

**NILLUMBIK HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2021-25  
SUBMISSION SUMMARY**

| Submission No.           | Summary of submission  | Officer Response  |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| 1.<br>Local Food Connect | <p>Submitter is supportive of the Plan, of the Food priority area and all strategies listed under this priority area.</p> <p>Reinforces need for greater collaboration, shared responsibility, commitment to place and transparent policy and practice.</p> <p>Highlights the community demand for the relocalisation of growing and accessing fresh food.</p> <p>Acknowledges the positive impact food growing can have on physical, mental, social and ecological health.</p> <p><b>Full submission included in Attachment 2 (submission 1).</b></p> | <p>No change recommended. Submitter in full support of the Plan, the Food priority area, the objective stated and strategies included in this priority area.</p>  |
| 2.                       | <p>Submitter is generally not in support of the plan.</p> <p>Submitter details specific areas that were not addressed sufficiently in the Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rural residents not considered</li> <li>2. The COVID-19 pandemic is not discussed</li> <li>3. Bushfire risk to rural residents not mentioned</li> </ol> <p><b>Full submission included in Attachment 2 (submission 2).</b></p>   | <p>In response to the main areas of concern from the submitter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recommended change. Suggest inequalities faced by rural landowners and people experiencing geographic isolation be strengthened in the social determinants and health inequalities section of the plan. Strategies, policies and plans that focus on rural landowners and land management are outside of the scope of this plan.</li> </ol> |

| Submission No. | Summary of submission   | Officer Response  |
|----------------|---|---|
|                |   | <p>2. Recommended change. Suggestion to include commentary on COVID-19 impacts and alignment with Pandemic Recovery Plan in introduction section of the plan. Strategy 3 in the Community Resilience priority area states Council will “Continue to support the community to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and respond to new threats to public health”.</p> <p>3. No change recommended. Strategy 3 in the Community Resilience priority area states Council will “Support the community to be prepared for, stay connected and build resilience before and during emergencies, disaster and extreme weather events, with particular regard for vulnerable communities including older people, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, people experiencing family violence and disadvantaged families”. Bushfire risk and management is also addressed in the <i>Bushfire Mitigation Strategy 2019 – 2023</i>. The <i>Green Wedge Management Plan 2020</i> also considers bushfire risk, management and mitigation.</p> |
| 3              | All good but just words unless to are prepared to put into action i.e. Community resilience/Strategies/4. - if council is looking to sell zoned parkland then you are not delivering early intervention and primary prevention initiatives to promote positive mental health and wellbeing through council services.....including | No change recommended. We acknowledge the important and positive role parks and open space play in the mental and physical health of the community.   |

| Submission No.                                 | Summary of submission   | Officer Response   |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p>community development and sport and recreation... if you take away Apollo's only flat park then you are not practicing what you preach.</p> <p>In 5 Promote connection and engagement with the natural environment.... not possible if you sell our park and it is replaced with an asphalt car park. Parks need to be preserved for health and wellbeing.</p>   | <p>Active recreation in open space is addressed in the Plan in the following area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy 4, Physical activity</li> </ul> <p>No change recommended. Maintenance and development of public spaces is beyond the scope of this plan.</p>  |
| <p>4.</p> <p>Eltham Community Action Group</p> | <p>The submitter focuses on the impact of COVID-19. The submitter outlines five main points for consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The use of the present tense to indicate the desired situation to be achieved through the implementation of the plan is commended. It indicates a strong stance and intention as to what Nillumbik expects of and for our community</li> <li>2. Outcome indicators would be of more use if they gave an indication of appropriate levels of change.</li> <li>3. Although in the 'Social inclusion and connection' section there is mention of 'diversity of our community and actively work to reduce inequalities among key groups', for people identifying as LGBTIQ+, for example, there is no outcome indicator to indicate how this may occur. This should be rectified.</li> <li>4. The total absence of any reference to drug use/abuse is concerning. 'Reducing harm from tobacco, alcohol and gambling'!! Where is 'drugs'? Surely it is a vital part of any community</li> </ol> | <p>In response to the five points from the submitter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No change recommended. Feedback noted.</li> <li>2. Change recommended. Consider building in directional targets for outcomes in line with Council Plan.</li> <li>3. Change recommended. Consider appropriate outcome indicators for diversity and update accordingly based on what data is available.</li> <li>4. Change recommended. Consider updating Priority 6: 'Reducing harm from alcohol, tobacco and gambling' to include reducing harm from drugs.</li> <li>5. No change recommended. Specific actions for how we implement the strategies within the Plan will be outlined in the annual implementation plans. Outcome indicators will be updated where possible.</li> </ol> |

| Submission No.                           | Summary of submission   | Officer Response  |
|--|---|---|
|  | <p>Health and Wellbeing Plan and a serious omission.</p> <p>5. Strategies, although appropriate, should be amended to include the areas mentioned above. They also need to be backed up with more detailed 'Actions'. The 'Outcome Indicators' need to include numerical or some other clearly definable targets.</p> <p><b>Included in Attachment 2 (submission 4)</b></p>   |   |
| <p>5. Nillumbik Reconciliation Group</p> | <p>Submitter is supportive of Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and suggests Council's commitment to Reconciliation is bolded/highlighted within the Acknowledgement.</p> <p>Submitter suggests inclusion of Reconciliation education programmes with a focus on dealing with racism.</p> <p>Reconciliation related indicators suggested for inclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultations with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders</li> <li>• Establishment of a Reconciliation Action Plan</li> <li>• Employment of an Indigenous officer</li> <li>• Funding of Reconciliation events and community grants available reconciliation activities</li> </ul> | <p>Change recommended. Consider this as an element in the designed version of final plan. Council will review its Reconciliation Commitment as it develops a Reconciliation Action Plan.</p> <p>No change recommended. Consideration of education programs and addressing racism will be given when developing the Reconciliation Action Plan.</p> <p>No change recommended. Indicators suggested for inclusion (except education projects) are existing/ongoing commitments of Council. Educational projects and continuation of these measures will be considered in the development of the annual implementation plan and development of the Reconciliation Action Plan.</p> |

| Submission No. | Summary of submission   | Officer Response   |
|----------------|---|--|
|                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational projects such as school Reconciliation events, culture days.</li> </ul> <b>Included in Attachment 2 (submission 5)</b>   |  |
| 6.             | We need to keep our trees, our open community spaces and we need to plan to stop climate change.  | <p>No change recommended. The plan acknowledges the importance of addressing climate change. This is addressed in the Plan in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy 2, Community resilience</li> <li>• Strategy 2 and 3, Physical activity</li> <li>• Strategy 2 and 4, Food</li> </ul> <p>Climate Change is addressed in more detail in the <i>Green Wedge Management Plan 2019</i> and the <i>Climate Action Plan</i> (currently in development).</p>   |
| 7.             | <p>The submitter focuses on the impact of COVID-19. The submitter outlines five main points for consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be revised with the impact of COVID lockdowns more central to it. (It is not even mentioned on p.8 under <i>Priority areas and strategies</i>, or further down under <i>Opportunities to improve health and wellbeing in Nillumbik</i>.)</li> <li>2. Include a section on what has been implemented from the <i>Nillumbik Community Pandemic Recovery Plan</i> and how other elements can be progressed.</li> <li>3. Include a section on the progress of implementation of recommendations in the <i>Together in Nillumbik, Covid-19 Community Survey Findings</i></li> </ol> | <p>In response to the five points from the submitter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change recommended. Suggest including commentary on COVID-19 impacts and alignment with <i>Nillumbik Community Pandemic Recovery Plan</i> in introduction section of the plan. Strategy 3 in the Community Resilience priority area states Council will “Continue to support the community to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and respond to new threats to public health”.</li> <li>2. No change recommended. Implementation of the <i>Nillumbik Community Pandemic Recovery Plan</i> will be reported on in June 2022.</li> </ol> |

| Submission No. | Summary of submission  | Officer Response  |
|----------------|--|---|
|                | <p>4. Be recognized under <i>Community resilience</i> (p.11) as a challenge. I note it is recognized under the Strategies.</p> <p>5. Be strengthened by the inclusion of Major Initiatives or key Actions, so as to give a “how” dimension to the strategies.</p> <p><b>Full submission included in Attachment 2 (submission 7).</b></p>   | <p>3. No change recommended. Implementation of the <i>Nillumbik Community Pandemic Recovery Plan</i> will be reported on in June 2022.</p> <p>4. No change recommended. Strategy 3 in the Community Resilience priority area relates specifically to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>5. No change recommended. Specific actions for how we implement the strategies within the plan will be outlined in the annual implementation plans.</p>  |
| 8<br>PALs      | <p>Submitter is generally not in support of the plan providing a score of 4/10.</p> <p>Submitter outlines three main points for noting which include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 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.</li> <li>2. 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.</li> <li>3. The absence of serious consideration of the long-term effects of the Covid-19 global pandemic is appalling.</li> </ol> | <p>In response to the three points from the submitter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No change recommended. The plan addresses climate change impacts on health including strategies within priority 2 Community Resilience. Climate change more broadly, industry and innovation are outside of the scope of the plan and are considered in the Climate Action Plan (currently in draft form) and the <i>Economic Development Strategy</i>.</li> <li>2. Change recommended. Consider strengthening information about inequalities faced by rural landowners and people experiencing geographic isolation in the health inequalities section of the plan. Strategies, policies and plans that focus on rural landowners and land management are outside of the scope of this plan.</li> <li>3. Change recommended. Commentary on COVID-19 impacts and alignment with</li> </ol> |

| Submission No. | Summary of submission  | Officer Response  |
|----------------|--|---|
|                | <b>Full submission included in Attachment 2 (submission 8).</b>  | Pandemic Recovery Plan will be included in introduction section of the plan. Strategy 3 in the Community Resilience priority area states Council will “Continue to support the community to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and respond to new threats to public health”.  |
| 9              | <p>Nillumbik Council is in a terrific position to be a leader in Health and Wellbeing.</p> <p>Extensive research repeatedly demonstrates the link between human mental/physical health and a healthy environment. Much greater emphasis must be placed on this. Given our location and extraordinary biodiversity - which is declining but able to regenerate - we have immense opportunities. We must invest in our ecosystems.</p> <p>It is also important to consider the likely impacts of climate change and pressures associated with this. Best policy is not repair work but investment in prevention of problems. As such, protecting and reinvigorating our environment and taking action on climate change mitigation are the most responsible things Council can do.</p> | <p>No change recommended. Climate change is addressed in the Plan in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy 2, Community resilience</li> <li>• Strategy 2 and 3, Physical activity</li> <li>• Strategy 2 and 4, Food</li> </ul> <p>Climate Change is addressed in more detail in the <i>Green Wedge Management Plan 2019</i> and the <i>Climate Action Plan</i> (currently in development).</p> |
| 10             | It is pleasing to see the offering of an Easy English version of the draft MPHWP. A greater effort towards inclusivity could be achieved if the Community Vision and the key plans also had Easy English versions available.   | No change recommended. Easy English versions of the Council Plan, Council Vision and Financial Plan were included as a part of the public exhibition process.   |

| Submission No.                 | Summary of submission  | Officer Response  |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
|                                | <p>On the whole this is a good Plan.</p> <p>It would be an improvement overall if the Council Plan had a greater alignment to the MPHWP. Perhaps in the future Council may consider integrating the two - demonstrating a true commitment to improving health and wellbeing outcomes for the community?</p> <p>Given the importance of community resilience in this Plan, it is a reminder that the Council Plan misses the value and importance.</p>  | <p>Integration of the Health and Wellbeing Plan into the Council Plan will be considered for the next iteration of the planning process and informed by evaluation of the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025.</p>  |
| Submission 11<br>healthAbility | <p>Submitter is supportive of the Plan and acknowledgement a strong alignment between this Plan and the health promotion directions of healthAbility.</p> <p>The priority areas of social inclusion, gender equality and the prevention of violence against women, and reducing harm from alcohol matches the focus areas of healthAbility.</p> <p>Supportive of the approach to work in partnership, with one recent example being the recent COVID-19 impact survey, <i>Together in Nillumbik</i>.</p> <p>The life stages approach is aligned to healthAbility's focus on pregnancy, birth and early childhood.</p> <p>A focus on equity and inclusion, the social determinants of health and a place based approach are</p> | <p>In response to the five recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change recommended. Include a definition of social inclusion definition from Department of Premier and Cabinet and work it into the objective for 'Social inclusion and connection'.</li> <li>2. Change recommended. Reference to the Social Isolation Framework developed by Inner East Primary Care Partnership</li> <li>3. No change recommended. Specific actions will be addressed in the annual implementation plan.</li> <li>4. Change recommended. Include food systems-related outcome indicators.</li> <li>5. Change recommended. Make the setting of action for reducing harm from alcohol, tobacco and gambling broader.</li> </ol> |



| Submission No. | Summary of submission   | Officer Response |
|----------------|---|------------------|
|                | <p>all in alignment with areas healthAbility is continuing to strengthen their work.</p> <p>Five recommendations for the Plan were made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social inclusion definition from Department of Premier and Cabinet and work it into the objective for 'Social inclusion and connection'</li> <li>2. Reference to the Social Isolation Framework developed by Inner East Primary Care Partnership</li> <li>3. Strategies that assertively outreach to vulnerable people to enable them to engage with Council</li> <li>4. Additional outcome indicators that capture changes at the local level, such as in 'Food' to measure changes in the settings and systems</li> <li>5. Additional settings for 'Reducing harm from alcohol, tobacco and gambling', not just sporting clubs</li> </ol> <p><b>Full submission included in Attachment 2 (submission 11)</b></p> |                  |

| Submission No.                         | Summary of submission  | Officer Response   |
|--|--|--|
| <p>12</p> <p>Victorian Pride Lobby</p> | <p>The submitter makes three recommendations for the plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update the statistic related to the number of LGBTIQA+ households in Nillumbik to reflect more recent data from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017.</li> <li>2. Include a commitment to establish an LGBTIQA+ advisory committee</li> <li>3. Include a commitment to achieve or investigate a Rainbow Tick accreditation of Council services to ensure that they are LGBTIQA+ inclusive.</li> </ol> <p><b>Full submission included in Attachment 2 (submission 12)</b></p> | <p>In response to the three recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change recommended. The plan will be updated to include 2017 Victorian Population Health Survey data where available.</li> <li>2. No change recommended. Council has an Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee and will seek to recruit LGBTIQA+ members to participate in this and the Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee. Consideration of an action to be included in the annual implementation plan to develop an LGBTIQA+ directions paper outlining priorities and resources required to support LGBTIQA+ inclusion.</li> <li>3. No change recommended. Consideration of an action to be included in the annual implementation plan to develop an LGBTIQA+ directions paper outlining priorities and resources required (including Rainbow Tick accreditation for Council services) to support LGBTIQA+ inclusion.</li> </ol> |

# Local Food Connect

"Creating a vibrant local food culture for health, environment and community"

20<sup>th</sup> August 2021

## Response to Nillumbik Shire Council's Draft Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

Local Food Connect is a not-for-profit, community group run by volunteers. Our aim is to increase appreciation of the importance of our local food system and to strengthen the community's ability to produce food locally whether at home or commercially. Active across Northeast Melbourne, we encourage, support, and promote events, actions, and enterprises which help to put your food back into your control.

Local Food Connect Inc. (LFC) supports the *Draft Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025*. This is our response to **PRIORITY AREA 6 - FOOD**

### INTRODUCTION

Supporting the health needs of both the people and the environment in Nillumbik will be one of the biggest challenges that Council faces into the future. As a not-for-profit community group Local Food Connect is acutely aware that a community built on shared values is necessary if we are to successfully confront these challenges.

It is evident that the *Draft Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* seeks to build resilience in a context of change rather than simply shoring up against disruption. We are encouraged to note that Council in the *Nillumbik Draft Council Plan 2021-2025* (p8) have stated their commitment to:

***"Have the courage to embrace future challenges to take informed risks and embrace better ways of working"***

### PRIORITY AREA 6 - FOOD (page 15)

Local Food Connect (LFC) unequivocally endorses the inclusion of **"Food"** as one of the six priority areas in the *Draft Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025*

**OBJECTIVE:** *Everyone in Nillumbik can access fresh, healthy, safe, affordable, and culturally appropriate food close to their home. More people in Nillumbik meet the recommendations for vegetable and fruit consumption and local food growing is widely supported and promoted.*

LFC supports the stated objective which clearly underscores the fundamental role that food, in all its forms, plays in the health and wellbeing of the people of Nillumbik.

# Local Food Connect

"Creating a vibrant local food culture for health, environment and community"

## STRATEGIES:

### **Food Strategy 1:** *Identify opportunities to enhance the local food system*

#### LFC supports this strategy

We urge Council to train their attention on the profound changes that have impacted Nillumbik's local food system and in turn the health of our community in the last decade. Food insecurity, chronic disease, loss of local food production and environmental degradation are all impacting the mental and physical health of our community. For the Nillumbik local food system to deliver critical health outcomes it must be strengthened with greater collaboration, shared responsibility, commitment to place and transparent policy and practice.

### **Food Strategy 2:** *In collaboration with local partners, address food insecurity and connect people with food relief*

#### LFC supports this strategy

There is accelerating community demand for the relocalisation of growing and accessing fresh food to enable robust local responses to health, economic and environmental shocks.

### **Food Strategy 3:** *Promote healthy food choices in community places through improved access to nutritious foods, policy and education.*

#### LFC supports this strategy

Food choices are driven by a variety of environmental, social, economic, and personal health concerns. Transparency here is imperative and Council must encourage healthy food choices in both policy and practice across all departments.

### **Food Strategy 4:** *Promote and support public and home-based food growing*

#### LFC supports this strategy

LFC applauds Council's recognition that the health of the Nillumbik community extends beyond just the food on their plates. The growing and accessibility of local fresh produce is critical as it has the potential to improve the physical, mental, social, and ecological health of the Nillumbik community.



## SUBMISSION 2

Our health and wellbeing vision for Nillumbik Everyone in Nillumbik is able to achieve complete mental, physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing. Our community is connected, safe, well fed and engaged and has equitable access to opportunities, resources and services. Everyone is able to thrive through all stages and experiences of life.

### Summary

Rural grazing and hobby farming residents are not represented, counted, considered, or accommodated in this plan or any of its indicators. We are, and will remain, invisible to council through the measures they have developed and plan to implement.

This plan pretends that the global health pandemic of COVID-19, its 18-month effects so far, and the permanent changes it will make to our lives and circumstances, does not exist. It is not discussed. Research and evidence is ignored. Health pathways, participation in activities, sports, committees are not discussed. The permanent deconditioning of an entire generation of elderly urban people is not identified or discussed. The social separation of populations is ignored. Vaccinations are not discussed. Ongoing pandemic management is not considered. This plan is delusional.

It is one of the more high-level light touch health and wellbeing plans ever prepared. It does not explore in any level of detail the complexity, isolation, disengagement, high risk behaviours, Council and community toxicity, or specificity of health and wellbeing outcomes in any part of the area. It does not cover the comprehensively researched evidence of psychological distress rural residents experienced after the 2009 fires, and the ongoing impacts these residents live with. It provides no cautionary information about the importance of managing fuel loads to reduce these levels of distress. It does not explore any innovative programming to respond to any identified needs specific to the local communities in any area of the Shire. It does not differentiate between survival and thriving – which are key differential features of health and wellbeing that particularly affect rural residents.

It is a plan that is bland and vanilla. It could be applied to any Local Government Area. It is demonstrative of poor engagement, poor understanding of local circumstances, and a low value being placed on resident and ratepayer health, wellbeing and circumstances by Council. It prioritises warm and cuddly language over substance that may assist improve the health, wellbeing, and circumstances of residents.

Inclusion - Nillumbik is an inclusive community, where people feel a sense of belonging, and are well connected to the people, places, resources, and services which enable them to thrive.

This does not acknowledge the obvious differences between thriving – and surviving. Volunteering at a local school reading program is about thriving. Volunteering at the local CFA is about surviving. Volunteering by some is in pursuit of their interest and passion is about thriving. Volunteering by others is to minimise the damage caused to them and their communities and is about surviving. This is not inclusive.

These measures will not measure inclusivity and belonging. They will hide social, behavioural, health and wellbeing needs, and problems in Nillumbik.

Resilience – measures of resilience include monitors of psychological distress, higher here than the broader population.

This section does not mention bushfire risk or any action council is taking to reduce this risk, or work with rural communities to build resilience. It is not a measure or indicator. This is bordering on negligent for rural Nillumbik by council, particularly given the high levels of rural distress and mental illness post Black Saturday, which has been regularly researched over time since. This distress is separate to Climate Change – and is not mentioned in the plan at all. This distress is also different to pandemic distress which is also not mentioned at all. Council would also be well served examining the extent to which council may be the root cause of psychological distress. Certainly the rural grazing and hobby farming experience is that this is Council's intent, and in some cases, the outcome they directly cause.

Gender equity – measures are population wide.

Physical activity – this data is outdated and needs revision.

Food security – this is poorly constructed. It ignores rural geography and isolation issues which are particularly prevalent in ageing rural communities and which council should be aware of.

Reducing harm from alcohol, tobacco, and gambling – this section says 70 per cent of adults are at risk of excess alcohol consumption. Many of us take pride in supporting local business, noting wine making is a local business in rural parts of the Shire. Council would be well served investigating the extent to which they contribute to high levels of alcohol, tobacco, and gambling in the Shire. For rural grazing and hobby farming families, there may be a direct and invisible correlation between Council torment and these behaviours that council could take positive action for to reduce harm.

CONFIDENTIAL

## Nillumbik Health and Well Being Plan

### Eltham Community Action Group Response

Eltham Community Action Group appreciates the opportunity provided by Nillumbik Shire Council to participate, as part of the local community, in the formulation of this Health and Well Being Plan. Although always important, with the wide ranging effects of the current pandemic amongst us in 2021, an effective ongoing plan for residents' health and wellbeing becomes an even more essential document.

Being aware that unforeseen circumstances such that have arisen worldwide since covid 19 may cause changes in emphasis at certain times, Nillumbik's Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25 should aim to cater for the broad range of needs in the community.

After careful and considered reading of the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 we offer the following thoughts and suggestions.

1. The use of the present tense to indicate the desired situation to be achieved through the implementation of the plan is commended. It indicates a strong stance and intention as to what Nillumbik expects of and for our community

For example 'Our health and well being statement' reads

*Everyone in Nillumbik is able to achieve complete mental, physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing. Our community is connected, safe, well fed and engaged and has equitable access to opportunities, resources and services. Everyone is able to thrive through all stages and experiences of life.*

2. Outcome indicators would be of more use if they gave an indication of appropriate levels of change.

3. Although in the 'Social inclusion and connection' section there is mention of '*diversity of our community and actively work to reduce inequalities among key groups*', for people identifying as LGBTIQ+, for example, there is no outcome indicator to indicate how this may occur. This should be rectified.

4. The total absence of any reference to drug use/abuse is concerning. 'Reducing harm from tobacco, alcohol and gambling'!! Where is 'drugs'? Surely it is a vital part of any community Health and Wellbeing Plan and a serious omission.

5. Overall...The facts and figures included in the plan provide a strong basis on which to plan strategies for the future. The sentiments expressed are positive and appropriate. Strategies, although appropriate, should be amended to include the areas mentioned above. They also need to be backed up with more detailed 'Actions'. The 'Outcome Indicators' need to include numerical or some other clearly definable targets.

Eltham Community Action Group thanks you for the opportunity to participate in the formation of this very important plan.

[Redacted signature block]

**COMMENTS FROM NILLUMBIK RECONCIATION GROUP**

**August 2021**

**HEALTH AND WELL BEING PLAN**

1. The Acknowledgement of Tradition Owners is full and descriptive. It is more than an acknowledgement as it includes some actions which Shire will take.

Could the last paragraph beginning with Council is committed..... have its own heading in bold type:

**COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION**

This would highlight these intentions and they then have a significant place in the rest of the Plan.

2. It would also be good to see Reconciliation Education programmes mentioned especially education that deals with **racism**.

**INDICATORS FOR RECONCILIATION:**

Consultations with Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Elders

Establishment of a RAP

Employment of an Indigenous officer for the Shire

Reconciliation events funded by Shire: Community grants for reconciliation activities/ events held by the Shire

Educational projects; schools having reconciliation events, special culture days etc.



## Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

### Submission from [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] **Date:** 26 August, 2021

#### Contact Details:

Address: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Present to Council:** No thanks

**Thank you** for the opportunity to contribute to this important document.

This is a short submission focusing on just one item: the impact of COVID 19.

#### **COVID-19 has had a major impact on the health and wellbeing of many people.**

- **The impacts are long-term**
- **Shouldn't this issue be front and centre to this Plan?** It isn't mentioned at all under *Priority areas and strategies* (p.8)
- **It makes the Vision** more of a taunt for some!

All around me there are young families struggling to cope with their family lives in lock-down, with home schooling, working from home, no playgrounds, no childcare and only one hour exercise outside the home. . The impact on mental health, family relationships, education, diet, and health are in some cases at crisis point and will have long-term impacts. Mental health services are overwhelmed and reduced to tele-help if you are lucky. Mental health of a parent not coping and locked up at home, trying to hold onto a job which can't be done with the chaos at home, is an enormous burden on others in the home and other family members can not escape from it.

A family I know is forced to sell business and home to cover the loans since Covid-19 arrived, removing their source of income. How common is this becoming? Financial insecurity and stress is commonplace. Nillumbik people in general are better resourced to cope with this, yet many are not coping well and some are not coping.

#### **SUGGESTIONS**

The *Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* should:

- 1, Be revised with the impact of COVID lockdowns more central to it. (It is not even mentioned on p.8 under *Priority areas and strategies*, or further down under *Opportunities to improve health and wellbeing in Nillumbik*.)
- 2, Include a section on what has been implemented from the *Nillumbik Community Pandemic Recovery Plan* and how other elements can be progressed.

3. Include a section on the progress of implementation of recommendations in the *Together in Nillumbik, Covid-19 Community Survey Findings*
4. Be recognized under *Community resilience* (p.11) as a challenge. I note it is recognized under the Strategies.
5. Be strengthened by the inclusion of Major Initiatives or key Actions, so as to give a “how” dimension to the strategies.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute.

██████████



**NILLUMBIK SHIRE COUNCIL  
COMBINED SUBMISSION  
26 August 2021 on:**

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>Community Vision / Nillumbik</b>        | <b>2040</b>        |
| <b>Council Plan</b>                        | <b>2021 – 2025</b> |
| <b>Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan</b> | <b>2021-2025</b>   |
| <b>Financial Plan</b>                      | <b>2021-2031</b>   |

**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 432km<sup>2</sup>, 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

## Nillumbik 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 Nillumbik 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 Nillumbik 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.

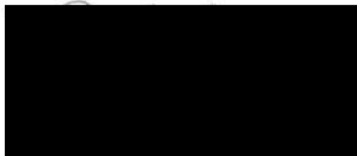
All council initiatives, future projects and policy direction requiring funding should always be restrained by what is affordable, what is practically achievable and what is of genuine importance rather than particular political whims.

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.**



26 August 2021





26 August 2021

Ms. Melissa Ensink  
Social Planning and Policy Officer  
Nillumbik Shire Council  
PO Box 476  
GREENSBOROUGH VIC 3088

Dear Melissa

**Re: Draft Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25**

healthAbility welcomes this opportunity to provide a submission on the Draft Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25. There is strong alignment in the draft plan with the health promotion directions of healthAbility. Your inclusion of the health priorities of **social inclusion, gender equality and prevention of violence against women, and reducing harm from alcohol**, matches our focus areas.

We agree with your approach including **working in partnership**. The recent COVID-19 impact survey, 'Together in Nillumbik', was a great example of our partnership with Nillumbik Shire Council as was the Women's Leadership Program.

The **life stages** approach with one life stage being "pregnancy and early parenthood (maternal and child health)" echoes our focus on pregnancy, birth and early childhood as key times to strengthen gender equality in families, evidenced in our *Baby Makes 3* program.

We recognize that there are health inequalities experienced by various groups in the community and strongly support your focus on **equity and inclusion**. healthAbility recently commissioned a small study to help us develop a deeper understanding of health inequalities in our catchment and identify our most vulnerable groups and pockets of disadvantage.

The **social determinants of health** underpin our prevention work and overlap with the resources, opportunities and capabilities people need that are the foundations of social inclusion.

The use of **place-based** approaches is something we intend to strengthen in our work in Nillumbik. We will shortly be undertaking scoping of opportunities within Nillumbik to address these through primary prevention action and I will be in contact to discuss this further.

We would also like to suggest the following inclusions:

- social inclusion definition from Department of Premier and Cabinet and work it into the objective for 'Social inclusion and connection'
- reference to the Social Isolation Framework developed by Inner East Primary Care Partnership

**Box Hill** 43 Carrington Road, Box Hill VIC 3128 | **Eltham** 917 Main Road, Eltham VIC 3095

**Other service locations** Boronia, Nunawading and Wellington Road, Box Hill | **Email** [contact@healthability.org.au](mailto:contact@healthability.org.au)

**Phone** (03) 9430 9100 | **Website** [healthability.org.au](http://healthability.org.au) | **Fax Box Hill** (03) 9898 8010 | **Fax Eltham** (03) 9431 0339

ABN 32 180 310 839

- strategies that assertively outreach to vulnerable people to enable them to engage with Council
- additional outcome indicators that capture changes at the local level, such as in 'Food' to measure changes in the settings and systems
- additional settings for 'Reducing harm from alcohol, tobacco and gambling', not just sporting clubs

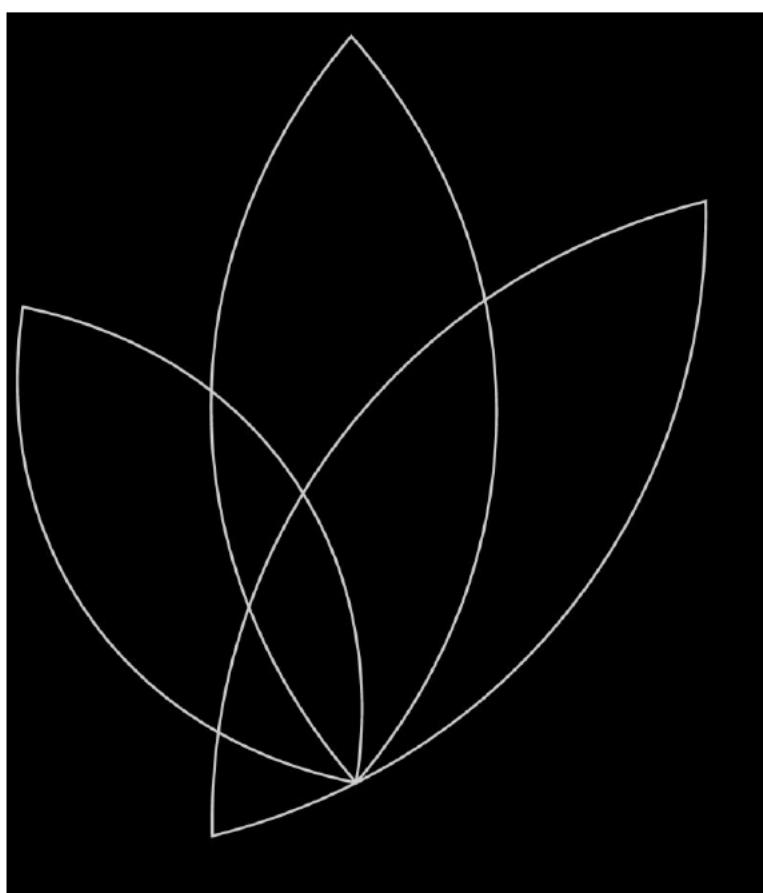
healthAbility values our relationship with Nillumbik Shire Council and are keen to continue to strengthen our work in partnership throughout the 2021-25 period to improve health outcomes for the Nillumbik community. We look forward to further planning on joint initiatives we can undertake to contribute to the implementation of the Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



26 August 2021

To: nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au

To whom it may concern,

**Re: Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025**

The Victorian Pride Lobby welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025.

The Victorian Pride Lobby is a community based advocacy group that represents lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer and same sex attracted Victorians of all ages, including those who live, study, work and recreate in Nillumbik. Approximately 4.6% of Nillumbik residents are LGBTIQA+, whom we represent. On this, we note that the draft Plan states that “two per cent of households in Nillumbik includes someone who identifies as LGBTIQA+.” **We recommended that this statistic be updated to reflect more recent data from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017.**

LGBTIQA+ communities experience disproportionately high rates of poor mental health and wellbeing. This is often due to experiences of stigma, prejudice, discrimination, harassment and abuse on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status. This can result in LGBTIQA+ communities feeling excluded and invisible. As such, we particularly welcome the strategy to celebrate the diversity of our community and actively work to reduce inequalities among people identifying as LGBTIQA+.

To oversee this strategy, **we recommend that the Plan include a commitment to establish an LGBTIQA+ advisory committee to both assist the existing Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee on issues particularly affecting LGBTIQA+ communities and to develop an action plan to reduce inequalities among people identifying as LGBTIQA+ in Nillumbik.**

We also welcome the strategy to create inclusive environments for people to engage in sport, recreation, learning and education across all stages and experiences of life. To achieve this strategy, **we recommend that the Plan include a commitment to achieve - or, at least, investigate - Rainbow Tick accreditation of Council services to ensure that they are LGBTIQA+ inclusive.**

We stand ready to work with the Council on implementing these actions. Please reach out to us if you have any questions or would like any support.

Yours faithfully,

