

# Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting

to be held at the Civic Centre, Civic Drive, Greensborough  
on Tuesday 13 September 2022 commencing at 7:00pm.

## Agenda

**Carl Cowie**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Thursday 8 September 2022

Distribution: Public

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# Council Chamber Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting seating plan

**Cr Natalie  
Duffy**  
Edendale Ward

**Cr Karen Egan**  
Bunjil Ward

**Cr Richard  
Stockman**  
Blue Lake Ward

Cr Peter Perkins  
**(Chairperson  
Planning Matters)**  
Ellis Ward

**Cr Ben Ramcharan  
(Deputy Mayor)**  
Sugarloaf Ward

**Cr Frances Eyre  
(Mayor)**  
Swipers Gully Ward

**Katia Croce**  
Governance  
Lead

**Blaga Naumoski**  
Director  
Governance,  
Communications  
and Engagement

**Cr Geoff Paine  
(Chairperson  
Consultation Matters)**  
Wingrove Ward

**Carl Cowie**  
Chief Executive  
Officer

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**Nillumbik Shire Council**

**Agenda of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting to be held  
Tuesday 13 September 2022 commencing at 7:00pm.**

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**1. Welcome by the Chair**

Members of the public are advised the meeting will be livestreamed and recorded and the livestream recording will be made publicly available on YouTube and Council's website.

**2. Acknowledgement of Country**

**The Acknowledgement of Country to be read by the Chairperson**

Nillumbik Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the Country 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, present and future, and extend that respect to all First Nations People.

We respect the enduring strength of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and acknowledge the ongoing impacts of past trauma and injustices from European invasion, massacres and genocide committed against First Nations People. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

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 and Australia's identity; from their cultural heritage and care of the land and waterways, to their ongoing contributions in many fields including academia, agriculture, art, economics, law, sport and politics.

**3. Apologies**

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That** the apologies be noted.

**4. Disclosure of conflicts of interest**

Committee members should note that any conflicts of interest should also be disclosed immediately before the relevant item.

5. Confirmation of Minutes

**COM.001/22 Confirmation of Minutes Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held Tuesday 9 August 2022**

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**Summary**

Confirmation of the minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 9 August 2022.

**Recommendation**

**That** the Committee (acting under delegation from Council) confirms the minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 9 August 2022 (**Attachment 1**).

**Attachments**

- 1  Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 9 August 2022

6. Officers’ reports

**PCC.029/22 Response to public consultation for the Eltham Gateway project**

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**Item: Consultation Matter**

**Distribution: Public**

**Manager: Hjalmar Philipp, Director Operations and Infrastructure**

**Author: Rowena Cairns, Open Space Project Officer**

**Summary**

Council resolved on 12 July 2022 to proceed with public engagement on the Eltham Gateway concept.

This is a project to revitalise underutilised public land along Main Road Eltham, between Falkiner Street and the Diamond Creek Bridge to recreate a southern gateway to Nillumbik as part of a legacy initiative following the State Government Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade.

Major Roads Projects Victoria (MRPV) are funding the project, with contribution by Nillumbik Council.

This report summarises the community response to the public engagement, via ‘Participate Nillumbik’. Information presented to the public via this portal is available on [Eltham Gateway Project | Participate Nillumbik](#).

Community feedback on a draft concept plan via Participate Nillumbik was accepted from 13 July 2022 until 7 August 2022. 146 survey responses and 18 submissions were received.

The community response clearly indicates an interest in, and support for, the project as a whole, with suggestions to reduce the ‘human’ impact put forward in the initial draft concept plan, in summary by reducing the area proposed as paths, minimising structured plantings, and providing more plantings of indigenous vegetation wherever possible.

Submitters have been invited to attend this meeting of the Planning and Consultation Committee (PCC) to speak to their submissions.

Following the PCC, the updated plan is expected to be presented to a Council meeting on 27 September 2022 for endorsement.

**Recommendation**

**That** the Committee (acting under delegation from Council):

1. Acknowledges and notes the community response to the consultation for the Eltham Gateway Project.
2. Notes that a further report with revised plan is expected to be presented to a subsequent Council meeting.
3. Requests Officers to write to all respondents to the community engagement to express Council’s gratitude for their contribution.

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4. Resolves that the confidential un-redacted copy of submissions to the exhibition of the public engagement for Council’s Eltham Gateway Plan Project (**Attachment 7**) remains confidential on the grounds specified in the definition of confidential information in section 3(1)(f) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

**Attachments**

- 1 . Eltham Gateway - Draft Concept Plan as presented for consultation
- 2 . Eltham Gateway - Overview Report - 8 August 2022
- 3 . Eltham Gateway - Project survey report with graphs 8 August 2022
- 4 . Eltham Gateway - Survey Responses 8 August 2022
- 5 . Eltham Gateway Feedback - Summary of Survey Responses
- 6 . Eltham Gateway - Additional Submissions Received - Redacted
7. Eltham Gateway - Unredacted Submissions - *CONFIDENTIAL*

**Discussion**

1. The Eltham Gateway Project will focus on rehabilitating and enhancing areas on both sides of Main Road, between Falkiner Street and the Diamond Creek Bridge in Eltham, and is a response to the construction of the new intersection at Fitzsimons Lane.
2. The aim of the project is to create a sense of arrival into Eltham and the Green Wedge Shire of Nillumbik by reclaiming public open space and revegetating underutilised roadside areas. The project will acknowledge the traditional owners of the land using indigenous planting and the creation of a public artwork on the northern side of Main Road.
3. The project’s draft plan was divided into three areas, namely Areas “A”, “B” and “C” for community consultation process. The plan for consultation is included as **Attachment 1** for completeness. Information presented to the public via this portal is available on [Eltham Gateway Project | Participate Nillumbik](#).
4. The project was developed in response to Nillumbik Shire Council, Major Road Projects Victoria (MRPV) and local community group Southern Gateway Renewal Group (SGRG) collaborating on a project to design and deliver a legacy initiative for an enhanced Eltham Gateway.
5. Community feedback is being incorporated into a final version of the Eltham Gateway plan, which will be presented to Council at a subsequent Council meeting.

**6. Consultation Matters**

**PCC.029/22 Response to public consultation for the Eltham Gateway project**

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**Related Council decisions**

6. On 26 October 2021, Council resolved through a Notice of Motion:
- That Council helps facilitate discussions with Major Roads Projects Victoria (MRPV) and the “New Gateway Project” Group in order to further explore opportunities for revitalisation of underutilised public land at the Eltham Gateway area, including areas beyond the MRPV footprint, to recreate the altered southern gateway to Nillumbik.*
7. On 12 July 2022, Council resolved that the Committee (acting under delegation from Council):
- *Notes Major Roads Projects Victoria (MRPV) are contributing funding to revitalise underutilised public land along Main Road Eltham, between Falkiner Street and the Diamond Creek Bridge to recreate a southern gateway to Nillumbik as part of a legacy initiative following the State Government Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade (known as the Eltham Gateway Concept).*
  - *Supports a collaboration with MRPV to deliver the Eltham Gateway Concept.*
  - *Notes that Attachments 1 and 2 in report PCC.027/22 will be replaced with a single plan (amended Attachment 1) which has been revised to remove the viewing platform and add additional tree planting on the southern side of Main Road.*
  - *Endorses the amended Attachment 1 for the purposes of receiving community feedback for exhibition on Participate Nillumbik for a period of 3 weeks.*
  - *Notes that following community consultation, the plan may be delivered in stages, subject to funding.*
  - *Considers public submissions at a future Planning and Consultation Committee meeting.*
  - *Requests the Director Operations and Infrastructure to work with the relevant landowners (Melbourne Water, Department of Transport and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning) to seek approval for the delivery of the concept on their land.*
  - *Requests the Mayor to write to MRPV to thank them for their funding and support for this community outcome.*

**Options**

8. Council’s options with respect to the final plan will be presented at a subsequent Council Meeting.

**Council plans and policies**

9. This report directly supports the achievement of the Council Plan 2021-2025 strategy:
- We carefully protect, plan, maintain and improve open spaces, streetscapes and places to ensure that they are safe, accessible and enjoyable.

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**Sustainability implications**

10. The proposed concept plan proposes an indigenous plant palette. Re-use of timber from hazardous tree removal is also proposed.

**Community engagement**

11. Consultation took the form of a survey on Council's Participate Nillumbik site <https://participate.nillumbik.vic.gov.au>. Written feedback was sought either through a submission on website or by submitting direct feedback.
12. The consultation was promoted through:
- Council's social media platforms.
  - MRPV's website and social media platforms.
  - Southern Gateway Renewal Group's (SGRG) website.
  - Meeting with a number of Council's advisory committees and the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.
  - Two two-hour "pop up sessions" were conducted in July 2022, providing the public with an opportunity to attend, ask questions of Council Officers, and view large A-0 print outs of the draft Plan.
  - A video was filmed on location, featuring the Mayor, Cr Frances Eyre, Councillor Geoff Paine, Vicki Ward MP, Alec Say (MRPV Project Manager). This was shown on multiple sources including Nillumbik social media and the Eltham Gateway Project page on Participate Nillumbik.
  - Notification of the engagement was posted on 200 postcards which were left in strategic locations, including the Diamond Valley Railway counters, and Nillumbik public spaces within Eltham.
  - Posters and/or postcards and/or flyers were left at the following locations:
    - Nillumbik Shire office foyer;
    - Nillumbik Operations Centre foyer;
    - Edendale Farm;
    - Living and Learning Eltham;
    - Eltham Library;
    - Public noticeboard outside Bakers Delight in Eltham Town Square;
    - Public noticeboard at Research shops;
    - Eltham Maternal and Child Health Centre;
    - Caltex Petrol station near Gateway;
    - Bolton Street shops - all shops both sides near Main Rd;
    - Sports clubs in Eltham Lower Park;
    - Eltham Miniature Railway;

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- Coles shopping centre Eltham pin board;
  - Eltham Community and Reception Centre; and
  - A TV image was on rotation at Eltham Leisure Centre.
  - The engagement was promoted through Council’s social media platforms.
  - The engagement was promoted through MRPV’s website and social media platforms.
  - The engagement was promoted through the Southern Gateway Renewal Group’s (SGRG) website.
  - Nillumbik Council also understands the engagement was promoted via community distribution of the survey, by Vicki Ward MP and Eltham Community Action Group (ECAG), and perhaps other.
13. The engagement was conducted between 13 July and 7 August 2022 (3.5 weeks).
14. In numerical terms, Council received the following response:
- 2,045 unique visitors (regardless of how many times they visited site),
  - 146 unique survey respondents,
  - The DRAFT concept plan was downloaded from the website 438 times,
  - An additional 18 written responses were provided; and
  - Around 30-40 people attended the Pop Up sessions.
15. The response was overwhelmingly from community members living in Nillumbik, and within that, overwhelmingly residing in Eltham.
16. Both Pop Up Sessions allowed officers to constructively discuss and explore relevant issues with the project.

Key Messages from the Engagement

17. The detailed responses provided to the survey are provided as a series of attachments to this report as follows:
- **Attachment 1 Eltham Gateway - Draft Concept Plan as presented for consultation**
  - **Attachment 2 Eltham Gateway - Overview Report – 8 August 2022**
  - **Attachment 3 Eltham Gateway - Project Survey Report with Graphs**
  - **Attachment 4 Eltham Gateway Survey Responses - 8 August 2022 – Redacted**
  - **Attachment 5 Eltham Gateway Feedback - Summary of Survey Responses**
  - **Attachment 6 Eltham Gateway - Additional Submissions Received - Redacted**
  - **Attachment 7 Eltham Gateway - CONFIDENTIAL Unredacted Submissions**

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18. Key messages distilled from the engagement is presented below, organised by survey questions:

*What respondents liked most about the proposal via Question 1.*

- 87 respondents (60% of the total to respond to the survey) submitted a written reply to this question. Around 70% of the written responses to this question had a generally positive response in regard to the overall design.
- Around 10% of the written responses to this question had a generally negative tone, generally in reference to the proposal containing too much development. Generally these respondents preferred Area A to be improved with plantings only.
- The remaining 30% of written responses to this question were neither positive or negative, and had varying suggestions for the area(s).
- The strongest responses were very positive regarding revegetation. There was a general support for removal of non-native plants, and revegetation of the area(s) using native trees, shrubs and grasses. “Greening” of the gateway was a common theme.

*Feedback on Area A via Survey Questions 2 to 15.*

- The four highest ranking elements in terms of preference in Area A (**question 2**) were:
  - a. The structured indigenous (native) plantings;
  - b. The indigenous / edible garden;
  - c. The looped pathway; and
  - d. The seating.
- The lowest ranking three elements in terms of preference in Area A were:
  - a. The fence;
  - b. The log steppers / balance logs; and
  - c. The spiral path.
- Respondents generally supported the larger, looped path, but with an access point to the north of Area A, to Main Road (**question 3**)
  - Nineteen optional (19) (13%) written responses were received to the question regarding the looped path. These had a common theme, suggesting the preference of no path, no human traffic, no non-natural content, revegetation only, or a simple(r) path only.
- Over 70% of respondents would like an indigenous (Wurundjeri) edible / useful garden included in Area A (**question 4**).
- Almost 70% respondents preferred the indigenous (Wurundjeri) edible / useful garden to be spread throughout Area A, rather than around a spiral path, or located in one location only (**question 5**).

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- 25 optional (17%) comments in regard to the indigenous (Wurundjeri) edible / useful garden were received (**question 6**). Of these:
  - Five (5) supported the indigenous (Wurundjeri) edible / useful garden, but preferred in to be in a different location instead of Area A (for example Eltham Lower Park, Area B or Area C).
  - The balance of other responses were again referring to a preference for no development of Area A except for revegetation with native plants, concerns over maintenance of the garden, or the comments were positive regarding the proposed informative signage.
  - Several answers did not directly address the proposed Wurundjeri edible / useful garden.
- 44% of respondents would like the proposed meeting circle included as part of the final design. 31% of respondents did not, and the remainder of respondents were unsure (**question 7**).
- 64 respondents (43%) opted to provide a written response on the proposed meeting circle (**question 8**):
  - In general, comments not supporting the meeting circle were due to a feeling of there being not enough space for it, or that the respondents preferred vegetation only in this area, that it should only be a passive space (i.e., not for meeting), or that there would be too much noise from the Main Road traffic.
  - There were also comments about the seating type, with seats with backs preferred to a stone seat, and comments in regard to the meeting circle size, some respondents feeling it would take up too much space within Area A in the proposed location and size.
- 45% of respondents supported a mixed steel and timber fence separating Area A from Main Road and the bicycle path. 33% did not (**question 9**).
- 78% of respondents supported the type of fence described as a “mixed construction” fence of milled timber, steel sections, rock sections, and being in itself a piece of art (**question 10**).
- Six (6) responses (4%) optional additional comments regarding the fence were received (**question 11**). Responses requested locally sourced materials be used, were concerned about the costs of the fence, suggested alternate materials for the fence, wanted bicycle path connection, or had concerns about the pine being treated for its longevity.
- 54% of respondents supported using the recycled timber from the pine trees in the landscape as log steppers, balance beams, tee-pees and so on. 34% did not and 12% were unsure (**question 12**).
- 71 worded responses (49%) were received regarding the re-use of the timber for the above items in the landscape (**question 13**). In general the worded responses were not supportive of re-use of timber for play spaces, especially tee-pees.

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- 75% of respondents supported the re-use of the stumps of two (or several) pine trees (**question 14 and question 15**). When respondents were asked how they would most like to see the stumps re-used, carvings and seats were the most popular responses, with 94% of preferences for either carvings (50%) or seats (44%).

*Feedback on Area B via survey **question 16***

- 68 written responses were received (47% of survey respondents) to the open question seeking comments on Area B.
- Most responses referred to, or requested, more vegetation. It is reasonable to infer that the preferred proposal, in general, is for more planted, native vegetation than was originally proposed.
- There was a range of comments regarding the florist, including requests for the florist site to be improved, and requests to consider the florist in a holistic way as part of the Gateway.
- There was more support for rocks to be used in the landscaping in the area than submissions against the use of rocks in the area.
- There was at least one suggestion for nesting boxes for habitat, although this may not have necessarily been intended only as a suggestion for Area B.
- There was a lot of support for 'layers' of vegetation – grasses, shrubs and trees, and in locations planting is completed, that it be dense, and minimising of mowed grass areas.
- There were several suggestions this area is better suited for pathways, seating and similar than Area A, and suggestion that the bus stop be improved in conjunction with this works.

*Feedback on Area C via survey **question 17***

- 63 responses were received (43% of survey respondents) to the open question seeking comments on Area C.
- Most responses mentioned a request for more trees and other native vegetation for this area than what was originally proposed.
- A consideration that Aboriginal / Traditional Owner culture is a positive theme for the artwork.
- There was support for the art work / sculpture planned for this area.
- From the feedback and also from pop up sessions, there was positive feedback for the proposed visual feature creating an avenue of trees of one type and shade in Area C, complementing another tree type and shade in the background of Area B.

***Additional Written Submissions***

19. Eighteen (18) additional written responses were received in relation to the survey. These are attached to this report as **Attachment 6**.

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20. The following is a very brief summary of the 18 additional written submissions.

- **Submission #1** Requests focus on more trees, more bush restoration, less infrastructure.
- **Submission #2** Suggests the draft concept for Area A is too overdeveloped and requests more trees, more bush restoration, less infrastructure.
- **Submission #3** Suggests activity zones are not appropriate for Area A, requests more bush restoration, planting, and focus on bushscape.
- **Submission #4** Requests consideration of fire risk with regard to new plantings.
- **Submission #5** Requests re-consideration of the physical placement of rocks in Area B, due to the potential need for vehicular access in Area B.
- **Submission #6** Site A proposal is too structured, prefer to focus on greening and indigenous planting, not necessary to have paths and structured gardens or play area.
- **Submission #7** Prefers minimal structured elements in Area A, with more revegetation preferred, refers to no previous requests or discussion regarding spiral, meeting circle, play areas etc.
- **Submission #8** Requests diverse revegetation – plantings of various sizes, requests a more ‘humble’ design. Presents submissions from 2021 in regard to the previous works involving removed trees for the Fitzsimons Lane roadworks.
- **Submission #9** Suggests Area A proposal has too much structured intervention, requests Site A be plantings only, for ecological restoration.
- **Submission #10** Too many “hard landscaping” components proposed for Area A. Some specific suggestions on plant types preferred. Prefers no fence along Main Road, but a fence to the drain near Eltham Lower Park. Supports boardwalks, prefers seats in small groups rather than meeting circle, does not like spiral pathway, and prefers seats with backs.
- **Submission #11** Prefers more plantings in Area A, no play areas in Area A and suggests a legacy / to the history of the pine trees. Provides a history of the area which includes information on the legacy pine trees.
- **Submission #12** Suggests Area A has too much hard landscaping proposed, preferring more vegetation, comfortable seating with backs. Supports allocasuarina forest, habitat logs, suggests meeting circle may be too costly.
- **Submission #13** Discusses an area not directly within the Eltham Gateway proposal.
- **Submission #14** Requests bush only, with perhaps seating only. Area A to be restored to full vegetation. Reference to white trunked trees.
- **Submission #15** Supportive of proposal but requests consideration of mobile phone service tower.
- **Submission #16** Not specifically talking to the Eltham Gateway project area.

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- **Submission #17** Supports removal of non indigenous trees, but prefers planting to natural bush / restoration. Prefers non looped path, larger meeting circle, no spiral walkway, no play area, prefers no fence.
- **Submission #18** Prefers passive and bushy space rather than meeting space. Suggests fence be better placed at drain at rear of Area A.

**Innovation and continuous improvement**

21. Not applicable.

**Collaboration**

22. There has been collaboration between Major Road Projects Victoria, Nillumbik Shire Council and local community group, Southern Gateway Renewal Group, to inform the design for consultation.

**Budget implications**

23. Council contribution to the project has been budgeted in the current financial year.

**Relevant law**

24. Not applicable.

**Regional, state and national plans and policies**

25. The aims of the project support all relevant state and local planning policy.

**Conflicts of interest**

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

- 7. Supplementary and urgent business**
- 8. Confidential reports**
- 9. Close of Meeting**