated above, **I suggest** it would be very useful if that Table could be accompanied by two sets of brief comments. The first would be a statement of the sources of and reasons for the specific targets chosen. The second would be commentary on how the plan tracks those targets out to 2030-31 and on any more significant deviations – both favourable and unfavourable – from the targets.

Under 2.3.3 User Fees the Plan lays out the following principle:

"The key principle for determining the level of user charges has been to ensure that increases are generally consistent with cost increases."

I support this principle but want to draw attention to the fact it has been breached in the past due to the grandstanding rates decisions of the dominant faction on the 2017–2020 Council. I have estimated previously that those decisions will cost the Nillumbik budget some \$2.5 million per year or \$25 million over the Plan's horizon out to 2030-31.

The chart below shows the annual changes in the unit rate and the average of the Council determined fees and charges each expressed as ratios. So the figure of 1.0 for the unit rate in 2017-18 and 2020-21 indicates the unit rate did not increase in those years.



The point of the chart is that it suggests that the previous council was managing its discretionary fees to counterbalance its grandstanding on rates. So when the rates were left constant, the fees and charges were increased in an attempt to make up the shortfall.

That is fair enough up to a point but not consistent with a strict cost basis for the discretionary charges in the recent past.

Section 5.2.2 Reserve Usage Projections shows the application of reserves to a variety of purposes. Unfortunately, I am not enough of an accountant to be able to identify where the reserves are "housed" in the main financial statements. I and I'm sure others would find it useful to see a time series of the aggregate of the reserves and their source so we can judge the projected expenditures.

Finally, an examination of the ratios of the average payments per EFT to males and females for the various corporate groups within the Council suggests there are no gender pay biases. And if there is some discrimination it seems likely to be trivial.

The only clear difference is that the pay per EFT for males in the Corporate Services Group is 32% higher than for females in that group. This would reflect the fact that the CEO's very high salary would be included in that group because otherwise there are three men and three women in the group.

I would expect to see general gender pay equity in a public agency. It is pleasing to see that hypothesis supported.

Financial Plan 2021-2031

Submission from Eltham Community Action Group

EGAG appreciates the opportunity to make input into this Plan. It is a positive move to see that this Council is making these opportunities available and, as always, it would be equally positive to see actual changes made to the final Plan!

As our group has existed for 25 years, we have observed the outcomes of many similarly titled documents with interest.

It was with some amusement to see that the other three allied Plans that are open to public comment also had 'Easy English' versions to aid understanding but not for the Financial Plan. If the Easy English practice is to happen regularly, in term of the financial education of the community, it would be useful to develop a similar one for the following Financial Plans.

Comments

1. Given the uncertain times that exist now and which will continue for this decade and beyond, why is there no specified Contingency fund/reserve? The Shire and its residents have experienced bushfire and now COVID and will continue to be affected by climate change. We need to prepare financially for the future and we appear not to be doing so other than in words.
2. There is no mention how the existing demands of climate change & COVID can be ameliorated financially, now or in the future. Maybe in a Simple English version such actions would become apparent or the lack of action would be picked up more easily.
3. Given the current global situation and the predicted uncertainty, the long term numbers are aspirational. At least this is recognised by Council on P2 in the heading for the diagram stating:
*The following figure demonstrates how each element **might** inform or be informed by other parts of the integrated framework.*
4. It is disappointing to read on P.19 that it appears that there is NO funding for Heritage buildings and that funding for roads, bridges, footpaths & cycleways appears to diminish each year.
5. It is pleasing that outstanding debt is projected to lessen each year, hopefully not at the expense of services valued by the community.
6. It does appear that the figures from P11 onwards do not align with those in the Budget document. The differences are small but an explanation or footnote would have been helpful in understanding the changes.

We understand that Nillumbik with its small rate base and large area and expectations from residents is in an invidious financial situation. Care should be taken that services do not diminish while the paperwork completed expands. Complying with Statutory requirements are excepted from this comment.

As stated earlier, Eltham Community Action Group appreciates the opportunity to respond and if further clarification is needed please contact us via - elthamcag@yahoo.com

26.08.21

COMMENTS FROM NILLUMBIK RECONCILIATION GROUP ON FINANCIAL PLAN

Prepared by [REDACTED], President, with members of the committee

August 2021

FINANCIAL PLAN

A THOUGHT: Settlers and squatters spread over Nillumbik shire land from 1835 onwards. Wurundjeri Woiwurrung people were driven off it, died from diseases brought to it, and were killed when they trespassed on their own land and stole sheep and cattle which had replaced the animals they had hunted and eaten. Reparation is an important aspect of reconciliation. Consideration should be given to an annual financial contribution to Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Corporation as a reparation. Our recognition of their loss and our gain.

The Annual Action Implementation Plan

Council is generous in its funding of Reconciliation events held by NRG, Social Justice Group St Margaret's, and other community groups.

It would be wonderful if the NSC could **host a major Reconciliation event each year**. This could be a public lecture, a concert featuring Aboriginal and other local musicians and performers, Aboriginal dancing, demonstrations of basketry, didg making etc in a park etc etc. A number of community group could be engaged as stakeholders and provide volunteer assistance and planning.

Submission to Nillumbik Council

[REDACTED]
Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan

August 2021

The Community Vision - *Engagement*

Amongst other things, a Council Vision must describe the community's aspirations for at least the next 10 years. The Vision must be developed in accordance with deliberative engagement principles [Local Government Act (LGA) S55] and Council policy (Community Engagement Policy (CEP) Feb 2020). Both stress that Council must provide objective, relevant and timely information for the benefit of participants, and ensure that the participants are representative (a cross section) of the population affected by the matter.

Representative Sample?

The best hard data about the deliberative engagement project is available in an Officer's Report, tabled at last May's Council meeting. It reports that the surveyed individuals were not part of a structured sample in the statistical sense. Taken as a whole, the group that completed the questionnaire did not match the Nillumbik population from a demographic or geographic perspective. The '*General Version*' of the Questionnaire was completed by 728 individuals in either hard copy or digital form.

Deliberative?

Deliberative is not defined in the Act, and therefore from a legal point of view takes on its dictionary or common meaning¹. The CEP defines it in two ways - '*open dialogue and discussion, access to information*' and '*Deliberative Polling*'. S55 describes 4 central principles including '*Participants ... must have access to objective, relevant and timely information to inform their participation*'.

The main source of information for the survey topics was published on 7 fact-sheets. Appendix A assesses the level of objectivity and relevance of a selection. The assessment finds some fact sheets created misleading impressions, provided erroneous data/information, omitted central concepts/ideas for example. Some of the information on the fact sheets was not relevant to the resources levels and jurisdictions of Council.

Weight of Reported Data

If the group was truly representative and all questions were responded to, a sample of 728 participants would have generated a margin of error of 3.59% at a confidence level of 95%². Meaning that Council could be 95% certain that the parent population result is 3.59% more or less the sample results. In practice this means that the selection and ranking procedures for virtually all the responses cannot be applied to the population. For example whereas the survey group ranked the top 3 healthy behaviour issues at 19%, 17% and 15%, statistically speaking, the first is as likely as the third, and so on.

Insofar as the open questions are concerned, there is less doubt given that the 29 points separate first ('*Protection of the Green Wedge*'), from second '*Protection of environment and biodiversity*'.

Structure of the Engagement Framework

'Shire Plan 2040' was implemented as Phase 1 of the engagement process, culminating in June 2020 with the publication of a background paper. Extracts from the paper entitled '**Towards a Community Vision for Nillumbik**' (TCVN) have since been used to support participants. TCVN included extensive Councillor and Executive workshops and proposed a 6 topic Framework to support the deliberative engagement phase of the project. Table 1 (below) lists the topics and compares that Framework with others used applied to subsequent documents during Phase 2 of the project.

1: Deliberative: From the word deliberate meaning done consciously, careful and unhurried, fully considered not impulsive

PHASE 1	PHASE 2		
TCVN	SURVEY	VISION	PLAN
Community Health and Well Being	Healthy Behaviours Resilient safe	7 and 3 shared	Equity and Inclusion (5) Health and Well being (2) Ages and Stages (4)
Social Infrastructure	Inclusion Employment and Learning Connected and Engaged Resilient and Safe	3 and 3 shared	Identity (3) Neighbourhood Character (4) Open Spaces (4) Resilience and Recovery Risk mgt. 2 shared Svs & Progs 1 shared.
The Economy and Employment	Expenditure Allocations Capital expenditure priorities	1 shared	Business and Tourism (4)
Climate change		2 shared	Climate action (2) Risk mgt. 1 shared
Transport	Accessible Transport	1 shared	Movement and Place (5)
The Role of Local Government		6 and 8 shared	Good Governance (6) Risk Management (3 shared) Services and Programs (5, 1/shared)
Ungrouped	Healthy Environments Housing Open Space and Sustainability		Sustainability

Table 1: Topics in subsequent documents related to the Phase 1 Framework

-  Our People (Survey) Community & Connection (Plan)
-  Our Place (Survey) Place and Space (Plan)
-  Sustainable and Resilient (Plan)
-  Good Governance (Plan)

The Shifting Framework

Table 1 shows a significant paradigm shift at two key points in the evolution of the Framework. It began as a cross section of priorities typical of Interface Councils, built on a basis of social research, in-house workshops and high level deliberation. The framework was narrowed for the survey. **Social Infrastructure** and **Community Health and Well Being** became dominant and **The Economy and Employment** and the **Role of Local Government** took a back seat. **Climate Change** found associates in 'behaviour' 'resilience and safety' 'sustainability' and 'environment'.

Then Framework for the Vision maintained the focus on **Community Health and Well Being**, and strengthened the place of the **Role of Government**. There was with occasional reference to transport, climate change and two pages on financial priorities. The Council Plans shows a shift back to **Social Infrastructure** and **Governance**, with a revived interest in **Climate Change** with **Health and Well-being** retaining its strength. The plan portends to have found a way of integrating some of these focal points with ordinary everyday Council functions like *Waste Management* and *Family Health*, while keeping the implementations under wraps. Noticeably the Green Wedge, which after all is the Councils logo, and the single most valid data point and preferred value in the Community Engagement data, is barely mentioned in the draft plan.

While the framework is expected to change organically between the top down efforts of consultants, the executive and Councillors, the point here which I hope is self evident, is that no one has taken responsibility for or explained the shifts. Shifts that must be explained if the engagement process is to have integrity.

The Community Vision Content

Deconstruction of what the Council *'heard'* from the municipal community reveals 26 elements, 10 of which approximate calls to action. The frequency of referenced priority categories is set out in Table 3 (see Appendix B for details). Table 3 also estimates how many imply funded projects.

Category	Frequency (all)	Frequency (action type)
Social Capital	9	2
Waste	5	1
Infrastructure	4	2
Environment	3.5	1
Housing	2	0
Climate Change	1.5	1.5
Education	0.5	0.5
Finance	0.5	0.5

Table 2: *Elements of engagement 'heard' by Council' (Vision P. 4)*

Guidance interprets the Act requires the Vision go further than the mere repetition of the aspirations of the community. It should build on those aspirations to develop *'relevant service, asset and land-use programs to develop an achievable Community Vision.'* This process can be detected in a close examination of the aspirations attributed to the community in the sectioned parts of the Vision.

For example the single reference to education in the survey: *'education for climate change'* evolves into *'Education and lifelong learning are valued as key contributors to social connection, personal development and well-being'*. The movement towards new programs is evident in 11 of the 27 dot point (dp) aspirations:

- Our People: Dp 7
- Our Place: Dp 1, 4, 5, 6, & 7
- Our Future: Dp 2, 3, 6.
- Our Council: Dp 2, 6 (Community Vision pages 9-13).

For the rest of the original aspirations, as in the case of most of the Social Capital priorities, they are restated in new language and remain languishing sentiments to the end. About 4 of the others have progressed, but appear as restatements of aspirations of Councils past, already well on their way to fulfilment: (Our future DP 4, 5 & 7; Our Council Dp 5).

Guidance also interprets the Act to require that the Community Vision *'describe the social, economic, cultural, and environmental aspirations for the future of the municipality'*. The first failings in this respect are in the second of the four fundamental forces that will shape Nillumbik's future regardless of the aspirations of its residents - Economic. Economic issues are represented from labour's point of view, whereas it's the development of land and capital resources that will help determine the future, and have largely been ignored. This is in part due to the failure of the chart based Finance section to stimulate anticipated responses, as well as the awkward and largely irrelevant content of the associated Fact Sheet.

The second failing is in respect of the environment. The fact sheets and closed survey questions gave little exposure to the many facets of the challenges facing the Nillumbik's natural environment, choosing to focus on waste disposal and land use instead.

The Council Plan.

The 21/25 Council Plan is the shortest plan in the Shire's history, and the first to headline Health and Well Being outcomes. It's the first to face the challenge of integrating a mix of medium and long-term strategic plans with a community vision based on deliberative engagement principles. I am not sure, but it may face the highest debt against operational expense ratio as well.

The plan is built upon a two phase process. The first was an initiative of the previous Council with the purpose of establishing a framework for the deliberative engagement process. A Framework was published in June 2020, after a major investigative study and Executive/Councillor workshops (Table 1 Column 1). Selected material from that publication informed the subsequent deliberative community engagement process in the form of 7 Fact Sheets and various staged workshop content.

SHIRE PLAN 2040 – PROJECT APPROACH



Council describes the development of the Council Plan in different terms (P.4), without acknowledging the originating 'Background Paper', or justifying the use of the Annual Community Survey (ACS).

NOTE: The ACS is not conducted in accordance with deliberative engagement practices (DEPs). S90 requires that the plan must be prepared according to Council's DEPs.

The Vision and the Plan are dated contemporaneously, yet describe what each has 'heard' from the community in quite different terms. The Plan expresses it this way:

- (According to the results of our ACS) *delivery of Council's core services is of most importance to the community. As such, we want to improve service delivery and get better at 'delivering the basics'.*
- (According to the deliberative engagement process) *The community has identified a number of key short term priorities, including action on climate change, responsible urban housing development, protection of the green wedge, reducing waste, greater recycling and community consultation and leadership.*
- (Un sourced) *Our community wants Council to operate both effectively, maintaining current service levels, and be fiscally responsible.*

Content

Section 90 requires the plan include 6 content areas:

1. Strategic direction
2. Strategic objectives
3. Strategies for achieving objectives over 4 years
4. Strategic indicators for each objective
5. Description of 'initiatives and priorities.'
6. Other matters prescribed by regulation

LGV provides an authoritative interpretation of implementation (Appendix C) which informs the following.

Strategic Direction of Council

Objectives should include ‘a strong narrative of the opportunities and challenges facing Council and how these will be addressed or realised’ (LGV). There is no such narrative in Nillumbik’s draft plan. There are lists of threats ‘the current COVID-19 pandemic, and the social, environmental and financial uncertainty it presents’ (P.6) However there is no strategy for managing Pandemic related threats.

I submit that a Strategic Direction may exist in shadow form. It does not take the form of a ‘strong narrative’, nor does it adequately describe the environmental challenges and opportunities ahead (ie it is not strategic). Given its dubious statistical basis and the ‘limitations’ expressed in the Officer’s report¹ it is reasonable to expect such limitations to be part of the required narrative. Further, in its shadow form it does not explain a response to community aspirations. There are notable deviations in the Plan relative to the Vision Statement. For example, the list of aspirations at page 4 of the Vision Statement is markedly different from those developed in the Plan.

Strategic Objectives

The plan includes 4 objectives, one for each of its 4 themes. Table 3 de-constructs the objectives from two points of view. Firstly, an attempt to understand the multi-layered quality of objectives 1 and 2. Organisations typically develop single layer objectives. This makes it easier to measure performance. Reminiscent of the multi-layering of single focus aspirations in the Vision Statement, these dual purpose objectives complicate Council’s mission and threaten the efficiency of delivery. They share a common internal logic:

We will resource programs for the delivery of X in a particular way (Y) so that the program also achieves Z.

Objectives 3 and 4 are different and from some points of view, redundant. For example, objective 3 is already regulated by principles at S9 (2b, c & h) as well as the State Climate Change Act. The fundamental purpose of objective 3 is also clouded by its phrasing. It is hard to understand how a Council can ‘compromise future community needs’. It is possible that Council’s ability to meet future needs could be compromised by its meeting of current needs. Otherwise the meaning and need for objective 3 escapes me.

Objective 4 is also a restatement of the essential functions of managers of any large organisation, and is therefore redundant. Note that the management role is normally broken into 4 functions not 2 - Planning, Organising, Leading and Controlling. Omitting Council’s intention to Plan strategically and Control performance meticulously may come back to bite this Council.

OBJECTIVE	X	Y	Z
1. To encourage inclusion and participation to support health and well being and ensure that all our residents have equitable access to services, programs, events and initiatives.	Support Health and Well-being	encourage inclusion and participation	Ensure all residents have equitable access to services, programs, events and initiatives
2. To plan, design and maintain places and spaces that strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility, encourage social connection and respect the environment.	Plan, design and maintain places and spaces	Not stated	strengthen identity, reinforce character, improve accessibility ... social connection and respect (for) the environment.
3. To ensure that we are able to meet the present needs of our community without compromising its future needs.	Requirement already embedded in the Local Government Act (S9) and the Climate Change Act		
4. To facilitate the best possible outcomes for our community, by demonstrating strong leadership and working actively to achieve the community’s objectives.	Required under the LGA, as are particular approaches to plan and control management functions.		

Table 3: Deconstructing the Objectives of the Council Plan

Discussion Points

- It is not clear that by promoting inclusion and participation in the kind of activity and functional areas that normally preoccupy local Councils, there will be a significant impact on the health and well-being of the Shire. There needs to be conceptual and experiential evidence that what is proposed, in general theoretical terms, is an established, tested and proven approach.
- The additional direct and indirect costs of these untested multi layered relationships may prove prohibitive, especially given the parlous state of Council's books. It needs to be modelled within the plan in accordance with S89 (c) - identify and address the risks to effective implementation
- The extra human and capital resources required to deliver the 'business as usual' outcomes of objectives 1 and 2, risk work against the efficiencies and effectiveness implied in Objective 4
- Performance against multi faceted objectives are difficult and expensive to measure
- Council needs to explain why it is committing to intergenerational and anti discrimination as a Council outcome when legislation and regulation already require high level performance against each..
- The Act requires the strategic objectives relate back to the strategic direction (S90 2(d)). They do not.

Strategies

According to organisational theory a strategy is a plan of action involving an assessment of an organisation's strengths and weaknesses and the evident and emerging threats and opportunities in its operating environment. Competing strategies are selected on the basis of high level cost benefit analyses, with budgeted costing and a timeline of implementation.

The Council plan lists 53 strategies. They are grouped according to 14 themes. Some of the themes are identical to those of the engagement process, most are new. Some of the thematic sub headings of the Vision have been excised, others have been renamed and moved between groups. In any case there is no explanation as to why the structure of the plan and that of the vision are at such variance. In the interests of transparency, and LGV guidance (*'strategies must be respondent to community engagement and aspirations'*) such wholesale shifts in framework must be explained.

Each of the 53 strategies can be characterised as one of three types

1. Aspirational: These are statements of how an individual or group would like the world to be. The outcomes of this kind of strategy cannot be measured in any meaningful way.
2. Qualitative: Designed to produce subjective changes in an individual or group's beliefs, values or attitudes. Typically measured through the use of focus groups and/or surveys.
3. Quantitative. Generate outcomes that are observable and measurable in time and space.

Table 4 (Appendix D) audits the 53 strategies against these three types. It finds that 13 are aspirational 20 are Qualitative and 20 are Quantitative.

Aspirational strategies can be extremely effective when applied to sporting activities and lifting morale within an organisation. A Council needs to justify their use in a strategic planning context. Qualitative strategies can lead to behaviour change but outcomes are typically erratic and temporary. A Council with the debt levels of Nillumbik risks wasting precious resources on potentially futile attempts to change attitudes.

The excision of aspirational and qualitative strategies denudes the strategic lists considerably.

'Community and Connection':	1 quantifiable strategy (within equity),
Place and Space:	7, mostly in the management of open spaces.
'Sustainable and Resilient',	9, mostly in the category of Business and Tourism.
Responsible and Accountable:	4 quantifiable strategies

I submit that Council should conduct its own audit and ensure that the strategies designed for each objective are fit for purpose. It should also consider the risks associated with implementing its four objectives.

Initiatives

Section 90 2 (e) requires Councils to describe its *initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure and amenity*. This is phrased as '*major activities and activities*' in the guidance (LGV). Frustratingly and in contrast to the pro-activity of adjacent Councils, Nillumbik has not listed one activity /initiative to support any of its 53 strategies.

Indicators

The new Act stresses the importance of integrating of all elements of the plan. This is especially so when designing performance indicators for Council Plan outcomes. Nillumbik has seen a recent trend towards the use of population survey results as indicators of Council performance. The previous Council relied on population surveys for 57% of its indicators – all from the ACS. The current Council figure is less - 40% - and includes a diverse range of surveys.

The governance, transparency and engagement principles of the new Act provide an opportunity for Council to review its use of population surveys. Issues include:

- Interpreting population survey results is complicated. For example the 2015 survey report for Mental Well being include the indicator 'Perceptions of neighbourhood – people are willing to help each other'. The result for the Nillumbik sample was 86.1% agree. Given the parameters of the survey, (margin of error, level of certainty) This meant that there was 95% certainty that 'perceptions' result for the parent population was somewhere between 80.8% and 90.3% (Appendix D). Few people understand this, and fewer bother to check the small print qualifications surrounding survey results.
- Surveys that measure beliefs, impressions and attitudes typically give unreliable results that are subject to manipulation, and are often temporary.
- Population surveys such as the VPHS are not annual. While they may publish inter survey results, these are typically adjusted in line with population growth.
- Results dependent upon census figures (via Remplan eg) may be adjusted for inflation in non census years, but are only truly reliable once every 4 years.
- Some of the proposed indicators are difficult to find in the public arena (VPHS), while Council is already outperforming in others (Maternal Health Care).
- It is not possible to account for the reasons for change in survey results. The nominated surveys do not measure the influence of local Council initiatives.

The Financial Plan.

For the first time Council is required to develop a financial plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices. Page 6 'engagement principles' declares the plan to be informed by the 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future' (OPOPOF) initiative. This influence could be evident directly via the engagement around spending and resource allocation decisions. It could also occur indirectly as Council priorities change and aspirations grow and shift.

Inputs from the Community and the Council Plan

Apparently the Financial Plan was informed by social media and local news outlets. Unfortunately what Council gleaned from these sources has not been published.

The indirect input from the OPOPOF initiative includes Council's plans to

- Increase the complexity of service delivery by building in certain health and well being outcomes.
- Expand its waste collection functions
- Promote sustainability
- Expand Business and Tourism function
- Strengthen emergency preparedness
- Modify Council's planning for neighbourhood character
- Improve safety, accessibility and enjoyability
- Enhance Shire's trail network
- Facilitate participation in sports, leisure and recreation
- Improve local transport systems
- Continue sustainable and responsible financial management
- Develop new partnerships with state and federal government.

However there is no evidence of these being costed in either the Council of the Financial Plan.

Content

The Financial Plan should show how the viability and financial sustainability of Council will be achieved and maintained over the 10-year period. The focus is on providing stability, predictability and effective mitigation and management of strategic financial risk. Legislators intend that it explain underlying assumptions, set out key financial statements and explain its underlying strategic rationale. The draft meets some of these elements.

Assumptions

Page 7 contains a list of 14 'escalators'. These imply but do not justify the underlying assumptions. Given the uncertainties surrounding the Covid Pandemic, global economic health and the increasing debt levels of grantors (ie the Federal and State treasuries), it is surprising that Council is willing to commit to central assumptions - CPI and Interest rates eg) without comment and rationale.

Council's CPI interest rates are aligned with the State budget, but are already out of alignment with ABS forecasts. Inflation/interest rates are fundamental to Council's budgeting process but are not included amongst the escalators.

Strategic Planning

Financial modelling over the 10 year time-frame is hobbled by that nature of the community vision statement. The vision makes few definitive statements about that can be tied to a financial plan. Where it does the language is unhelpful. For example it predicts a 13% increase in 'dwellings' over 15 years. It is silent on the 10 year period and it remains unclear if these dwellings are assessable for rating purposes, and what rate categories they are likely to be in.

The most disappointing (and self defeating) feature of the plan is what happens to the forecasts after 2025.. Nothing! That is where the plan needs input from the vision. But there,s none evident. What's missing is a concise vision of Nillumbik 2031. Given such a vision the executive are meant to generate an appropriate financial strategic response.

Deliberative Engagement

The plan's so called 'Engagement Principles' (P.4) challenges many of the principles enunciated in Council's engagement policy, for example

- provide participants in community engagement with relevant, objective, accessible and timely information and resources such as leaflets, rates notice, newspapers, Nillumbik News, social media, direct stakeholder engagement, stalls at community events to allow informed participation.
- recognise barriers to participation and increase opportunities by engaging in meaningful and supportive ways.
- report back to the community on the outcome of the community engagement and how the community's input influenced decision-making.

The act requires that The Financial Plan must include 'information about the decisions and assumptions that underpin (its) forecasts' (S91(b)). LGV guidance states that this should include 'Council's strategic financial planning context and drivers (demographic, economic, community, contextual) as well as financial planning drivers (policy).

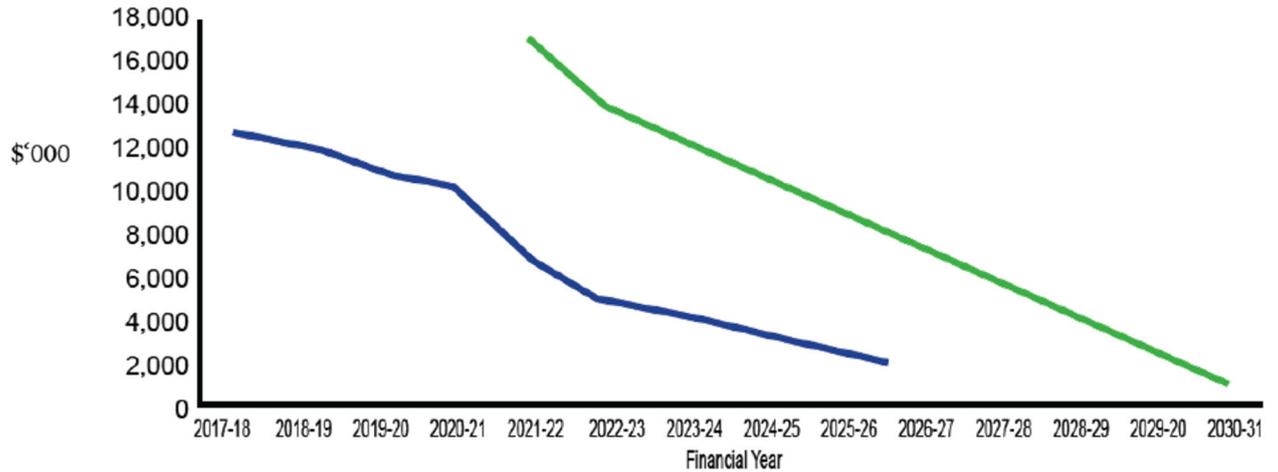
A policy statement appears on page 5, but there is no reference to contextual drivers outside of the assumptions (escalators) listed at page 7. That list includes explicit forecasts for CPI and an unexplained flat rate forecast for assessments growth. This shows a minimal attempt to use context to forecast the first 4 years, and a minimalist effort to explain its forecasts, especially those beyond 2025. It basically duplicates of the annual budget predictions, and introduces no new information for Councillors and residents to use in the formulation, through deliberative engagement or otherwise, of a 10 year plus resource allocation plan.

The previous Council ran the underlying surplus down from +5.56% in 2017 to an underlying deficit of -32.8% in 2019/20. This was reduced to an underlying deficit of -0.17% last year with the help of a multi million dollar loan. Further recovery was expected in 21/22, but a substantial and unexplained increase of \$3.1m in the expense 'materials and services' has thwarted that prospect. In turn this converts the +1.9% underlying surplus into an underlying result for the current year of -1.01% . This alone raises serious questions about the impact of the Council Plan, and Council's failure to address a persistent underlying financial imbalance (see debt projections below).

While I would like to follow the subsequent and other impacts of the plan on the budget there is inadequate information. Whereas the deliberative engagement principles and the new integrated planning processes were meant to make it easier to de-construct the relationship between the vision, the financial plan and the Council, this is not the case in Nillumbik. In my experience the draft Financial Plan, when considered in conjunction with the Council plan, fails to deliver the information required under S91(a) – '*statements describing the financial resources required to give effect to the Council plan and other strategic plans of the council.*'

Debt

The debt graph (page 5) is eerily familiar as is its rationale. Such a chart was presented upon the election of the previous Council with the promise to repay all debt before the end of its term. That never happened, and the current iteration shows debt continues to increase at disturbing rates. The previous Council inherited a debt held against a productive asset (Eltham Leisure Centre). The current debt is most commonly associated with non productive assets (landfill rehabilitation) and appears to be a systemic problem for Council that is inadequately explained in this plan.



Appendix E discusses the relationship between asset expansion and debt

Integration

The Community vision *'must describe the municipal community's aspirations'* (S88(3)). The aspirations are to be ascertained via Council's deliberative engagement process, which must include *'a process for informing the municipal community of the outcome of the community engagement'*. The Council Plan must be prepared in accordance with strategic planning principles which in turn must address the Community Vision (S89(b)).

The Financial Plan must be developed *'in accordance with its deliberative engagement practice'* [S91(4)] and must describe *'the financial resources required to give effect to the Council Plan'* (S91(3 a)). The Financial Plan *'is informed by and informs the Council Plan'* (LGV Guidance). Together these linkages are central to the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework which is central to the new Act.

Engagement to Vision

Council says *'is representative of feedback received from over 2,000 community participants in the Our People, Our Place, Our Future community engagement program undertaken in early 2021'*. An Officer's report was tabled at Council's May meeting and is available on line (if you know where to look!). It summarises what had been 'heard' in its Vision statement in 9 dot points. Does this satisfy the spirit and letter of the Act, state guidance and its own community engagement policy? I submit that it has fallen short in respect of some key elements of its own principles:

Clear Objectives

'Ensure that all information will be captured in a succinct summary and be available to the community'.

The Officers' Report summarised the raw data without co relations, or detailing how many respondents to the "General Survey" answered each question. Council released the raw data and some observations but I have been unable to locate a succinct summary of the entire OPOPOF Project findings.

Representative*:

See page 2 this submission.

Inclusive and Diverse:

'Provide participants in community engagement with relevant, objective, accessible and timely information and resources such as leaflets, rates notice, newspapers, Nilumbik News, social media, direct stakeholder engagement, stalls at community events to allow informed participation'.

Some of the Fact Sheets circulated in conjunction with the survey fail the relevance and objectivity test. See Appendix A.

Transparent:

Commit to providing participants with updates at key stages throughout the project and why certain feedback may or may not have been taken into account.

Demonstrate that all community contributions and relevant data have been considered, prior to making any decisions that affect the local community.

The previous Council spent a great deal of ratepayers money on the development of a Framework for Engagement, (Phase 1) the content and outcomes of which are not explicitly evident in the development of the Vision, and consequently the Council and Financial Plans (see Table 1 page 3). Table 1 indicates how the Framework is reorganised and how the content shifts from one stage to the next. While the changes in the framework is to be expected in a complex process such as this, a commitment to transparency should entail an explanation of the reasons for the changes.

*Council policy uses the term 'cross section' which is different from 'representative' S56 (c)

While the drift is subtle at times, they are occasionally monumental. Economic and Environmental themes drop away to such an extent that the word 'Economic' appears only once, in the narrow context of factors of health. Despite the clear priorities expressed in the OPOPOF survey, reference to the green wedge is also referenced once, and in anthropocentric terms.

Report back to the community on the outcome of the community engagement and how the community's input influenced decision-making.

Given the drift in the framework, representational and transparency issues, such a report back is sorely needed but has not (yet?) been provided.

The Vision, the Community and the Financial Plans

The Act and LGV guidance describe ways in which the vision and the two plans should be interrelated. However the Financial Plan provides no evidence of a serious and dedicated deliberative planning process specific to its scope and depth. Further when searching for the financial impacts that the Council Plan there is no statement to that effect. However there is a lift in line item 'Materials and Services' forecast for next year.

This is potentially linked to Council's plans to integrate health and well being outcomes into the delivery of its services, making them less efficient and therefore more expensive. However the failure to provide notes against the line items, and the failure of the Council Plan to describe the operation of the new layers in its service delivery outcomes, makes it impossible to conclude impacts. The same applies to other aspects of the inter relationship, meaning Council has failed to meet this fundamental transparency principle.

Appendix A

Fact Sheets - Objectivity, reliability and relevance

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

The overview says: 'certain widespread health inequalities persist within the municipality.'

SEIFA: Definition and level of index compared to Greater Melbourne in 2016.

Health Determinants: Food Environment, Alcohol, tobacco and drugs, current smokers data is 3 to 10 years old. Trends and comparisons indicate negative status.

Mental Health: Reported anxiety and depression 2011 – 2017.

Family Violence: Rate per 100,000 residents

Community Safety: Perceptions day and night.

SEIFA: Definition is technically incorrect/incomplete. The score of 1099 in the 2016 census refers to **Socio Economic Relative Disadvantage** only. Three other indices make up the composite index including **Education** and **Economic Resources**.

Selected determinants of health statistics and comments: Not representative of their absolute and relative status compared to VicHealth Indicators (see over extract from Nillumbik LGA Profile VicHealth Indicators Survey 2015 Results).

So what? Readers may have understood that relative health status is poor (and therefore need to be prioritised)

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is mentioned once in a list of 13 priorities under the sub heading Open Space and Sustainability. The fact sheet presents 1 – 3 sentence statements with data about 4 topics.

Tree Canopy: Data on the extent relative to Metropolitan Melbourne.

Waste Diversion: Percentage diverted to landfill in 2019/20 and statement of trend ('relatively constant')

Solar Panels: Current installation status per household for the Shire and 5 selected communities.

Council emissions: tCO₂-e emissions (no definition), water use, electricity consumption e2018 and 2019 Summary

So what? Selection of indicators does not accurately reflect the portrayal in the source document and underplays potential impacts especially loss of flora and fauna and threat of bushfire.

LEARNING, EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY

2 stats on education status, 5 on employment status and workforce distribution, 5 sentence overview of trends in employment. Several sentences on opportunities (heritage, arts culture, tourism).

So what? Fails to represent the emphasis and content of the source document.

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Stats and short statement about 5 categories:

Community Health (1), schools and childcare (2), sport and recreation (3) Local library (2) Arts and cultural participation (1). Text summarises geographic distribution and rates of use.

So what? Average distances ignores actual issues, especially in townships and rural areas. Trends in selected stats rates would have better matched the content of the text.

Indicator results

Crude rates, also known as non-standardised rates, have been presented here to help inform localised planning. Crude rates are not appropriate for comparison between LGAs, as estimates have not been age-standardised and therefore differences may be due, at least in part, to differing age profiles. **Details of questions can be found in the full report at: www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/indicators**

Indicator	Measure	LGA estimate	LGA estimate confidence interval	Victorian estimate	Victoria least favourable	Victorian range	Victoria most favourable
General wellbeing							
Subjective wellbeing [range 0–100]	average	78.3	[76.3, 80.3]	77.3	74.1		84.0
Satisfaction with life as a whole [range 0–10]	average	7.9	[7.7, 8.1]	7.8	7.6		8.5
Perceptions of safety – walking alone during day	%agree	95.5	[92.8, 97.4]	92.5	84.9		98.9
Perceptions of safety – walking alone after dark	%agree	67.4	[60.6, 73.8]	55.1	36.3		86.9
Mental wellbeing							
Resilience [range 0–8]	average	6.7	[6.5, 7.0]	6.4	5.5		6.9
Perceptions of neighbourhood – people are willing to help each other	%agree	86.1	[80.8, 90.3]	74.1	63.0		96.8
Perceptions of neighbourhood – this is a close-knit neighbourhood	%agree	73.0	[66.3, 79.1]	61.0	45.3		91.9
Perceptions of neighbourhood – people can be trusted	%agree	88.8	[83.7, 92.8]	71.9	54.6		96.0
Low gender equality score	%	29.9	[23.2, 37.2]	35.7	52.5		18.3
Physical activity							
0 days per week	%	13.2	[9.1, 18.4]	18.9	32.7		7.4
4 or more days per week	%	49.5	[42.3, 56.8]	41.3	28.6		56.2
Organised physical activity							
Participation in any organised physical activity	%	36.4	[29.4, 43.7]	28.7	15.7		39.9
Organised by a fitness, leisure or indoors sports centre	%	15.3	[10.2, 21.7]	9.2	0.0		16.3
Organised by a sports club or association	%	9.8	[6.0, 14.8]	9.8	4.8		21.9
Non-organised physical activity							
Participation in any non-organised physical activity	%	77.0	[70.5, 82.7]	70.5	56.9		85.7
Activity type – walking	%	58.2	[50.8, 65.3]	51.2	43.0		65.1
Activity type – jogging or running	%	12.4	[7.8, 18.4]	14.0	2.4		27.6
Activity type – cycling	%	15.4	[10.2, 21.9]	11.8	3.6		25.2
Sedentary behaviour at work							
Time spent sitting on usual work day (Base: Those aged 18–64 years who are working 35 or more hours)	average (hrs: mins)	4:26	[3:48, 5:05]	4:29	5:58		2:21
Healthy eating							
Number of serves of vegetables per day*	average	2.6	[2.4, 2.8]	2.2	1.7		2.7
Number of serves of fruit per day*	average	1.7	[1.5, 1.8]	1.6	1.3		1.9
Eats take-away meals/snacks at least three times a week	%	7.1	[3.6, 12.4]	10.2	19.8		1.7
No water consumed per day	%	1.6	[0.6, 3.4]	3.1	11.3		0.2
Number of cups of water consumed per day	average	5.4	[5.0, 5.9]	5.4	4.1		6.6
Alcohol							
At risk of short-term harm each month	%	43.5	[36.2, 51.0]	29.4	51.6		13.3
At very high risk of short-term harm each month	%	12.4	[7.1, 19.6]	9.2	20.6		3.6
Alcohol culture – getting drunk every now and then is okay	%agree	30.8	[23.9, 38.3]	27.9	47.7		15.2
Smoking prevalence							
Current smokers**	%	10.7	[6.8, 16.3]	13.1	29.7		5.2

Legend

- LGA value significantly more favourable than Victorian estimate
- LGA value significantly less favourable than Victorian estimate
- LGA value not significantly different from Victorian estimate
- Sampling variability high, use with caution (relative standard error 25–50%)
- | Victorian estimate
- Range of results across all LGAs

- * See Victorian Population Health Survey 2014 for estimates of compliance with the 2013 Australian fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines
- ** Data from Victorian Population Health Survey 2014
- The Victorian Population Health Survey 2014 can be viewed at www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/population-health-systems/health-status-of-victorians/survey-data-and-reports/victorian-population-health-survey/victorian-population-health-survey-2014
- No data** Relative standard error above 50%, estimate not reported

Relationship between Economics and Health (Australia)

Why Economic Development Strategies are key to Community Health and Well-being

- The 20% of Australians living in the lowest socioeconomic areas in 2014–15 were 1.6 times as likely as the highest 20% to have at least two chronic health conditions, such as heart disease and diabetes (ABS 2015a).
- Australians living in the lowest socioeconomic areas lived about 3 years less than those living in the highest areas in 2009–2011 (NHPA 2013).
- If all Australians had the same death rates as people living in the highest socioeconomic areas in 2009–2011, overall mortality rates would have reduced by 13%—and there would have been 54,000 fewer deaths (AIHW 2014d).
- People reporting the worst mental and physical health (those in the bottom 20%) in 2006 were twice as likely to live in a poor-quality or overcrowded dwelling (Mallett et al. 2011).
- Mothers in the lowest socioeconomic areas were 30% more likely to have a low birthweight baby than mothers in the highest socioeconomic areas in 2013 (AIHW 2015a).
- A higher proportion of people with an employment restriction due to a disability lived in the lowest socioeconomic areas (26%) than in the highest socioeconomic areas (12%) in 2012 (AIHW analysis of ABS 2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers).
- Unemployed people were 1.6 times as likely to use cannabis, 2.4 times as likely to use meth/amphetamines and 1.8 times as likely to use ecstasy as employed people in 2013 (AIHW 2014e).
- Dependent children living in the lowest socioeconomic areas in 2013 were 3.6 times as likely to be exposed to tobacco smoke inside the home as those living in the highest socioeconomic areas (7.2% compared with 2.0%) (AIHW analysis of the 2013 National Drug Strategy Household Survey).
- People in low economic resource households spend proportionally less on medical and health care than other households (3.0% and 5.1% of weekly equivalised expenditure, respectively, in 2009–10) (ABS 2012).
- People living in the lowest socioeconomic areas in 2014–15 were more than twice as likely to delay seeing—or not see—a dental professional due to cost compared with those living in the highest socioeconomic areas (28% compared with 12%) (ABS 2015b).

Appendix B Community Vision ‘What we heard’

Element	Category	Action?
Our Green Wedge is valued,	En	
Our Green Wedge is admired,	En	
Our Green Wedge is protected,	En	y
Inclusion is championed in all areas of community life	SC	
participation is championed in all areas of community life	SC	
reconciliation is championed in all areas of community life	SC	
equitable access to services is championed in all areas of community life	SC	
equitable access to opportunities, is championed in all areas of community life	SC	
The mental well being of our residents is supported through targeted, evidence based initiatives	SC	
The physical wellbeing of our residents is supported through targeted, evidence based initiatives	SC	
We facilitate education on climate change	Ed/cc 1	y
We facilitate action on climate change	cc 1	y
Housing diversity promotes quality lifestyles	H	
Housing diversity protects the local character and environment	H 2	
Connected transport systems, are accessible to all residents	I (t)	
public and active transport, are accessible to all residents	I (t)	y
appropriate (transport) infrastructure is accessible to all residents	I (t) 4	y
There is a greater emphasis on a reduce approach to waste management	W	y
There is a greater emphasis on a refuse approach to waste management	W	
There is a greater emphasis on a reuse approach to waste management	W	
There is a greater emphasis on a repurpose approach to waste management	W	
There is a greater emphasis on a recycle approach to waste management	W 5	
An increased focus on minimising energy use,	En/fi 4	y
An increased focus on minimising local, renewable energy production	I (e) 1	y
Environmental emergencies are managed effectively	SC	y
health emergencies are managed effectively	SC 9	y

Community has told us that these 26 elements are particularly important in Nillumbik

APPENDIX C: Content of the Council Plan

The Council Plan must (include):

- the strategic direction of Council
- strategic objectives for achieving that direction
- strategies for achieving the objectives (for at least 4 years)
- strategic indicators for monitoring achievement
- description of initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure, and amenity
- developing background papers and gathering data
- ensuring linkages are made to adopted strategies, policies, and plans
- planning and commissioning community engagement processes
- analysing inputs and information from a broad range of sources regarding priorities and emerging issues
- framing and proposing broad strategic objectives, strategies, and major initiatives in draft form for Council and community consideration.

In fulfilling these content requirements, the plan:

- outlines the strategic agenda for the Council during its term including the steps it will take to implement the Community Vision
- will contain a strong narrative of the opportunities and challenges facing Council and how these will be addressed or realised
- must be respondent to community engagement and aspirations
- demonstrates linkages and connections to relevant regional, state, and national plans
- does not address all the things that Council does, but it will reflect the major challenges facing Council and community and outline objectives, strategies, and initiatives to deliver change and positive improvement.
- is a major influence on the Budget process with transparent links through strategies, initiatives, and performance indicators
- must consider Financial Plan opportunities and constraints but will also contemplate growing the pool of available resources through partnerships, advocacy, or regional collaboration
- is informed by, and informs Councils 1 plus 3-year Budget, Rating and Revenue Plan and Workforce Plan
- has a dynamic relationship with mandated (MSS / MPHP) and other major policies, strategies, and plans
- performance against strategic indicators and progress on initiatives and major activities in the Council Plan must transparently link through the Budget, Annual Report, and other reporting mechanisms
- consideration of what parts of the Community Vision will translate into the Council Plan
- how will the Council Plan be structured and what are the Council's strategic objectives for the next 4-years?
- how the community will be engaged in the Council Planning process?
- how will strategies be developed, tested, and then scheduled across the 4-year period?
- what are the major initiatives and activities that will be included?
- what strategic indicators and performance measures will be included to enhance accountability?

Local Government Victoria

Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework (ISPRF) 2021

Via Engage Victoria online.

Appendix D- Audit of Council Strategies for Type

COMMUNITY AND CONNECTION	
EQUITY AND INCLUSION	
We champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion for people of all abilities, ages, cultural identities, gender identities, geographic locations, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic backgrounds	L
We actively work towards reconciliation and the process of healing with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and recognise them as the Traditional Owners of the land and waterways of Nillumbik	A
We protect Aboriginal cultural heritage, and through building trust, education and celebration, we respect all First Nations people	N
We aim to make Council's programs, services, processes and information accessible and inclusive	L
We encourage and support volunteering to enable community participation opportunities and actively celebrate these contributions.	N
HEALTH AND WELL BEING	
We address the social, environmental and economic factors of health to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for our communities	A
We work with our local partners, government and non-government agencies to respond to health and wellbeing priorities in Nillumbik.	A
AGES AND STAGES	
We work towards creating an age-friendly community where all people regardless of their age or ability can live a good quality of life	A
We actively engage people of all ages and stages in decisions that affect them, ensuring that initiatives meet current and emerging needs	A
We ensure people of all ages and stages have access to inclusive services that respond to their individual needs	L
We focus on lifelong learning as a way to support our residents through key life stages.	L
PLACE AND SPACE	
Identity	
We celebrate and prioritise the protection of our heritage, arts and culture, places and spaces by focusing on the diversity of experiences that have shaped our shared history	L
We value and admire our Green Wedge Shire, including our rural areas and leafy urban areas, which we work hard to protect and enhance	A
We recognise and celebrate our community's significant contributions to art and culture.	A
Neighbourhood character	
We respect and enhance the unique neighbourhood character in our communities to ensure a considered approach to planning and development	N
We promote place making and shaping and advocate for the continuation and enhancement of local character	L
We value everyday arts and cultural experiences through the development of public art	
We champion good design in our public buildings and developments that is consistent with local character.	A
Open spaces	
We are committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of our community's unique surroundings, natural environment and diverse wildlife	A

We carefully protect, plan, maintain and improve open spaces, streetscapes and places to ensure that they are safe, accessible and enjoyable	N
We continue to enhance the Shire's shared trail network, working proactively to improve connectivity	N
We facilitate participation in sports, leisure and recreational activities.	N
Movement and place	
We work to understand what residents, businesses and visitors need from modes of transport, to ensure that getting around is easy, accessible, safe and sustainable	N
We champion the notion of living locally; making it easier for people to meet most of their daily needs within the Shire	A
We continue to deliver on our road management responsibilities; working to enhance infrastructure that aligns with the character of the neighbourhood	N
We prioritise and actively advocate for new and better public transport options and a reduction of private car use and dependence	N
We work with our community, neighbouring councils and transport and planning agencies to advocate for improved transport solutions.	N
SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT	
Climate action	
We take decisive action on climate change	N
We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and all levels of government to develop clear and effective initiatives to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation.	N
Sustainability	
We develop clear and effective initiatives designed to reduce the impact of waste and materials from procurement to disposal	N
We explore innovative techniques to enhance food systems within Nillumbik and improve their resilience in response to climate change	A
We favour sustainable and innovative investment; focussing on renewable energy initiatives	A
We seek to embed sustainability initiatives in the planning scheme	A
We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and government agencies to promote sustainability.	N
Business and tourism	
We promote Nillumbik's unique offerings; supporting a vibrant local economy and encouraging tourism	N
We support businesses, industries and events, and encourage investment within Nill	N
We support sustainable agricultural pursuits and their contribution to Nillumbik and the broader community	N
We provide spaces, places and opportunities that develop, and actively support our creative industries.	N
Resilience and recovery	
We support individuals, families and the community to be mentally and physically healthy, safe and enabled to participate in relief and recovery processes arising from crisis or emergency	A
We strengthen emergency preparedness, prevention, response and recovery through the sharing of emergency management information and capabilities	N
We work with our community, Traditional Owners, partners and government agencies to develop processes that are flexible, tailored, relevant and adaptive to the changing needs of the community.	L
RESPONSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE	
Good governance	
We act in the best interests of our community	L
We continue to exercise sustainable and responsible financial management	N

We maintain good governance and transparency; clearly defining and communicating the role of Councillors and Council	L
We are forward-thinking, data-driven and evidence-led in our decision making, always looking to identify new opportunities	A
We will continue to be an employer of choice	A
We foster a positive organisational culture, from the top down.	A
Risk management	
We continue to meet Council's responsibilities for emergency management by working with the community and partner agencies, especially in relation to bushfire	N
We seek to enhance community safety, public health, amenity and the environment through improved planning and community engagement, prioritising fair and transparent approaches to managing compliance and enforcement	A
We acknowledge our role in managing the significance of global risks.	A
Services and programs	
We aim to ensure that Council's service delivery is equitable, accessible and inclusive	L
We enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our services, prioritising a great customer experience	L
We communicate clearly and regularly, taking the time to listen and engage with our community	N
We source alternative and innovative funding sources to support and complement Council services and infrastructure	N
We partner with state and federal governments to advocate in our community's best interests	L
We work with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung to develop strategies and projects that deliver meaningful acknowledgement as Traditional Owners.	N

Appendix E

The relationship between Infrastructure and Debt

Sample of high level strategic assessment

Integrating infrastructure planning with land use is a critical factor, but striking a balance between major new builds and initiatives that reduce demand and get the most out of Nillumbik's existing infrastructure is just as important. Achieving this balance will require open conversations with residents and ratepayers about the level of infrastructure that is expected, and the extent to which they are willing to pay for access to improved infrastructure and the trade-offs between the two. Crucial to these discussions will be evidence-led policies, robust data and careful analysis to support investment proposals and to base decisions on.

To ensure Council realises full value from its assets, Council will need to effectively plan for, manage, and effectively utilise existing assets. Effective management of these assets requires the collection of appropriate information, including their value, cost to maintain and operate, condition, performance, risk and utilisation. Adequate planning for established areas such as Nillumbik requires an appreciation of the existing services and facilities, including capacity, condition and the potential to increase, decrease or modify the services that are offered here.

With the introduction of a rate cap in 2016, many councils implemented efficiency reforms to reduce costs including organisation restructures, asset sales, collaborative purchasing, reviews of discretionary services and fleet vehicle reductions. However, evidence is emerging of an under investment in capital infrastructure by financially-constrained smaller councils.³⁹ Over time, the under-investment in social infrastructure renewal by councils will have long-term negative impacts on the quality and safety of local roads, and the availability of community facilities across Victoria.

A number of Nillumbik's facilities managed by or on behalf of Council are ageing and will require significant expenditure to upgrade them to contemporary standards, both in terms of community expectations and current design standards. Further, local conditions present a number of infrastructure challenges for Council. Nillumbik has steep topography and is heavily treed, which both add to infrastructure and maintenance costs.

One of Council's biggest challenges in relation to the provision of infrastructure is the ability to adequately address the funding gap for renewal and maintenance of existing infrastructure assets. Underspensing on renewal is not a saving, as higher costs will eventually be borne by future ratepayers.

Social infrastructure in the future: what we can expect

Changing demographics will impact on the provision of social infrastructure. The funding gap for social infrastructure renewal and maintenance will widen as less traditional funding is available. Partnerships, co-location and innovative delivery solutions to the provision of social infrastructure will become more important in the future. Under-supply of services and infrastructure will mean the broader community will have lower quality of life and economic opportunities.

Nillumbik 2040
P. 32

Financial Plan 2021-2031

DRAFT



Acknowledgement of traditional owners

Nillumbik Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which Nillumbik is located, and we value the significance of the Wurundjeri people's history as essential to the unique character of the shire. We pay tribute to all First Nations People living in Nillumbik, give respect to Elders past and present and future, and extend that respect to all First Nations People.

We recognise that Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people hold a deep and ongoing connection to this place. We value the distinctive place of our First Nations people in both Nillumbik's and Australia's identity; from their cultural heritage and care of the land, to their ongoing contributions in many fields including academia, agriculture, art, economics, law, sport and politics.

We recognise and value the distinctive and special spiritual and material relationship that First Nations people have with the land and the water, including trees, rocks, hills and valleys, creeks, rivers and flood plains in our Shire.

Model Financial Plan Reports

1. Legislative requirements	1
2. Financial Plan context	5
3. Financial Plan statements	10
4. Financial performance indicators	26
5. Strategies and plans	30
6. Glossary	33

The draft Financial Plan, including financial statements, has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* and with the Australian Accounting Standards Board standards.

1. Legislative Requirements

This section describes how the Financial Plan links to the achievement of the achievement of the Community Vision - Nillumbik 2040 and the four year Council Plan within the Integrated Strategic Planning & Reporting framework. This framework guides the Council in identifying community needs and aspirations over the long term (Community Vision), medium term (Council Plan) and short term (Annual Budget) and then holding itself accountable (Annual Report).

The following diagram provides an overview of the core legislated elements of an integrated strategic planning and reporting framework and outcomes.

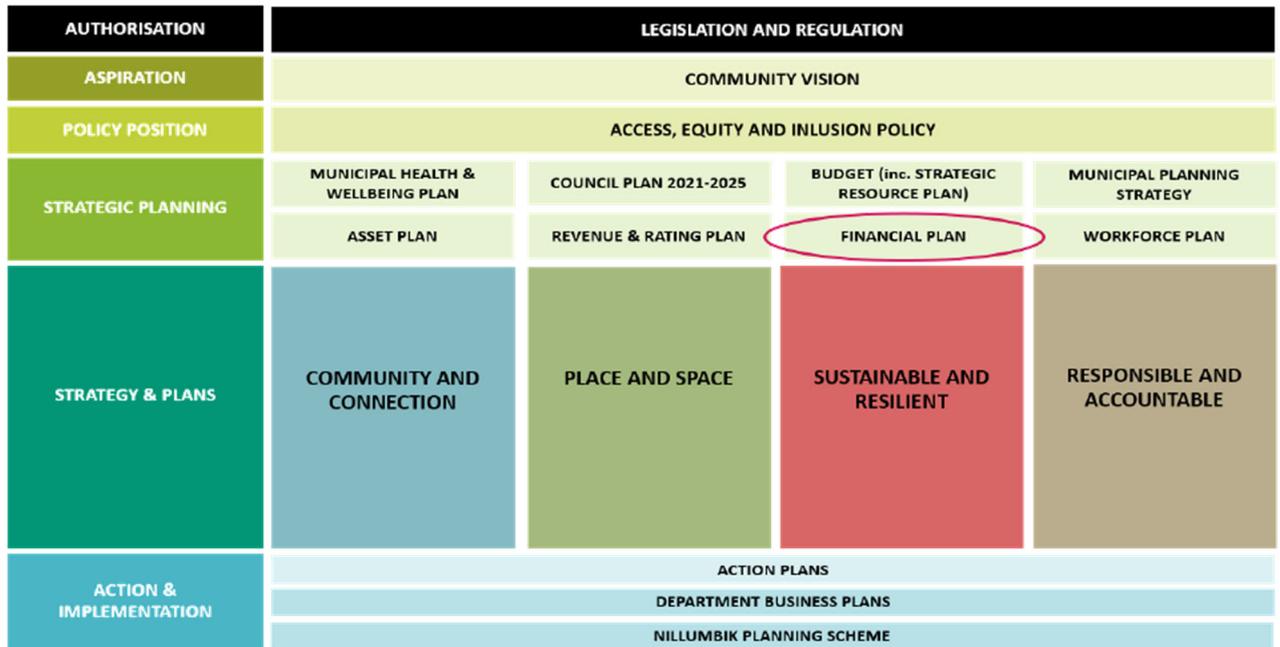


Image: Council's Strategic Planning Framework

The following figure demonstrates how each element might inform or be informed by other parts of the integrated framework.

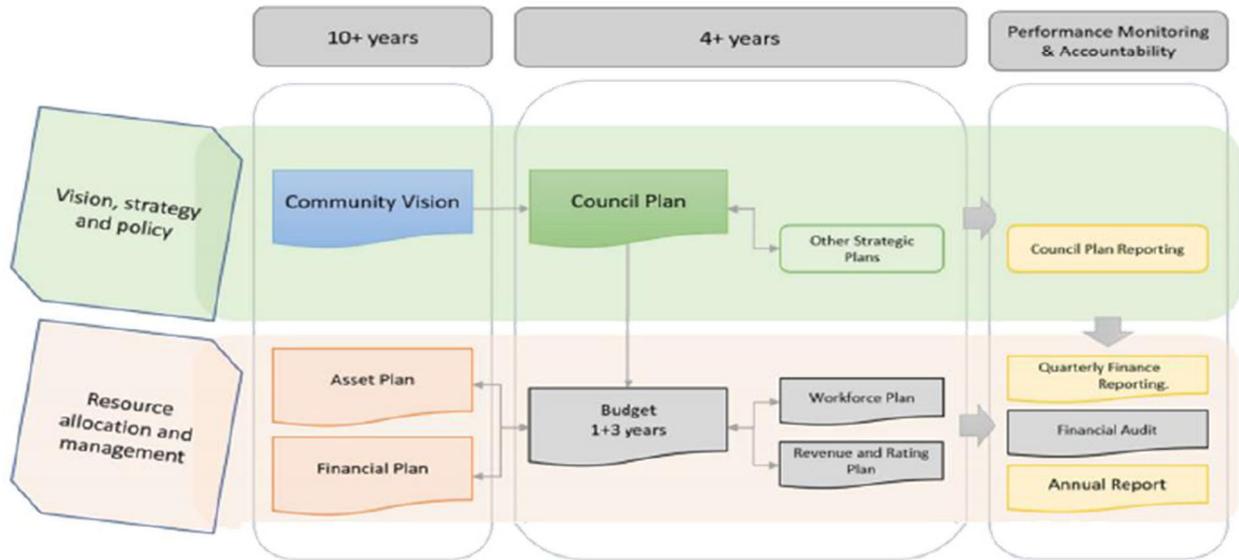


Image: Council's Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework

1.1 Strategic Planning Principles

The Financial Plan is developed in the context of the following strategic planning principles:

- a) Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.
- b) The Financial Plan addresses the Community Vision by allocating funds towards the actions in the four year Council Plan.
- c) The Financial Plan statements articulate the 10-year financial resources necessary to implement the objectives and strategies of the Council Plan to achieve the Community Vision.
- d) Council's strategic planning principles identify and address the risks to effective implementation of the Financial Plan. The financial risks are included at section 1.2.2 below.
- e) The Financial Plan provides for the strategic planning principles of progress monitoring and reviews to identify and adapt to changing circumstances.

1.2 Financial Management Principles

The Financial Plan demonstrates the following financial management principles:

- 1.2.1 Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions are managed in accordance with Council's financial policies and strategic plans and the Australian Accounting Standards Board standards.
- 1.2.2 Management of the following financial risks:
 - a) the financial viability of the Council (refer to section 2.1 Financial Policy Statements).
 - b) the management of current and future liabilities of the Council. The estimated 10 year-liabilities are disclosed in section 3.2 Balance Sheet projections.
- 1.2.3 Financial policies and strategic plans are designed to provide financial stability to the community.
- 1.2.4 Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position (refer section 3 Financial Statements).

1.3 Engagement Principles

The Council Plan 2021-2025 has been informed by community engagement through the 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future' community engagement initiative undertaken in February and March 2021, results from the 2021 Annual Community Survey and expands on the themes and aspirations of our Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040. The plan is also the result of Councillor and staff planning workshops to identify directions and outcomes.

The Financial Plan 2021-2031 provides the context through which the objectives and strategies of the Council Plan can be funded and ultimately achieve the aspirations of Community Vision.

Council has developed a comprehensive community engagement framework. Council has implemented the following consultation process to ensure due consideration and feedback is received from relevant stakeholders.

- a) Draft Financial Plan preparation is informed by Council Plan and Community Vision;
- b) Draft Financial Plan adopted for public exhibition at the July 2021 Council meeting for a period of 28 day and calling for public submissions;
- c) Community engagement is conducted using local news outlets and social media;
- d) Hearing of public submissions to the Financial Plan in September 2021;
- e) Financial Plan, including any revisions, presented to in October 2021 to Council for adoption.

1.4 Service Performance Principles

Council services are designed to be purposeful, targeted to community needs and value for money. The service performance principles are listed below:

- a) Services are provided in an equitable manner to the community. The four year Council Plan will guide the organisation's work to deliver on the priorities of the Council and the community, and to manage and deliver services for the Nillumbik community during Council's term.
- b) Services are accessible to users within the community.
- c) The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) is designed to communicate Council's performance regarding the provision of services.
- d) Council considers and responds to community feedback and complaints regarding service provision.

1.5 Asset Plan Integration

Integration to the Asset Plan is a key principle of the Council's strategic financial planning principles. The purpose of this integration is designed to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery in terms of the plans and the effective management of Council's assets into the future, across each asset category and condition.

The Asset Plan will identify the operational and strategic practices and will ensure that Council manages assets across their lifecycle in a financially sustainable manner. The Asset Plan, and associated asset management policies, provide Council with a sound base to understand the risk associated with managing its assets for the community's benefit.

2. Financial Plan Context

This section describes the context and external / internal environment and consideration in determining the 10 year financial projections and assumptions.

2.1 Financial Policy Statements

This section defines the measures that demonstrates Council's financial sustainability in order to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision - Nillumbik 2040 and the four year Council Plan.

Policy Statement	Measure	Target	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
			Consistent underlying surplus results	Adjusted underlying result	>5%	-1.01%	0.16%	1.53%	2.45%	3.14%	3.67%	4.31%
Ensure Council maintains sufficient working capital to meet its debt obligations as they fall due.	Current Assets / Current Liabilities	>1.5	1.80	1.33	1.17	1.17	1.15	1.30	1.47	1.69	1.93	2.26
Allocate adequate funds towards renewal capital in order to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life.	Asset renewal and upgrade expenses / Depreciation	100%	149.9%	113.4%	88.3%	77.4%	80.1%	91.0%	94.8%	90.1%	90.6%	76.9%
That Council applies loan funding to new capital and maintains total borrowings in line with rate income and growth of the municipality.	Total borrowings / Rate revenue	<60%	24.3%	19.2%	16.5%	13.9%	11.3%	8.7%	6.5%	4.6%	2.8%	1.1%
Council maintains sufficient unrestricted cash to ensure ongoing liquidity as well as to address unforeseen cash imposts if required.	Unrestricted cash / current liabilities	>80%	116.8%	60.2%	41.6%	38.5%	37.6%	43.6%	59.3%	80.9%	105.1%	135.7%
Council generates sufficient revenue from rates plus fees and charges to ensure a consistent funding for new and renewal capital.	Capital Outlays as a % of Own Source Revenue	>30%	35.2%	24.6%	20.5%	20.2%	19.1%	19.0%	19.0%	18.2%	18.1%	18.0%

2.1 Financial Policy Statements continued

As can be seen from the above table, the results across the indicators for the current financial year demonstrate that overall financial sustainability is being maintained through active management of Council's underlying financial practices. The forecast results in the outer years are indicating fluctuating trends highlight the reliance on grant funding.

The forecast **underlying surplus** results show a stabilising trend, reflecting limited growth in own-source revenue and maintenance of operational expenditure in line with service levels. The trend reinforces the reliance on external funding sources, such as grants from other levels of government.

Council's **liquidity** forecasts are stable and reflects liabilities, including borrowing maturities and a greater proportion of the provision for landfill rehabilitation, becoming current and cash balances lowering as capital projects are completed.

Council continues to invest in public infrastructure and community **asset renewal** with an underlying criteria being the renewal gap, to ensure Council's responsibility remains at a manageable level. The forecast results mirror the capital works program currently scheduled and in future years; and again highlights the reliance on external funding.

Council continues to repay its existing **loans and borrowings** and has budgeted to take out further loans in 2021/2022. This is offset by borrowing maturities schedule to occur each year, resulting in the declining overall debt balance and trend.

Council does not budget for non-recurrent grant funding where there is a high degree of uncertainty or lack of assurance of receipt. As such **unrestricted cash** balances fluctuate but remain at sustainable levels.

Council is highly reliant on external funding sources in order to achieve the desired level of **capital outlay**, as demonstrated in the forecast results.

2.2 Strategic Actions

The strategic actions are included in the 10-year financial plan.

1. That Council adopt the following statements as being an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
2. That the working capital ratio be targeted to remain above a ratio of 1.5.
3. That capital expenditure on asset renewal projects (and upgrades that have a significant renewal component) be given priority over capital expenditure on new assets to achieve consistent and sustainable asset renewal.
4. That any new projects that require loan funding be given priority if the projects that are driven by legislative requirements, represent a significant benefit to Council's longer term sustainability, or will have proven cash flows in future periods to 'repay' the cash outlays required in the initial periods.
5. That Council consider the most appropriate fees and charges strategy so that adequate funds are recovered to offset operational expenses in annual and future budgets.

2.3 Assumptions to the financial plan statements

This section presents information in regard to the assumptions to the Comprehensive Income Statement for the 10 years from 2021/22 to 2030/31.

Description and table of annual escalations, for the 10 year period, for each income and expenditure line item contained in the Comprehensive Income Statement.

Escalation Factors	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
CPI (source: 2021-2022 Victorian [State Government] Budget)	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%
Growth (assessments)	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130
Rates and charges	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%
Statutory fees and fines	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%
User fees	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%
Grants - operating	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%
Grants - capital	<i>Capital grants are forecast in line with anticipated capital works.</i>									
Interest revenue	0.50%	0.40%	0.70%	0.80%	0.80%	1.00%	1.00%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%
Contributions - monetary	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%
Other income	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%
Employee costs	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%
Materials and services	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%
Depreciation & amortisation	<i>Budgeted depreciation and amortisation is based on current depreciation, plus an increase based on budgeted capital works, less a retirement/ renewal factor.</i>									
Other expenses	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%

2.3.1 Rates and charges

Rate revenue will increase by 1.50% for the 2021-22 year, based on the state government rate cap, with estimated future annual increases based of 1.75%, 2.00% and 2.25% per annum for the ensuing years of the long term financial plan.

Waste charges are estimated to increase in line with the CPI growth increases to ensure Council continues to recover the full costs of providing waste services and to rehabilitate former landfill sites at Plenty and Kangaroo Ground.

2.3.2 Statutory fees and fines □

The Financial Plan indexes statutory fees, set by legislation, according on the estimated annual rate of CPI.

2.3.3 User fees

User charges relate mainly to the recovery of service delivery costs through the charging of fees. The key principle for determining the level of user charges has been to ensure that increases are generally consistent with cost increases.

Revenue increases for the ensuing years are in line with growth assumptions in the state government rate cap.

2.3.4 Grants □

Operating grants include all monies received from State and Federal sources for the purposes of funding the delivery of Council's services. Overall, the level of operating grants is expected to decrease by 19.29 percent or \$1.226 million. This is mainly due to a large number one-off non-recurrent grants received in 2020-21.

2.3.5 Contributions □

Council receives contributions from developers. These contributions represent funds to enable council to provide the necessary infrastructure and infrastructure improvements to accommodate development growth. The contributions are for specific purposes and require Council to outlay funds for infrastructure works before receipt of this income source. These contributions are statutory contributions and are transferred to a restricted reserve until utilised for a specific purpose through the capital works program or delivered as works in kind by developers.

2.3.6 Other income

Revenue from other income mainly comprises investment income plus the recovery income from a variety of sources and rental income received from the hire of Council buildings.

2.3.7 Employee costs

Employee costs include all labour related expenditure including; wages and salaries and on-costs for both casual employees and permanent employees. Salaries and wages have been increased based on Council's Enterprise Agreement which provides a 1.8 percent increase. The superannuation rate has been increased to 10 percent to reflect changes in the superannuation guarantee legislation.

The ensuing years, reflect annual increases of 1.9 percent for 2022-23 and 2.0 percent up to 2030-31 to provide for annual EBA increases.

2.3.8 Materials and services □

Material costs include items required for the maintenance and repairs of Council buildings, roads, drains and footpaths. Other associated costs included under this category are utilities and purchase of consumable items for a range of services. Council also utilises external expertise on a range of matters. These costs are kept to within CPI levels year on year.

2.3.9 Depreciation & amortisation

Depreciation is an accounting measure which allocates the value of Council's property, plant and equipment including infrastructure such as roads and drains assets over their useful life. Depreciation and amortisation is based on prior year depreciation, plus an increase based on budgeted capital works, less a retirement/ renewal factor.

2.3.10 Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs comprise the interest expense to service Council's loan portfolio that is described in Section 5.1 Borrowing Plan.

2.3.11 Other expenses

Other expenses include administration costs such as Councillor allowances, election costs, sponsorships, partnerships, community grants, lease expenditure, fire services property levy, audit costs and other costs associated with the day to day running of Council.

3. Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information in regard to the Financial Plan Statements for the 10 years from 2021/22 to 2030/31.

The appendix includes the following budgeted information:

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Capital Works
- Statement of Human Resources

Comprehensive Income Statement
For the five years ending 30 June 2026

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Income					
Rates and charges	69,953	72,409	74,425	76,517	78,678
Statutory fees and fines	1,916	1,950	1,989	2,034	2,079
User fees	16,504	16,817	17,127	17,599	18,065
Grants - operating	5,131	5,116	5,219	5,336	5,456
Grants - capital	2,809	5,105	5,205	5,905	5,705
Contributions - monetary	119	121	123	1,480	129
Contributions - non-monetary	-	-	-	-	-
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Share of net profits/(losses) of associates	-	-	-	-	-
Other income	1,137	1,153	1,172	1,195	1,218
Total income	97,569	102,671	105,260	110,066	111,330
Expenses					
Employee costs	37,035	37,708	38,460	39,228	40,179
Materials and services	39,294	40,409	40,654	41,553	42,472
Depreciation and amortisation	12,352	12,430	12,506	12,595	12,672
Bad and doubtful debts	-	-	-	-	-
Amortisation - right of use assets	420	110	110	55	55
Borrowing costs	583	621	550	477	400
Finance costs - leases	12	9	6	4	3
Other expenses	5,897	6,000	6,120	6,258	6,399
Total expenses	95,593	97,287	98,406	100,170	102,180
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	1,976	5,384	6,854	9,896	9,150
Other comprehensive income					
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods					
Net asset revaluation increment	-	-	-	-	-
Share of other comprehensive income of associates	-	-	-	-	-
Items that may be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods					
	-	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive result	1,976	5,384	6,854	9,896	9,150

Comprehensive Income Statement
 For the five years ending 30 June 2031

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Income					
Rates and charges	80,891	83,176	85,516	87,932	90,407
Statutory fees and fines	2,126	2,174	2,223	2,273	2,324
User fees	18,380	18,783	19,195	19,627	20,069
Grants - operating	5,579	5,704	5,833	5,964	6,098
Grants - capital	5,955	6,055	5,855	6,155	6,255
Contributions - monetary	131	134	137	141	144
Contributions - non-monetary	-	-	-	-	-
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Share of net profits/(losses) of associates	-	-	-	-	-
Other income	1,242	1,266	1,292	1,318	1,345
Total income	114,304	117,292	120,051	123,410	126,642
Expenses					
Employee costs	41,154	42,151	43,171	44,216	45,098
Materials and services	43,412	44,373	45,356	46,361	47,388
Bad and doubtful debts	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation and amortisation	12,777	12,865	12,992	13,136	13,264
Amortisation - right of use assets	37	-	-	-	-
Borrowing costs	318	237	170	119	66
Finance costs - leases	1	-	-	-	-
Other expenses	6,543	6,690	6,840	6,994	7,152
Total expenses	104,242	106,316	108,529	110,826	112,968
Surplus (deficit) for the year	10,062	10,976	11,522	12,584	13,674
Other comprehensive income					
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods					
Net asset revaluation increment	-	-	-	-	-
Share of other comprehensive income of associates	-	-	-	-	-
Items that may be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods	-	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive result	10,062	10,976	11,522	12,584	13,674

Balance Sheet

For the five years ending 30 June 2026

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Current assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	33,409	20,673	16,921	16,501	16,591
Trade and other receivables	5,854	6,160	6,315	6,604	6,680
Other financial assets	250	250	250	250	250
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	-	-	-	-	-
Other assets	18	19	19	19	19
Total current assets	39,531	27,102	23,505	23,374	23,540
Non-current assets					
Trade and other receivables	454	363	291	233	186
Other financial assets	5	5	5	5	5
Investments in associates and joint arrangement and subsidiaries	1,471	1,471	1,471	1,471	1,471
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	978,950	988,908	995,557	1,002,347	1,008,505
Right-of-use assets	367	257	147	92	37
Investment property	-	-	-	-	-
Intangible assets	-	-	-	-	-
Total non-current assets	981,247	991,004	997,471	1,004,148	1,010,204
Total assets	1,020,778	1,018,106	1,020,976	1,027,522	1,033,744
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	5,135	5,261	5,320	5,435	5,559
Trust funds and deposits	1,925	1,925	1,925	1,925	1,925
Provisions	11,054	10,196	9,896	9,326	9,756
Unearned grants and contract liabilities	702	1,276	1,301	1,476	1,426
Interest-bearing liabilities	3,063	1,601	1,673	1,751	1,808
Lease liabilities	112	112	55	55	36
Total current liabilities	21,991	20,371	20,170	19,968	20,511
Non-current liabilities					
Provisions	15,022	12,245	9,907	8,283	6,374
Interest-bearing liabilities	13,903	12,302	10,629	8,878	7,070
Lease liabilities	258	145	91	36	-
Total non-current liabilities	29,183	24,692	20,627	17,197	13,444
Total liabilities	51,175	45,063	40,797	37,165	33,955
Net assets	969,603	973,043	980,179	990,357	999,789
Equity					
Accumulated surplus	411,374	422,610	431,651	441,399	450,912
Reserves	558,229	550,433	548,528	548,958	548,877
Total equity	969,603	973,043	980,179	990,357	999,789

Balance Sheet

For the five years ending 30 June 2031

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
Current assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	17,234	20,337	24,697	29,938	35,764
Trade and other receivables	6,858	7,038	7,202	7,404	7,598
Other financial assets	250	250	250	250	250
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	-	-	-	-	-
Other assets	19	19	20	20	20
Total current assets	24,361	27,644	32,169	37,612	43,632
Non-current assets					
Trade and other receivables	149	119	95	76	61
Other financial assets	5	5	5	5	5
Investments in associates and joint arrangement and subsidiaries	1,471	1,471	1,471	1,471	1,471
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	1,014,689	1,021,310	1,027,452	1,033,809	1,040,578
Right-of-use assets	-	-	-	-	-
Investment property	-	-	-	-	-
Intangible assets	-	-	-	-	-
Total non-current assets	1,016,314	1,022,905	1,029,023	1,035,361	1,042,115
Total assets	1,040,675	1,050,549	1,061,192	1,072,973	1,085,747
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	5,685	5,815	5,945	6,081	6,213
Trust funds and deposits	1,925	1,925	1,925	1,925	1,925
Provisions	7,985	8,136	8,291	8,448	8,609
Unearned grants and contract liabilities	1,489	1,514	1,464	1,539	1,564
Interest-bearing liabilities	1,701	1,412	1,464	1,517	977
Lease liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Total current liabilities	18,785	18,802	19,089	19,510	19,288
Non-current liabilities					
Provisions	6,386	6,398	6,411	6,424	6,437
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	5,369	3,957	2,494	977	-
Lease liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Total non-current liabilities	11,755	10,355	8,905	7,401	6,437
Total liabilities	30,540	29,157	27,994	26,911	25,725
Net assets	1,010,135	1,021,392	1,033,198	1,046,062	1,060,022
Equity					
Accumulated surplus	460,725	471,352	483,060	495,396	508,754
Reserves	549,410	550,040	550,138	550,666	551,268
Total equity	1,010,135	1,021,392	1,033,198	1,046,062	1,060,022

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the five years ending 30 June 2026

* Balances at the end of the financial year may be subject to rounding differences.

	Total \$'000	Accum Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2022				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	971,121	400,003	523,226	47,892
Adjustment on change in accounting policy	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	1,976	1,976	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment / (decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to other reserves	2,261	(20,998)	-	23,259
Transfer from other reserves	(5,755)	30,393	-	(36,148)
Balance at end of the financial year	969,603	411,374	523,226	35,003
2023				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	969,603	411,374	523,226	35,003
Adjustment on change in accounting policy	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	5,384	5,384	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment / (decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to other reserves	2,267	(15,146)	-	17,413
Transfer from other reserves	(4,211)	20,998	-	(25,209)
Balance at end of the financial year	973,043	422,610	523,226	27,207
2024				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	973,043	422,610	523,226	27,207
Adjustment on change in accounting policy	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	6,854	6,854	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment / (decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to other reserves	2,250	(12,959)	-	15,209
Transfer from other reserves	(1,968)	15,146	-	(17,114)
Balance at end of the financial year	980,179	431,651	523,226	25,302
2025				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	980,179	431,651	523,226	25,302
Adjustment on change in accounting policy	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	9,896	9,896	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment / (decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to other reserves	2,249	(13,107)	-	15,356
Transfer from other reserves	(1,967)	12,959	-	(14,926)
Balance at end of the financial year	990,357	441,399	523,226	25,732
2026				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	990,357	441,399	523,226	25,732
Adjustment on change in accounting policy	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	9,150	9,150	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment / (decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to other reserves	2,249	(12,744)	-	14,993
Transfer from other reserves	(1,967)	13,107	-	(15,074)
Balance at end of the financial year	999,789	450,912	523,226	25,651

Statement of Changes in Equity Projections

For the five years ending 30 June 2031

* Balances at the end of the financial year may be subject to rounding differences.

	Total \$'000	Accum Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2027				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	999,789	450,912	523,226	25,651
Adjustment on change in accounting policy	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	10,062	10,062	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment / (decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to other reserves	2,249	(12,993)	-	15,242
Transfer from other reserves	(1,965)	12,744	-	(14,709)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,010,135	460,725	523,226	26,184
2028				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,010,135	460,725	523,226	26,184
Adjustment on change in accounting policy	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	10,976	10,976	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment / (decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to other reserves	2,289	(13,342)	-	15,631
Transfer from other reserves	(2,008)	12,993	-	(15,001)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,021,392	471,352	523,226	26,814
2029				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,021,392	471,352	523,226	26,814
Adjustment on change in accounting policy	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	11,522	11,522	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment / (decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to other reserves	1,089	(13,156)	-	14,245
Transfer from other reserves	(805)	13,342	-	(14,147)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,033,198	483,060	523,226	26,912
2030				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,033,198	483,060	523,226	26,912
Adjustment on change in accounting policy	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	12,584	12,584	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment / (decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to other reserves	1,089	(13,404)	-	14,493
Transfer from other reserves	(809)	13,156	-	(13,965)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,046,062	495,396	523,226	27,440
2031				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,046,062	495,396	523,226	27,440
Adjustment on change in accounting policy	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	13,674	13,674	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment / (decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to other reserves	1,089	(13,720)	-	14,809
Transfer from other reserves	(803)	13,404	-	(14,207)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,060,022	508,754	523,226	28,042

Statement Cash Flows

For the five years ending 30 June 2026

* Balances at the end of the financial year may be subject to rounding differences.

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows / (Outflows)	Inflows / (Outflows)	Inflows / (Outflows)	Inflows / (Outflows)	Inflows / (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities					
Rates and charges	71,351	72,255	74,373	76,344	78,664
Statutory fees and fines	1,996	1,935	1,981	2,020	2,075
User fees	16,584	16,802	17,119	17,585	18,061
Grants - operating	5,211	5,101	5,211	5,322	5,452
Grants - capital	(4,276)	5,664	5,222	6,066	5,651
Contributions - monetary	119	121	123	1,480	129
Interest received	271	272	274	276	278
Trust funds and deposits taken	-	-	-	-	-
Other receipts	866	881	898	920	939
Employee costs	(36,888)	(37,559)	(38,308)	(39,073)	(40,021)
Materials and services	(45,244)	(45,741)	(43,379)	(43,782)	(43,979)
Trust funds and deposits repaid	-	-	-	-	-
Other payments	(5,895)	(6,001)	(6,118)	(6,260)	(6,397)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	4,096	13,730	17,396	20,898	20,852
Cash flows from investing activities					
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(32,310)	(22,661)	(18,879)	(19,109)	(18,553)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	750	-	-	-	-
Payments for investments	-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from sale of investments	-	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	(31,560)	(22,661)	(18,879)	(19,109)	(18,553)
Cash flows from financing activities					
Finance costs	(583)	(621)	(550)	(477)	(400)
Proceeds from borrowings	7,000	-	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings	(3,426)	(3,063)	(1,601)	(1,673)	(1,750)
Interest paid - lease liability	(12)	(9)	(6)	(4)	(3)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(428)	(112)	(112)	(55)	(55)
Net cash provided by / (used in) financing activities	2,551	(3,805)	(2,269)	(2,209)	(2,208)
Net increase / (decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	(24,913)	(12,736)	(3,752)	(420)	91
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	58,322	33,409	20,673	16,921	16,501
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	33,409	20,673	16,921	16,501	16,591

Statement of Cash Flows

For the five years ending 30 June 2031

* Balances at the end of the financial year may be subject to rounding differences.

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows / (Outflows)	Inflows / (Outflows)	Inflows / (Outflows)	Inflows / (Outflows)	Inflows / (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities					
Rates and charges	80,785	83,062	85,407	87,790	90,267
Statutory fees and fines	2,117	2,165	2,215	2,263	2,314
User fees	18,371	18,774	19,187	19,617	20,059
Grants - operating	5,570	5,695	5,825	5,954	6,088
Grants - capital	6,009	6,071	5,797	6,220	6,270
Contributions - monetary	131	134	137	141	144
Interest received	281	284	288	291	295
Trust funds and deposits taken	-	-	-	-	-
Other receipts	961	982	1,004	1,027	1,050
Employee costs	(40,993)	(41,987)	(43,004)	(44,046)	(44,924)
Materials and services	(45,198)	(44,238)	(45,216)	(46,221)	(47,246)
Trust funds and deposits repaid	-	-	-	-	-
Other payments	(6,543)	(6,690)	(6,840)	(6,994)	(7,151)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	21,491	24,252	24,800	26,042	27,166
Cash flows from investing activities					
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(18,922)	(19,440)	(19,163)	(19,529)	(20,010)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	237	229	306	311	253
Payments for investments	-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from sale of investments	-	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	(18,685)	(19,211)	(18,857)	(19,218)	(19,757)
Cash flows from financing activities					
Finance costs	(318)	(237)	(170)	(119)	(66)
Proceeds from borrowings	-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings	(1,808)	(1,701)	(1,412)	(1,463)	(1,517)
Interest paid - lease liability	(1)	-	-	-	-
Repayment of lease liabilities	(36)	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by / (used in) financing activities	(2,163)	(1,938)	(1,582)	(1,582)	(1,583)
Net increase / (decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	643	3,103	4,360	5,242	5,826
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	16,591	17,234	20,337	24,697	29,938
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	17,234	20,337	24,697	29,938	35,764

Statement of Capital Works

For the five years ending 30 June 2026

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000
Property					
Land	-	-	-	-	-
Land improvements	-	-	-	-	-
Total land	-	-	-	-	-
Buildings	1,991	1,489	1,574	1,307	912
Heritage buildings	-	-	-	-	-
Building improvements	-	-	-	-	-
Leasehold improvements	-	-	-	-	-
Total buildings	1,991	1,489	1,574	1,307	912
Total property	1,991	1,489	1,574	1,307	912
Plant and equipment					
Heritage plant and equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Plant, machinery and equipment	957	683	585	558	559
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	60	175	223	269	295
Computers and telecommunications	-	-	-	-	-
Library books	-	-	-	-	-
Total plant and equipment	1,017	858	808	827	854
Infrastructure					
Roads	5,113	3,378	3,344	3,949	3,677
Bridges	835	424	260	209	190
Footpaths and cycleways	1,514	1,124	987	947	953
Drainage	453	571	618	667	704
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	14,617	8,178	5,210	4,604	4,123
Waste management	3,786	2,790	2,350	1,636	1,920
Parks, open space and streetscapes	967	561	413	546	486
Aerodromes	-	-	-	-	-
Off street car parks	-	-	-	-	-
Other infrastructure	1,204	3,346	3,875	4,967	5,294
Total infrastructure	28,488	20,372	17,057	17,525	17,348
Total capital works expenditure	31,496	22,719	19,439	19,660	19,114
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	271	647	541	1,321	82
Asset renewal expenditure	18,520	14,100	11,041	9,753	10,156
Asset expansion expenditure	1,225	1,070	3,128	3,132	3,016
Asset upgrade expenditure	11,480	6,902	4,729	5,454	5,861
Total capital works expenditure	31,496	22,719	19,439	19,660	19,115
Funding sources represented by:					
Grants	4,003	6,877	5,865	6,291	5,817
Contributions	-	-	-	-	-
Council cash	20,493	15,842	13,574	13,369	13,298
Proceeds on sale of assets	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowings	7,000	-	-	-	-
Total capital works expenditure	31,496	22,719	19,439	19,660	19,115

Statement of Capital Works

For the five years ending 30 June 2031

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
Property					
Land	-	-	-	-	-
Land improvements	-	-	-	-	-
Total land	-	-	-	-	-
Buildings	977	715	622	600	604
Heritage buildings	-	-	-	-	-
Building improvements	-	-	-	-	-
Leasehold improvements	-	-	-	-	-
Total buildings	977	715	622	600	604
Total property	977	715	622	600	604
Plant and equipment					
Heritage plant and equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Plant, machinery and equipment	761	596	894	1,014	760
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	313	327	347	367	383
Computers and telecommunications	-	-	-	-	-
Library books	-	-	-	-	-
Total plant and equipment	1,074	923	1,241	1,380	1,143
Infrastructure					
Roads	3,010	2,797	3,057	3,215	3,626
Bridges	197	298	233	210	203
Footpaths and cycleways	972	1,001	1,153	1,238	1,416
Drainage	736	769	796	829	860
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	3,911	3,920	4,010	4,154	5,802
Waste management	1,464	1,306	522	209	84
Parks, open space and streetscapes	471	383	477	524	550
Aerodromes	-	-	-	-	-
Off street car parks	-	-	-	-	-
Other infrastructure	6,677	7,902	7,622	7,747	6,292
Total infrastructure	17,438	18,374	17,871	18,125	18,833
Total capital works expenditure	19,489	20,012	19,734	20,105	20,580
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	100	256	81	78	1,064
Asset renewal expenditure	11,623	12,195	11,704	11,904	10,195
Asset expansion expenditure	1,358	889	945	965	996
Asset upgrade expenditure	6,408	6,672	7,004	7,158	8,324
Total capital works expenditure	19,489	20,012	19,734	20,105	20,579
Funding sources represented by:					
Grants	5,882	5,952	5,910	6,080	6,161
Contributions	-	-	-	-	-
Council cash	13,607	14,060	13,824	14,025	14,418
Proceeds on sale of assets	-	-	-	-	-
Reimbursements	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowings	-	-	-	-	-
Total capital works expenditure	19,489	20,012	19,734	20,105	20,579

Statement of Human Resources

For the five years ending 30 June 2026

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000
Staff expenditure					
Employee costs - operating	35,940	36,659	37,392	38,140	38,903
Employee costs - capital	-	-	-	-	-
Total staff expenditure	35,940	36,659	37,392	38,140	38,903
	EFT	EFT	EFT	EFT	EFT
Staff numbers					
Permanent EFT numbers	314.43	314.43	314.43	314.43	314.43
Limited tenures	7.16	8.00	6.00	4.00	4.00
Total staff numbers	321.59	322.43	320.43	318.43	318.43

Statement of Human Resources

For the five years ending 30 June 2031

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
Staff expenditure					
Employee costs - operating	39,681	40,474	41,284	42,109	42,952
Employee costs - capital	-	-	-	-	-
Total staff expenditure	39,681	40,474	41,284	42,109	42,952
	EFT	EFT	EFT	EFT	EFT
Staff numbers					
Permanent EFT numbers	314.43	314.43	314.43	314.43	314.43
Limited tenures	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Total staff numbers	318.43	318.43	318.43	318.43	318.43

A summary of human resources expenditure categorised according to the organisational structure is included below:

Directorate	Composition				
	Budget	Permanent		Casual	Temp
	2021-22 \$'000	Full time \$'000	Part time \$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operations and Infrastructure	13,542	11,650	1,452	-	440
Planning and Community Safety	7,787	6,252	1,535	-	-
Community Services	6,043	2,925	2,827	-	291
Corporate Services	6,022	5,552	470	-	-
Governance, Communications and Engagement	2,546	2,383	163	-	-
Total expenditure	35,940	28,762	6,447	-	731

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff in relation to the above expenditure is included below:

Directorate	Composition			
	Budget	Permanent	Temp	
	2021-22	Full time	Part time	
Operations and Infrastructure	129.32	109.85	15.07	4.40
Planning and Community Safety	71.19	53.00	18.19	-
Community Services	53.60	24.00	26.84	2.76
Corporate Services	46.48	41.60	4.88	-
Governance, Communications and Engagement	21.00	19.00	2.00	-
Total staff	321.59	247.45	66.98	7.16

Summary of Planned Human Resources Expenditure
For the five years ending 30 June 2026

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000
Operations and Infrastructure					
Permanent - Full time	11,650	11,871	12,108	12,350	12,597
Female	2,992	3,048	3,109	3,171	3,234
Male	8,658	8,823	8,999	9,179	9,363
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	1,452	1,480	1,509	1,539	1,570
Female	611	623	635	648	661
Male	841	857	874	891	909
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Operations and Infrastructure	13,102	13,351	13,617	13,889	14,167
Planning and Community Safety					
Permanent - Full time	6,252	6,371	6,498	6,628	6,761
Female	3,287	3,350	3,417	3,485	3,555
Male	2,965	3,021	3,081	3,143	3,206
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	1,535	1,564	1,595	1,627	1,659
Female	999	1,018	1,038	1,059	1,080
Male	536	546	557	568	579
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Planning and Community Safety	7,787	7,935	8,093	8,255	8,420
Community Services					
Permanent - Full time	2,925	2,981	3,041	3,102	3,164
Female	2,688	2,739	2,794	2,850	2,907
Male	237	242	247	252	257
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	2,827	2,881	2,938	2,996	3,056
Female	2,762	2,815	2,871	2,928	2,987
Male	65	66	67	68	69
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Community Services	5,752	5,862	5,979	6,098	6,220
Corporate Services					
Permanent - Full time	5,551	5,657	5,771	5,886	6,003
Female	2,234	2,277	2,323	2,369	2,416
Male	3,317	3,380	3,448	3,517	3,587
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	470	479	489	499	509
Female	470	479	489	499	509
Male	-	-	-	-	-
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Corporate Services	6,021	6,136	6,260	6,385	6,512
Governance, Communications and Engagement					
Permanent - Full time	2,383	2,429	2,478	2,528	2,579
Female	2,008	2,047	2,088	2,130	2,173
Male	375	382	390	398	406
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	163	166	169	172	175
Female	163	166	169	172	175
Male	-	-	-	-	-
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Governance, Communications and Engagement	2,546	2,595	2,647	2,700	2,754

Summary of Planned Human Resources Expenditure
For the five years ending 30 June 2031

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
Operations and Infrastructure					
Permanent - Full time	12,849	13,106	13,368	13,636	13,909
Female	3,299	3,365	3,432	3,501	3,571
Male	9,550	9,741	9,936	10,135	10,338
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	1,601	1,633	1,666	1,699	1,733
Female	674	687	701	715	729
Male	927	946	965	984	1,004
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Operations and Infrastructure	14,450	14,739	15,034	15,335	15,642
Planning and Community Safety					
Permanent - Full time	6,896	7,034	7,175	7,318	7,464
Female	3,626	3,699	3,773	3,848	3,925
Male	3,270	3,335	3,402	3,470	3,539
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	1,693	1,727	1,761	1,796	1,832
Female	1,102	1,124	1,146	1,169	1,192
Male	591	603	615	627	640
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Planning and Community Safety	8,589	8,761	8,936	9,114	9,296
Community Services					
Permanent - Full time	3,227	3,291	3,356	3,423	3,492
Female	2,965	3,024	3,084	3,146	3,209
Male	262	267	272	277	283
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	3,117	3,179	3,242	3,306	3,372
Female	3,047	3,108	3,170	3,233	3,298
Male	70	71	72	73	74
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Community Services	6,344	6,470	6,598	6,729	6,864
Corporate Services					
Permanent - Full time	6,123	6,245	6,370	6,497	6,627
Female	2,464	2,513	2,563	2,614	2,666
Male	3,659	3,732	3,807	3,883	3,961
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	519	529	540	551	562
Female	519	529	540	551	562
Male	-	-	-	-	-
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Corporate Services	6,642	6,774	6,910	7,048	7,189
Governance, Communications and Engagement					
Permanent - Full time	2,630	2,682	2,735	2,790	2,846
Female	2,216	2,260	2,305	2,351	2,398
Male	414	422	430	439	448
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	179	183	187	191	195
Female	179	183	187	191	195
Male	-	-	-	-	-
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Governance, Communications and Engagement	2,809	2,865	2,922	2,981	3,041

Summary of Planned Human Resources Expenditure
For the five years ending 30 June 2026

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
Operations and Infrastructure					
Permanent - Full time	109.85	109.85	109.85	109.85	109.85
Female	27.85	27.85	27.85	27.85	27.85
Male	82.00	82.00	82.00	82.00	82.00
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	15.07	15.07	15.07	15.07	15.07
Female	6.42	6.42	6.42	6.42	6.42
Male	8.65	8.65	8.65	8.65	8.65
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Operations and Infrastructure	124.92	124.92	124.92	124.92	124.92
Planning and Community Safety					
Permanent - Full time	53.00	53.00	53.00	53.00	53.00
Female	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00
Male	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	18.19	18.19	18.19	18.19	18.19
Female	11.66	11.66	11.66	11.66	11.66
Male	6.53	6.53	6.53	6.53	6.53
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Planning and Community Safety	71.19	71.19	71.19	71.19	71.19
Community Services					
Permanent - Full time	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00
Female	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00
Male	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	26.84	26.84	26.84	26.84	26.84
Female	26.24	26.24	26.24	26.24	26.24
Male	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Community Services	50.84	50.84	50.84	50.84	50.84
Corporate Services					
Permanent - Full time	41.60	41.60	41.60	41.60	41.60
Female	19.60	19.60	19.60	19.60	19.60
Male	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	4.88	4.88	4.88	4.88	4.88
Female	4.88	4.88	4.88	4.88	4.88
Male	-	-	-	-	-
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Corporate Services	46.48	46.48	46.48	46.48	46.48
Governance, Communications and Engagement					
Permanent - Full time	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00
Female	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00
Male	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Female	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Male	-	-	-	-	-
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Governance, Communications and Engagement	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00

Summary of Planned Human Resources Expenditure
For the five years ending 30 June 2031

	Financial Plan Projections				
	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
Operations and Infrastructure					
Permanent - Full time	109.85	109.85	109.85	109.85	109.85
Female	27.85	27.85	27.85	27.85	27.85
Male	82.00	82.00	82.00	82.00	82.00
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	15.07	15.07	15.07	15.07	15.07
Female	6.42	6.42	6.42	6.42	6.42
Male	8.65	8.65	8.65	8.65	8.65
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Operations and Infrastructure	124.92	124.92	124.92	124.92	124.92
Planning and Community Safety					
Permanent - Full time	53.00	53.00	53.00	53.00	53.00
Female	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00
Male	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	18.19	18.19	18.19	18.19	18.19
Female	11.66	11.66	11.66	11.66	11.66
Male	6.53	6.53	6.53	6.53	6.53
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Planning and Community Safety	71.19	71.19	71.19	71.19	71.19
Community Services					
Permanent - Full time	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00
Female	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00
Male	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	26.84	26.84	26.84	26.84	26.84
Female	26.24	26.24	26.24	26.24	26.24
Male	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Community Services	50.84	50.84	50.84	50.84	50.84
Corporate Services					
Permanent - Full time	41.60	41.60	41.60	41.60	41.60
Female	19.60	19.60	19.60	19.60	19.60
Male	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00	22.00
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	4.88	4.88	4.88	4.88	4.88
Female	4.88	4.88	4.88	4.88	4.88
Male	-	-	-	-	-
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Corporate Services	46.48	46.48	46.48	46.48	46.48
Governance, Communications and Engagement					
Permanent - Full time	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00
Female	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00
Male	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Female	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Male	-	-	-	-	-
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-
Total Governance, Communications and Engagement	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00

4. Financial performance indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide an analysis of Council's 10 year financial projections and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives and financial management principles.

Indicator	Measure	Notes											Trend
			2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	+ / o / -
Operating position													
Adjusted underlying result	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	1	(1.01%)	0.16%	1.53%	2.45%	3.14%	3.67%	4.31%	4.85%	5.37%	6.05%	+
Liquidity													
Working Capital	Current assets / current liabilities	2	1.80	1.33	1.17	1.17	1.15	1.30	1.47	1.69	1.93	2.26	o
Unrestricted cash	Unrestricted cash / current liabilities	3	116.8%	60.2%	41.6%	38.5%	37.6%	43.6%	59.3%	80.9%	105.1%	135.7%	o
Obligations													
Loans and borrowings	Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	4	24.3%	19.2%	16.5%	13.9%	11.3%	8.7%	6.5%	4.6%	2.8%	1.1%	+
Loans and borrowings	Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue		5.7%	5.1%	2.9%	2.8%	2.7%	2.6%	2.3%	1.9%	1.8%	1.8%	+
Indebtedness	Non-current liabilities / own source revenue		32.6%	26.7%	21.8%	17.7%	13.4%	11.5%	9.8%	8.2%	6.7%	5.6%	+
Asset renewal	Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation	5	149.9%	113.4%	88.3%	77.4%	80.1%	91.0%	94.8%	90.1%	90.6%	76.9%	-
Stability													
Rates concentration	Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue	6	73.9%	74.3%	74.5%	74.5%	74.6%	74.7%	74.9%	75.0%	75.1%	75.2%	o
Rates effort	Rate revenue / CIV of rateable properties in the municipality		0.33%	0.34%	0.35%	0.36%	0.37%	0.38%	0.39%	0.40%	0.41%	0.42%	o

Key to Forecast Trend:

- + Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
- o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator