

## **11 EMERALD LAKE PRECINCT STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2030**

FILE REFERENCE INT2010788

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council endorse the final version of the Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-2030.

### **Attachments**

|   |  |             |
|---|--|-------------|
| 1 | Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-2030   | 19<br>Pages |
| 2 | Summary of Consultation Phase Two - Draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-2025 | 8 Pages     |

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In September 2019, SLT and Councillors were presented the Draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-25 and gave the approval to proceed with a second phase community engagement process to finalise the Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan.

Phase two consultation took place over a seven week timeframe from the 24th September until the 11th November. The feedback that was received were generally based around the issues and opportunities in the precinct. 146 individual pieces of feedback were received. This feedback has led to 14 recommended amendments to the draft Strategic Plan. An in-depth assessment of the community feedback received on the draft Plan can be found in attached document: Summary of Consultation Phase Two draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

The proposed final version of the Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-30 was presented to SLT and Council Briefing in late November and early December 2019 and approved for the Plan to be finalised, ready for endorsement.

### **BACKGROUND**

The 2013 – 2018 Emerald Lake Park Strategic Plan, which built on the 2006-2009 plan, linked opportunities associated with the Cardinia Shire Tourism Strategy. It also provided a five-year capital development plan and focused on partnerships with Puffing Billy Railway. Upon review of this plan, Council officers reported to SLT in June 2018 that the majority of actions had been completed.

This and previous documents have created solid foundations from which the future of the Emerald Lake and Nobelius Heritage parks can be built.

In 2017, Council made the decision to connect Emerald Lake and Nobelius Heritage parks under the banner of the Emerald Lake Precinct (ELP). This has brought with it re-establishment of caretaking, maintenance and activations across Council departments, along with changes in

processes and policies for the operation and management of the spaces. This decision also created a new Emerald Lake Precinct Place Maker role, which sits within the Passive Reserves team.

These changes have affected the approach of the Emerald Lake Precinct (ELP) Strategic Plan review to ensure that the new Plan has the following attributes:

- Incorporates both Emerald Lake and Nobelius Heritage Parks as a precinct, yet respects each park's individuality
- Incorporates key Place making principles to ensure success and buy in of all visitors and stakeholders
- Identifies key goals and objectives to be met, yet allows space and flexibility to allow the ability to take up unforeseen opportunities.
- Aligns with the Council Plan 2017 – 2021 and other key Council documents.

A large scale and in depth community engagement process was undertaken in 2018 and the feedback received was used to prepare the draft ELP Strategic Plan 2020-25. This process sought significant contribution from community members (of a diverse range of ages), key business operators, Friends and community groups, and Council staff.

The feedback was assessed against leading practice and policy frameworks from the international Place making sector, and aligned with the current Council and Liveability Plans. It also helped to establish five goals to drive the draft ELP Strategic Plan. The goals were initially presented to SLT and Council in November 2018.

Following SLT and Councillor support of the goals, the draft ELP Strategic Plan 2020-25 was developed. The purpose of the document is to guide the future management and strategic direction of the Precinct. Precinct goals, objectives and priority actions were developed as part of the Strategic Plan that will drive further development of capital works plans and strategies for the precinct.

In September 2019, SLT and Councillors were presented the Draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-25 and gave the approval to proceed with a second phase community engagement process to finalise the Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan, which is explored in detail in the attached document: Summary of Consultation Phase Two draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

The proposed final version of the Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-30 was presented to SLT and Council Briefing in late November and early December 2019 and approved for the Plan to be finalised, ready for endorsement.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-2030 will replace the Emerald Lake Park Strategic Plan 2013-2018.

The goals guiding the draft ELP Strategic Plan align with the following Liveability Plan Goals:

- Active Travel
- Education
- Employment
- Food

- Health and social services
- Open spaces and places.

## RELEVANCE TO COUNCIL PLAN

The goals guiding the draft ELP Strategic Plan align with the following Council Plan strategic objectives:

- **Our People:** We support a variety of needs and lifestyles through programs and activities that promote and develop the wellbeing of Cardinia Shire's people
- **Our Community:** We will foster a strong sense of connection between Cardinia Shire's diverse communities
- **Our Environment:** We will continue to plan and manage the natural and built environment for present and future generations
- **Our economy:** We will create and support local employment and business opportunities for our community and the wider region
- **Our governance:** We will consult with the community, as appropriate, in an open and accountable way to help in determining the key direction of Council.

## CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Phase two consultation for the draft ELP Strategic Plan 2020-25 took place over a seven week timeframe from the 24th September until the 11th November. A brief outline of what was undertaken is outlined in the table below. Further details regarding the consultation process and feedback received can be found in attached document: Summary of Consultation Phase Two draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

| <u>Methodology</u>                      | <u>Description</u>  | <u>Attendance / Number/ spread</u>      |
|---|---|---|
| Contact initial engagement participants | Council officers received emails from community members outlining general feedback<br>Council officers meet with the Emerald Museum committee members<br>Email primary schools in the Ranges ward | 3 responses<br>6 attendees<br>4 schools |
| Focus Group workshops                   | Emerald Lake Precinct Advisory Committee - 24/9/2019<br>Internal Council staff - 29/9/2019  | 11 attendees<br>12 attendees            |
| Public Exhibition of Strategic Plan     | Hard copies of the Draft Strategic Plan provided to the Emerald Museum, Council Offices Civic Centre, Officer, Emerald Library, and Council's website   | N/A                                     |
| Online                                  | An online survey to receive community feedback  | 15 responses                            |

|                                       |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Survey                                | An online survey for internal Council stakeholders  | 7 responses                                 |
| Have Your Say page                    | Information provided about the draft Strategic Plan and engagement process to date  |   |
| Social media posts                    | One social media post directly promoting ELP Strategic Plan<br>One general post promoting the Strategic Plan and other have your say posts (results excluded as results were not specific to ELP Strategic Plan)                                | 1,299 reach<br>10 engagements<br>1 negative |
| Advert in the Ranges Trader newspaper | <a href="https://rangestrader.mailcommunity.com.au/news/2019-10-15/have-your-say-on-emerald-lake-precinct-strategic-plan/">https://rangestrader.mailcommunity.com.au/news/2019-10-15/have-your-say-on-emerald-lake-precinct-strategic-plan/</a> | N/A   |
| Feedback                              | Collated individual responses received across all feedback forums   | 146 responses                               |

## FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Financial resource implications for capital works and large scale infrastructure upgrades will be understood as part of the Masterplan development.

Ongoing funding with future potential increases will be required and applied for through Council's budget process. However, the following outline works that will require funding in the near future:

- Ongoing minor capital works - minor infrastructure improvements; furniture, minor building improvements, landscape; reactive works.
- Events and activations - movie night, summer music series, and Easter egg hunt etc.
- Increased service levels that meet expectations of regional open space. What this looks like is yet to be determined, and will be undertaken as part of the ELP Place Maker role in liaison with Parks Services in Operations.
- Engagement of consultants for specialised research and documentation (Masterplan, Conservation Management Plan, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Report, Arborist Assessment, Promotions and Marketing Plan).

## CONCLUSION

Council embarked on a large scale, unique and in-depth community engagement journey to develop the draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-25. The feedback received was used to develop the draft Plan. Between September and November 2019, the draft Strategic Plan was presented to the community once again to see if what we developed, reflected what they said. This round of consultation took place over a seven week timeframe and incorporated seven methods of seeking feedback.

A total of 146 individual pieces of feedback were received as a result of the consultation on the draft Plan. The feedback highlighted that people were focused on the practical aspects in the

Precinct as opposed to the strategic direction, suggesting high interest in the development of the Masterplan and the Promotions and Marketing Plan.

All feedback received was considered and in response, 14 recommended amendments were made to the draft Plan. The recommended amendments were presented to SLT and Council in November and December 2019 and accepted, providing approval for the Plan to be finalised for endorsement.

The next steps are:

- To graphically design the Strategic Plan into a more community friendly document.
- Continue to progress the development of a Masterplan.

It is recommended that the final version of the Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-2030 to be endorsed by Council.



# Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020–2030

Prepared by:

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## 1 Introduction

Located adjacent to the Dandenong Ranges, approximately 45kms south-east of Melbourne, are two distinctly unique yet strongly connected parklands – Emerald Lake and Nobelius Heritage parks. Together, these historic and beautiful parks have recently become the Emerald Lake Precinct (ELP).

Cardinia Shire Council have developed the Draft Emerald Lake Precinct (ELP) Strategic Plan 2020-30. This plan builds on previous strategic documents that focussed solely on the individual parks within the Precinct, and which created solid foundations from which the future of the Precinct can build.

As this is a newly formed Precinct, Council's approach to developing this document needed to ensure the following attributes were considered:

- Incorporating both Emerald Lake and Nobelius Heritage parks as a Precinct, yet respecting each park's individuality.
- Recognising that the Precinct is considered a regional level open space and develops service levels that meet this expectation.
- Incorporating key placemaking principles to ensure success and buy-in of visitors and stakeholders.
- Identifying goals and objectives to be met, yet allowing space and flexibility to take up unforeseen opportunities.
- Aligning with the Council Plan 2019–23 and Council's Liveability Plan 2017-29.
- Ongoing review on how the goals and objectives are being met.

To incorporate these attributes into the Strategic Plan, Council referenced the Project of Public Spaces (PPS) [Placemaking Process](#)<sup>1</sup> and [The Place Diagram](#)<sup>2</sup> assessment tool.

## 2 Strategic context

The ELP Strategic Plan aligns closely with two key Council documents; the Council Plan 2019-23 and Council's Liveability Plan 2017-29 which are summarised below. How the ELP Strategic Plan considers and aligns with the Project of Public Places (PPS); Placemaking Process is also outlined.

### 2.1 Cardinia Shire Council Plan 2019–23

The Council Plan sets out a medium to long-term vision for how we will respond to community needs and the opportunities and challenges facing Cardinia Shire. The five key strategic objectives are:

1. **Our people:** We support a variety of needs and lifestyles through programs and activities that promote and develop the wellbeing of Cardinia Shire's people.
2. **Our community:** We will foster a strong sense of connection between Cardinia Shire's diverse communities.
3. **Our environment:** We will continue to plan and manage the natural and built environment for present and future generations.
4. **Our economy:** We will create and support local employment and business opportunities for our community and the wider region.
5. **Our governance:** We will consult with the community, as appropriate, in an open and accountable way to help in determining the key direction of Council.

### 2.2 Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan 2017–29

The Liveability Plan 2017–29 is Shire Council's public health plan for Cardinia Shire. It has been developed to provide a clear framework for public health planning within the Shire. The framework outlines the common agenda that Council, partners and the community, will collectively work towards over the next 12 years. The Liveability Plan identifies seven policy domain objectives which include:

**Active Travel** - In Cardinia Shire, walking and cycling for transport is safe, enjoyable, accessible and linked to promote social connection, reduce financial hardship and enhance the health of people and the environment.

<sup>1</sup> Project for Public Spaces, *The Placemaking Process*, <https://www.pps.org/article/5-steps-to-making-places>

<sup>2</sup> Project for Public Spaces, *What makes a successful place?* <https://www.pps.org/article/grplacefeat>

**Education** - In Cardinia Shire, all residents have access to a variety of education and training opportunities close to home. Modern and contemporary learning environments support quality education, continuous learning, enhanced employment opportunities, social connection and better health outcomes.

**Employment** - Cardinia Shire residents are skilled to access local jobs in a resilient, innovative and thriving local economy. Workplaces are inclusive and promote the health, wellbeing and safety of workers.

**Food** - Cardinia Shire's healthy, delicious, sustainable and fair local food system promotes the health of people, strengthens the local economy and enhances the natural environment.

**Health and Social Services** - In Cardinia Shire, local services and community groups work together to ensure residents can access appropriate and affordable services and facilities which promote and protect health and wellbeing throughout life.

**Housing** - Cardinia Shire encourages diverse, high quality and sustainable housing, affordable for all, in close proximity to employment, education, goods and services and open space, which is connected by active travel infrastructure and meets the needs of a growing and diverse community.

**Open Spaces and Places** - Open space in Cardinia Shire is strategically planned, developed and maintained to create a sense of place, encourage participation, protect the natural environment and promote health and wellbeing.

How the ELP Strategic Plan aligns with the Council Plan strategic goals as well as the Liveability Policy domains is further explored in Section 8 of the Strategic Plan.

## **2.3 Placemaking**

Placemaking is a practical and philosophical approach for creating and transforming public places. It emphasises the requirement of listening to the community and visitors, recognising it as a place where people live, work and play. Understanding the current and future needs for that place and aspirations of the community. The process that placemaking follows includes:

- Defining a place & identifying stakeholders.
- Evaluating space and identifying issues.
- Develop a place vision.
- Short term experiments / quick wins.
- Ongoing re-evaluations and long term improvements.

The process can be applied to new or existing places, and the steps may vary depending on that particular place, and the people who use it. The Project of Public Places (PPS); Placemaking Process provides further details around the process which has been applied to the Strategic Plan and future planning of Emerald Lake Precinct.

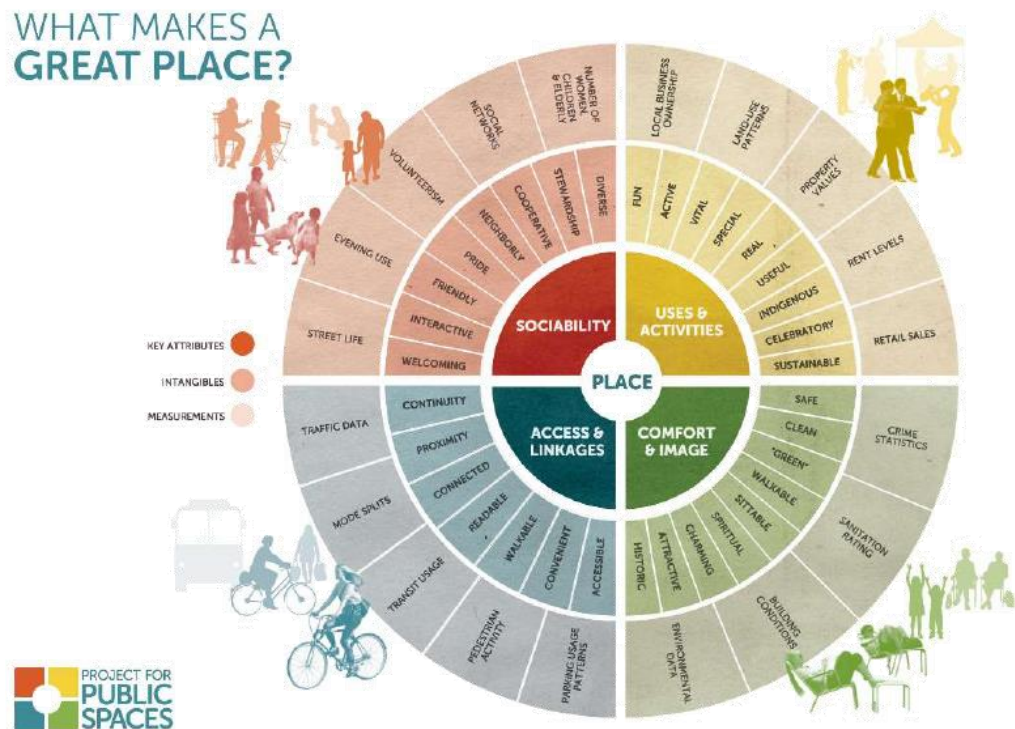
## **2.4 The Place Diagram**

The Place Diagram was developed as part of the PPS as a way to judge if a place is successful or not. Successful places generally share four key qualities which include:

- They are accessible
- People are engaged in activities
- The space is comfortable and has a positive image
- The place allows people to be sociable; meet others, and take visitors.

The Place Diagram (Figure 1) has been utilised in the ELP Strategic Plan as a tool to understand and assess how well the Precinct rates against these four qualities. Each of the goals developed as part of the Plan have been assessed against the Place Diagram to understand how well the Precinct currently rates, and as a way to continually assess and improve in each of the four areas.

Figure 1. The Place Diagram



The Place Diagram, Project of Public Places, <https://www.pps.org/article/grplacefeat> (retrieved 28/8/2019)

Extensive community engagement and these leading sector frameworks has informed the key goals and objectives which will guide the direction of the newly formed Precinct over the next ten years. The Strategic Plan is strongly drawn from the community and visitor feedback, complimented with council knowledge, experience and management of the Precinct.

### 3 Emerald Lake Precinct

#### 3.1 History

Emerald Lake Precinct has had a rich and fruitful history, from the First Nations who lived and connected with the land, through post-settlement development and economic drive to public recreational parklands of state significance.

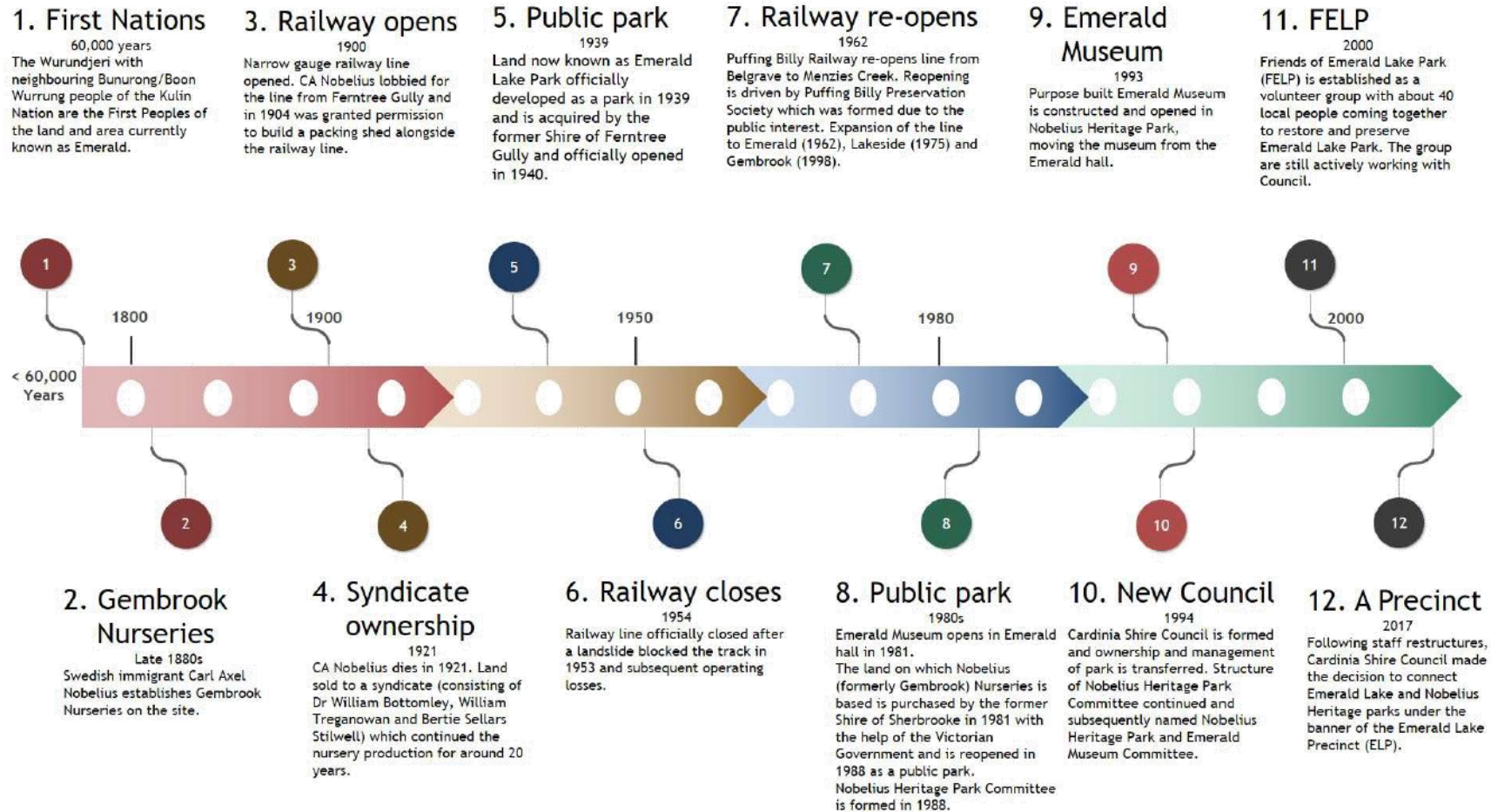
The timeline below (Figure 2) shows some of the key milestones in the history of the Precinct.

For further details on the history of the Precinct, visit:

- Emerald Museum as part of your visit to the Precinct.
- Melbourne's Dandenong Ranges visitor site: [www.visitdandenongranges.com.au/history](http://www.visitdandenongranges.com.au/history)
- Emerald Museum and Nobelius Heritage Park website: [www.emeraldmuseum.org.au/our-history](http://www.emeraldmuseum.org.au/our-history)
- Emerald Lake Park website: [www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/elphistory](http://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/elphistory)
- Puffing Billy Railway website: [www.puffingbilly.com.au/about/history-heritage](http://www.puffingbilly.com.au/about/history-heritage)
- Friends of Emerald Lake Park website: [www.felp.org.au](http://www.felp.org.au)



Figure 2. Emerald Lake Precinct Historic Timeline

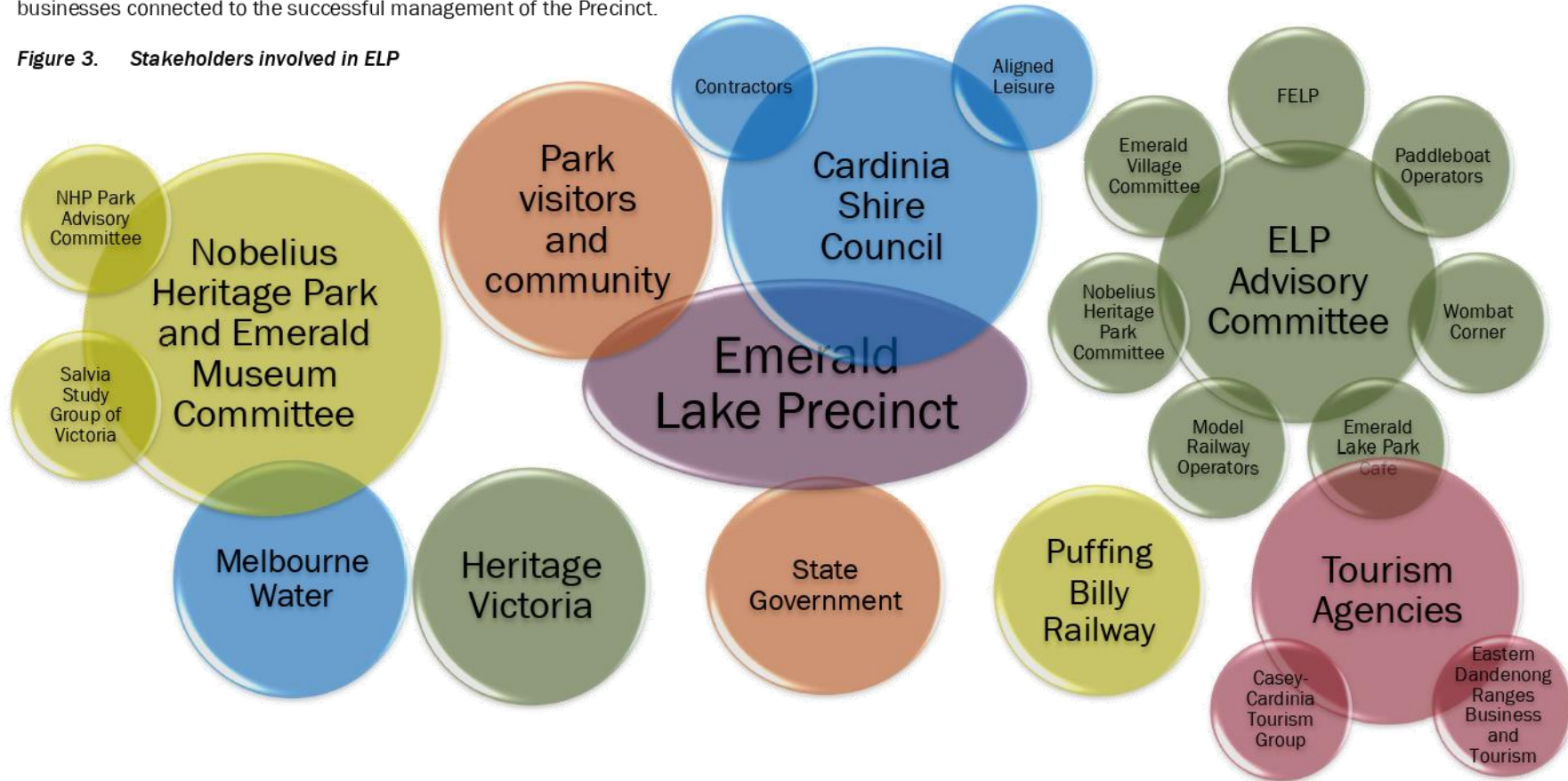


## 4 Precinct stakeholders

### 4.1 Who's involved?

Many people are involved in operating and managing the Emerald Lake Precinct. Figure 3 shows the organisations, volunteer groups, community groups and businesses connected to the successful management of the Precinct.

Figure 3. Stakeholders involved in ELP



## 5 Precinct vision

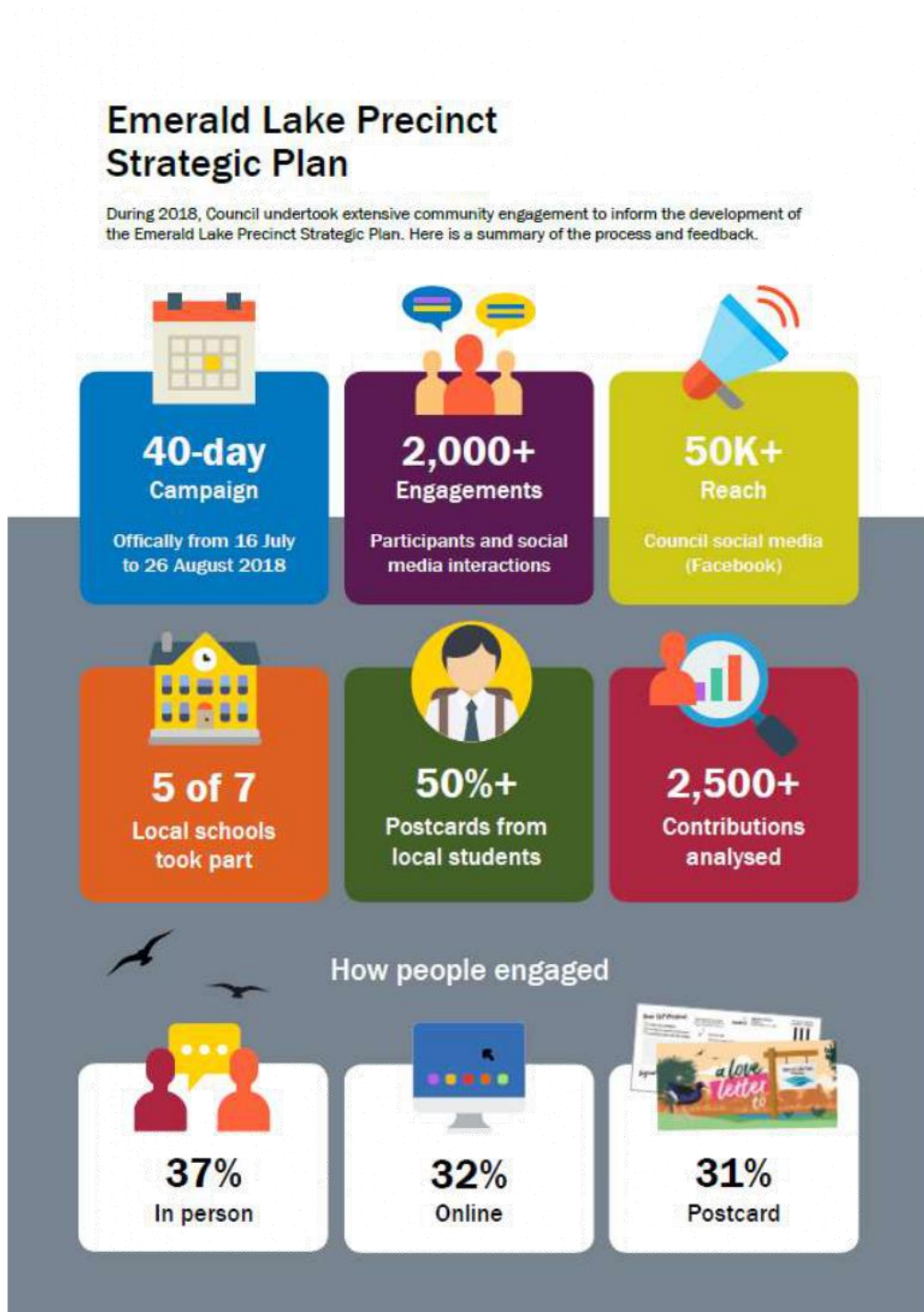
Council's vision for the Emerald Lake Precinct is:

- The Precinct is recognised as a regional park offering a unique blend of natural, historical, recreational and cultural experiences for local, regional, national and international visitors.
- The Precinct is accessible for all ages, abilities and cultures and hosts a range of opportunities for social and economic exchanges.
- The Precinct is well maintained and comfortable and offers appropriate amenities and infrastructure expected within a regional open space.
- Visitors are engaged in a range of events, activations, recreation and leisure activities and the Precinct supports both public and private functions.
- Through sustainable management and practices, the Precinct balances development with the natural environment.

## 6 Community engagement

Council undertook extensive community engagement from the 16 July to 26 August 2018 to help inform the development of this Strategic Plan. Eight methods were used, including interviews, surveys, postcard submissions and forums. Opportunities to have a say were promoted across eight different avenues, reaching more than 50,400 people via social media alone.

Figure 4. Community engagement summary







Phase two consultation on the draft Strategic Plan took place over a seven week timeframe from the 24th September until the 11th November 2019. The feedback that was received were generally based around the issues and opportunities in the Precinct. 146 individual pieces of feedback were received. This feedback has led to 14 amendments to the draft Strategic Plan to create the final Plan.



## 7 Precinct strategic goals

The key themes emerging from the community engagement data were used to develop the Precinct strategic goals and objectives for the Plan.

These goals will guide how Council manages, maintains and activates the Emerald Lake Precinct over the next ten years.

### 1. Activation and engagement

*ELP is a leading outdoor venue for quality educational, entertaining, active, passive, private and public activities and events all year round.*

### 2. Environmental, cultural and historical significance

*ELP is recognised and celebrated for its distinctive environmental, cultural and historical significance and offerings.*

### 3. Accessibility and inclusion

*ELP is well connected, accessible and hosts a variety of offerings for all ages, abilities and nationalities.*

### 4. Sociability and comfort

*ELP is the place of choice for local, national and international visitors to establish and build social connections, feel welcome and create memories.*

### 5. Sustainability

*ELP is a leading example in sustainable operation and management.*

## 7.1 Environmental, cultural and historical significance

*ELP is recognised and celebrated for its distinctive environmental, cultural and historical significance and offerings*

### 7.1.1 Why?

The community feedback told us that the natural environment and history of the Precinct was important. The community felt it was important that the unique stories were shared so that not only locals knew them, but so that visitors from further afield could also better appreciate and learn from them. The feedback on the draft Strategic Plan also told us that it was important to protect and enhance the environmental significance of the Precinct; promoting the native and indigenous flora and fauna as well as significant tree species.

### 7.1.2 Objectives – what we will do

- Preserve and enhance significant natural environmental assets within the Precinct.
- Ensure the Precinct has a strong promotional presence in eco-tourism, environmental and public sectors.
- Increase visitors' understanding of the Precinct's environmental significance and ecological issues.
- Educate visitors on the Precinct's historical significance and how that translates to the present day (including Aboriginal, post settlement, economic and industrial themes).
- Encourage locals and visitors to have a strong sense of pride and increased stewardship of the Precinct (natural and built).
- Ensure upkeep and maintenance of natural and built assets is proactive, and meets service standards that balance community expectations and Council resources.
- Ensure future infrastructure upgrades and development is considerate of environmental, historical and cultural significance that meets current standards and visitor expectations
- Ensure measures are put in place for the protection of significant built and natural assets, including waterways, during any upgrade or new build works.

## 7.2 Activation and engagement

*ELP is a leading outdoor venue for quality educational, entertaining, active, passive, private and public activities and events all year round.*

### 7.2.1 Why?

The community feedback told us that you wanted to see more events and activations at the Precinct. Visitors enjoyed what was already on offer, such as annual music events, theatre shows, races and treasure hunts however, believed the Precinct could offer so much more. It was raised that the uniqueness of the Precinct and the variety of visitors made it an ideal location to offer a range of programs. These include; educational programs, organised recreation activities and classes, arts and cultural events, festivals and markets (plus much more). Council heard that the community enjoyed hosting private and public events and it was important that the Precinct offer better opportunities to facilitate these more easily in future. It was important that up to date information was provided in a range of ways to promote activities and events, as well inform the community about operational activities that will have a direct impact on them.

### 7.2.2 Objectives – what we will do

- Explore partnerships to offer a variety of events and activations programs (educational, entertaining, Council funded, community led and commercial).
- Have the infrastructure in place to support a range of uses and activities including community events.
- Have clear processes and resources to support community use of spaces, community-led placemaking activities and events.
- Engage visitors in activities and events as a way of expanding their understanding and involvement with the Precinct and broader social commentary.
- Engage and promote events and activities through a range of mediums, technology and based on latest trends to reach a wide audience.
- Support opportunities for community to be more involved and informed with what is happening in the Precinct from both an events, maintenance and operational perspective.

## 7.3 Sociability and comfort

*ELP is the place of choice for local, national and international visitors to establish and build social connections, feel welcome and create memories.*

### 7.3.1 Why?

The community feedback received told us that the Precinct is like the 'backyard' for locals and those who come from urban areas. The Precinct also attracts a broad range of visitors from many faiths and cultures. Respondents shared many memories they have of the Precinct and they would return with friends, children and family to reminisce and create new ones.

Feedback informed us that the community believes parks of this size and significance, should have more up-to-date facilities, a greater variety in food and hospitality options along with better quality playground and water play opportunities. A common comment was that the Precinct was tired and needed some more 'sparkle'.

There was also the desire to have people to assist and welcome visitors to the parks and for information to be easily found and understood, regardless of your background.

### 7.3.2 Objectives – what we will do

- Encourage and foster diversity in visitor demographics through provision of infrastructure that considers all ages, abilities and interests.
- Strive to meet CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) principles and align with Council's Healthy by Design framework.
- Create inviting and engaging play areas for children, teens and adults.
- Provide a range of opportunities and infrastructure to enhance social connections – both formal and informal.

- Support a variety of hospitality and food options catering for the range of visitor experiences.
- Have easily accessible, personable and welcoming information and customer service.
- Increase and support volunteerism and stewardship of the Precinct.
- Continue to build a strong relationship and support Emerald Tourist Railway Board in continuing to provide visitors with opportunities to explore the Precinct during their travels on Puffing Billy.

## **7.4 Sustainability**

*ELP is a leading example in sustainable operation and management.*

### **7.4.1 Why?**

The community feedback received told us that sustainability was important to you and that the Precinct and those who operate within it should be implementing sustainable practices. The Precinct could showcase and offer opportunities to educate about the importance of climate change and sustainability.

Council understands the importance of being sustainable in how activities within the Precinct are funded and managed. Feedback told us that the Precinct was 'tired' and some of the infrastructure was run-down. The community hoped for appropriate resources to bring the maintenance, operations and management of the Precinct to a higher level that will be maintained into the future for others to enjoy.

### **7.4.2 Objectives – what we will do**

- Showcase environmental sustainability to visitors in an engaging and practical way.
- Support business operators within the Precinct reduce their environmental footprint in day-to-day operations.
- Encourage and promote Precinct visitation to support economic viability of operators.
- Explore and implement sustainable options when upgrading existing and creating new infrastructure.
- Ensure a diverse range of cost recovery avenues and opportunities to generate income are sought to enhance and support the operation and management of the Precinct.

## **7.5 Accessibility and inclusion**

*ELP is well connected, accessible and hosts a variety of offerings for all ages, abilities and nationalities.*

### **7.5.1 Why?**

The community feedback told us of your favourite areas within the Precinct and how they were unique. We heard visitors come with families and groups of friends of all ages and abilities.

The community told us that people of all abilities want to use the space, but felt some areas were not considered safe or accessible. Council heard that visitors don't always explore all that the Precinct has on offer as it can be difficult for people to navigate, move, or feel safe in all areas of the Precinct.

Feedback highlighted that the two parks did not yet feel connected and were somewhat disconnected from Emerald township.

The community wanted more activities and events to take place throughout the calendar year that are relevant to local, regional, national and international visitors.

### **7.5.2 Objectives – what we will do**

- Encourage visitors to explore the range of key nodes within the Precinct (e.g. bushland, 'urban', historical, trails).
- Provide accessible and inclusive facilities and trails where appropriate, recognising that not all areas in the Precinct can meet all abilities due to the natural topography of the landscape.
- Ensure the Precinct has proactive maintenance regimes in place and sufficient resources to manage the infrastructure and grounds.
- Ensure adequate resources to proactively manage, maintain and activate the Precinct

- Ensure visitors of all ages, abilities and nationalities can easily navigate between the individual parks, key nodes and activities in the Precinct.
- Identify opportunities to better connect ELP to the Emerald Township.
- Develop a varied program of events and activities.
- Ensure the Precinct supports social connections across ages, abilities and cultures.
- Recognise, embrace and celebrate local, national and international interests and cultures through programing and information sharing.
- Ensure Precinct staff represent Council in key industry sectors and keep up-to-date with developments, opportunities, legislation, industry best practice and relevant regulations.

## 8 Strategic alignment


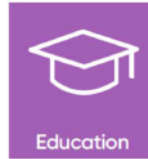



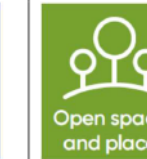

### 8.1 Cardinia Shire Council Plan 2019-23

The table below shows the alignment between the ELP Strategic Plan Goals and Cardinia Shire Council Plan.

|   | 1. Our people | 2. Our community | 3. Our environment | 4. Our economy | 5. Our governance |
|---|---------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Environmental, cultural and historical significance |               | ✓                | ✓                  |                |                   |
| Activation and engagement                           | ✓             | ✓                | ✓                  | ✓              |                   |
| Sociability and comfort                             | ✓             | ✓                | ✓                  | ✓              |                   |
| Sustainability                                      |               |                  | ✓                  | ✓              | ✓                 |
| Accessibility and inclusion                         | ✓             | ✓                | ✓                  | ✓              |                   |

### 8.2 Liveability Plan 2017–29

This table shows the alignment between the ELP Strategic Plan Goals and Council’s Liveability Plan

|   | <br>Active travel | <br>Education | <br>Employment | <br>Food | <br>Health and social services | <br>Open spaces and places | <br>Housing |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| Environmental, cultural and historical significance |  | ✓  |  | ✓   |   | ✓   |  |
| Activation and engagement                           |  | ✓  | ✓  |   | ✓   | ✓   |  |
| Sociability and Comfort                             | ✓  |  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |  |
| Sustainability                                      |  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   |   | ✓   |  |
| Accessibility and inclusion                         | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |  |



**8.3 The Place Diagram and our strategic direction**

This figure shows the alignment between the ELP Strategic Plan Goals and the Placemaking Framework Place Diagram.

Figure 5. Our strategic direction aligned to the Place Diagram



## 9 Strategic Plan implementation

Every year, Council will use this Strategic Plan to guide the development and implementation of annual action plans for ELP. These action plans will consider resources, programming and balancing a range of areas from this strategic plan. These action plans will also allow Council to respond to opportunities as they arise. Annual updates to the ELP Advisory Committee will be provided to document how activities undertaken in the Precinct have met the goals and objectives outlined in this strategic plan. Priority actions have been developed as part of the Strategic Plan and will build on the work contained in this plan to provide further direction and detail for subsequent year's actions.

### 9.1 Priority actions

Based on this strategic plan, the priority actions are:

#### Aboriginal cultural heritage report

Staff will work with internal departments and external consultants to:

- Begin building meaningful relationships with local Aboriginal groups and Traditional Custodians.
- Gather research on the Aboriginal significance of the Precinct and surrounds.
- Create an overarching Aboriginal Cultural Report for the Precinct which takes into consideration:
  - Historical significance of the sites.
  - Current cultural significance of the sites.
  - Appropriate cultural contacts for ongoing relationship and permissions.
  - Review of current wording/names/representations within site and assessment of cultural appropriateness.
  - Key actions for implementation to build education on local Aboriginal culture and significance in relation to the site.

#### Conservation Management Plan (CMP)

Staff will work with internal departments and consultants to:

- Collate existing data and information about cultural heritage significance of the Precinct for natural and built assets.
- Engage a consultant to prepare a CMP that will provide Council with a clear understanding of the requirements around significant infrastructure, vegetation and fauna throughout the Precinct to assist in guiding future development and maintenance upgrades.

#### Arborist assessment

Staff will work with internal departments and external consultants to:

- Collate existing data and information about tree species.
- Assess tree health, structure, and screen for any pests and /or disease.
- Identify and prioritise tree works required around high use trails and key activity areas.

#### Building and infrastructure audit

Staff will work with internal departments and external consultants to:

- Review and assess current condition and functionality of buildings, furniture and other infrastructure types.
- Identify improvement opportunities for buildings and infrastructure.
- Identify infrastructure needs to enhance bookings, events and activations.
- Develop infrastructure improvements and purchasing plan.

#### ELP Master Plan

Staff will work with internal departments and external consultants to:

- Review and assess current landscaping and associated plans and reports.
- Identify improvement opportunities for landscaping within the Precinct.
- Undertake extensive community consultation.
- Create a Master Plan to align with Strategic Plan objectives taking into consideration:

- Data and recommendations from the Arborist Assessment, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Report, Conservation Management Plan and the Building and Infrastructure Audit.
- Heritage overlays.
- Wayfinding, accessibility and lighting.
- Balance between natural and landscaped/built environment.
- Key actions for implementation (short, medium and long term).

#### Capital Works Plan to implement Master Plan

Council will prepare a Capital Works Implementation Plan that will include:

- Capital works recommendations from the Master Plan including cost estimates for implementation.
- The Capital Works Plan will be used for funding applications in Council's annual capital works program and other grant opportunities.

#### Promotions and marketing plan

Staff will work with internal departments and external consultants to:

- Develop baseline current promotions and marketing activities (including Council, business operators, key volunteer groups and broader tourism avenues).
- Assess what does and does not work in line with promotional and marketing trends.
- Create an overarching promotional and marketing strategy to align with Strategic Plan objectives and taking into consideration:
  - The Precinct as a whole.
  - The individuality of the parks within the Precinct.
  - Business operators and volunteer groups (both under the Precinct banner and as individual entities).
  - Key market demographics.
  - Key actions for implementation (short, medium and long term).
  - Design, web, print (and other) proposals.
  - Council communications, community engagement, policies and approaches.

#### Ongoing priorities:

##### Increase in activation

Staff will work with internal departments and external groups and agencies to increase the activations within the Precinct. Activations are not defined only as events or festivals, but include all activities (formal and informal) that increase visitations, activity and usage of any areas within the space.

This may include:

- Council organised events and activations.
- Community organised events and activations.
- Partnerships with groups, event organisers and operators from outside the Shire to host events and activations.
- Purchasing of shows, events, festivals and activations to take place within the Precinct.
- Bookings of spaces and private functions.
- Research and development of professional relationships for future activations.
- Community consultation.



## **Draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-2025**

### **Summary of Consultation – Phase Two**

#### **Background**

In September 2019, SLT and Council were presented the Draft Emerald Lake Precinct (ELP) Strategic Plan 2020-25 and gave the approval to proceed with a second phase community engagement process to finalise the Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan.

Phase two consultation took place over a seven week timeframe from the 24th September until the 11th November 2019.

The purpose of this document is to detail the consultation process including: methodology, results and feedback received.

#### **Community consultation**

The Engagement Plan that was developed for the ELP Strategic Plan identified two phases.

##### **Phase one**

The first phase incorporated a large scale community engagement process which captured feedback from a range of sources that led to the development of the draft Emerald Lake Plan Strategic Plan, and in particular, the five Precinct goals (outlined below), objectives and priority actions.

Precinct goals:

- Environmental, cultural and historical significance
- Activation and engagement
- Sociability and comfort
- Sustainability
- Accessibility and inclusion

##### **Phase two**

Phase two of the consultation process outlined how Council would seek feedback on the draft ELP Strategic Plan. The process for phase two took place over a seven week timeframe, it commenced from the 24<sup>th</sup> September to 11<sup>th</sup> November and included the following activities:

Contact initial engagement participants

- Email those who participated in the phase one community engagement process and left contact details to be kept informed. A link to the online survey and a copy of the Draft ELP Strategic Plan 2020-25 was emailed.
- Email primary schools to place the survey link in the school newsletters – Upper Beaconsfield School, Emerald Primary School, Cockatoo Primary School, and Gembrook Primary School.

Informal feedback

- Council officers received emails from community members outlining general feedback, which has been included in the consultation collated data.
- Council officers meet with the Emerald Museum committee members to further discuss the Strategic Plan.

## Focus Group workshops:

- Emerald Lake Precinct Advisory Committee - 24/9/2019
- Internal Council staff - 29/9/2019

## Workshop outline

Provide an overview of the draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan prior to the workshop.

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Introduction   | 20 mins    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the session by running through the Strategic Plan development. General overview of the Strategic Plan content, outline the 5 precinct goals and priority actions.</li> </ul>  |            |
| Activity   | 40 minutes |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split the committee up into 5 small groups.</li> <li>• Each group will be allocated to the table in the room with butcher's paper, each station will have one of the strategic plan goals on the paper.</li> <li>• Ask the groups to provide feedback on the goal.</li> <li>• On the left hand side of the sheet ask them to comment on what they like about the content of the goal. On the right hand side ask them to comment on what they would like to see changed or added.</li> <li>• Give each group 5 minutes then rotate to the next station.</li> <li>• Each group to present feedback.</li> <li>• Opportunity to provide any additional feedback or general comments/discussion.</li> </ul> |            |
| Where to from here   | 10 minutes |
| Let the group know the process for the finalisation and adoption of the strategy from this point forward.  |            |
| Workshop close.  |            |

## Public Exhibition of Draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan - 26/9/19 - 10/11/19

- Hard copies of the Draft Strategic Plan provided to the Emerald Museum, Council Offices Civic Centre, Officer, Emerald Library, and Council's website.

## Online Survey

- An online survey developed to receive feedback on the draft Strategic Plan and key elements. Asked for feedback on each of the proposed Strategic goals, offered people to provide any general feedback regarding the goals and general content.

Have Your Say page - <https://creating.cardinia.vic.gov.au/emerald-lake-precinct-draft-strategic-plan>

- Information provided about the draft Strategic Plan and engagement process to date.

## Social media posts

- Communications team to post two Have Your Say posts outlined in the Engagement Plan and Communications Plan.

## Advert in the local newspaper – Ranges Trader newspaper:

<https://rangestrader.mailcommunity.com.au/news/2019-10-15/have-your-say-on-emerald-lake-precinct-strategic-plan/>

## Have your say

### Draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-25

You're invited to provide your feedback on the draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-25.

Developed with assistance from the community, the draft plan outlines the strategic direction over the next five years for the precinct, which includes Emerald Lake Park, Nobelius Heritage Park and Emerald Museum.

The plan will also help guide a future masterplan to detail improvements and upgrades.

Copies of the draft plan are available to view at the Emerald Museum, Emerald Library, Cardinia Shire Council Civic Centre or online.


### Have your say

Feedback closes 5pm  
Sunday 10 November, 2019.

**Online**  
[www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay](http://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay)

**Email**  
[mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au](mailto:mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au)

**In writing**  
ELP Strategic Plan  
Cardinia Shire Council  
PO Box 7, Pakenham VIC 3810



## Consultation summary

| Consultation Methodology  | Purpose / Description   | Attendance / Number/ spread   |   |                        |                            |       |    |    |   |   |  |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|------------------------|----------------------------|-------|----|----|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| Informal feedback   | Informal email submissions<br>Meeting with Emerald Museum attendees   | 3<br>6  |   |                        |                            |       |    |    |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| Focus Group workshops<br>ELP Advisory Committee   | Facilitated forum for Emerald Lake Precinct Advisory Committee attendees<br>Lakeside Paddleboats,   | 11  |   |                        |                            |       |    |    |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| Focus Group Workshop<br>Internal Stakeholders   | Internal stakeholder workshop<br>Facilitated forum for internal Council staff<br>Invitations sent to identified stakeholders from departments including: Operations; Economic Devlpt; Planning; Engineering; Recreation; Arts and Culture; Passive Reserves; Community Strengthening; Environment; Communications and others.   | 12  |   |                        |                            |       |    |    |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| Online survey   | Community<br>Internal Council staff   | 15<br>7   |   |                        |                            |       |    |    |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| Facebook posts  | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #334d33; color: white;"> <th>Lifetime Post Total Reach</th> <th>Lifetime Post Total Impressions</th> <th>Lifetime Engaged Users</th> <th>Lifetime Negative Feedback</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1,299</td> <td>83</td> <td>10</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr style="background-color: #d9ead3;"> <td># of people for whom your Page's posts entered their screen. (from post date to reporting date)</td> <td># of times that posts entered a person's screen (e.g. as newsfeed, revisited for comments, notifications etc.)</td> <td># of unique people who engaged in certain ways with post. (e.g. commenting, liking, sharing or clicking on particular elements of the post.</td> <td># of times people who have hidden post or all posts related, reported as spam or unliked page</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Lifetime Post Total Reach   | Lifetime Post Total Impressions   | Lifetime Engaged Users | Lifetime Negative Feedback | 1,299 | 83 | 10 | 1 | # of people for whom your Page's posts entered their screen. (from post date to reporting date) | # of times that posts entered a person's screen (e.g. as newsfeed, revisited for comments, notifications etc.) | # of unique people who engaged in certain ways with post. (e.g. commenting, liking, sharing or clicking on particular elements of the post. | # of times people who have hidden post or all posts related, reported as spam or unliked page | 1 post was specifically for the draft Strategic Plan<br><br>1 indirect post with other HYS promotions (not included in this data) |
| Lifetime Post Total Reach   | Lifetime Post Total Impressions   | Lifetime Engaged Users  | Lifetime Negative Feedback  |                        |                            |       |    |    |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| 1,299   | 83  | 10  | 1   |                        |                            |       |    |    |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| # of people for whom your Page's posts entered their screen. (from post date to reporting date) | # of times that posts entered a person's screen (e.g. as newsfeed, revisited for comments, notifications etc.)  | # of unique people who engaged in certain ways with post. (e.g. commenting, liking, sharing or clicking on particular elements of the post. | # of times people who have hidden post or all posts related, reported as spam or unliked page |                        |                            |       |    |    |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| Captured feedback   | The amount of individual responses captured throughout the consultation process   | 146   |   |                        |                            |       |    |    |   |   |  |   |   |   |

## Consultation analysis

Analysis of the community consultation feedback undertaken by Council staff followed the following steps:

- Collation of data from all consultation methods
- Identification of key themes related to the precinct goals
- Summary of key themes
- Recommendations for changes in the draft Strategic Plan.

### Summary of key themes

In September 2019, SLT and Council were presented the Draft Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan 2020-25 and gave the approval to proceed with a second phase community engagement process to finalise the Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan.

Phase two consultation took place over a seven week timeframe from the 24th September until the 11th November. The feedback that was received were generally based around the issues and opportunities in the precinct. Out of 146 individual responses, 14 led to amendments to the draft Strategic Plan. The remaining 132 were either already included in the Strategic Plan, to be included in the Masterplan, Promotions and Marketing Plan, or of an operational nature that Council already currently undertakes or will work towards (such as increasing service levels and proactive maintenance).

The remaining feedback generally fall into the following categories:

- already accommodated in the Plan
- to be actioned in future Council documents
- noted for consideration in Council officers existing roles and responsibilities
- noted but not agreed with – did not fit with the Strategic Plan or direction.

The key themes from the feedback received are summarised below:

| GOAL  | KEY THEMES   |
|---|--|
| Environmental, Cultural and Historical Significance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased promotion to bring tourism to the area</li> <li>• Main focus was on the precinct promotion, not necessarily joint promotion of business operators</li> <li>• Significance (historical/ environmental) was undersold and had potential to attract more visitors</li> <li>• Improved signage to assist in promotion.</li> </ul>   |
| Activation and Engagement                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event Opportunities - regular markets and music events to education sessions and biodiversity information sessions</li> <li>• Opportunity to engage support - support of Friends groups and further encourage other groups</li> <li>• Improve access to ELP for pedestrians, cars, buses and public transport</li> <li>• Staffing - onsite staffing often referencing safety concerns - Ranger/By Laws Staff and Customer Service staff</li> <li>• Improvements to facilities - increasing the maintenance scheduled, all-weather facilities for bookings.</li> </ul> |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Sociability and Comfort     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved signage with directional and warning information for in emergencies, way finding signage in multiple languages</li> <li>Improved food and beverage offerings</li> <li>Infrastructure improvements were strongly requested.</li> </ul>   |
| Sustainability              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern and required further clarification on 'cost recovery'</li> <li>Community expectations centred more around environmental sustainability</li> <li>Concerns regarding increasing costs to access the precinct – disadvantaging seniors and low income families.</li> <li>Future development build designs and planning sympathetic towards the natural environment</li> <li>Understanding the visitor capacity of the site</li> <li>Identifying the challenges of an increased visitor base vs environmental impact</li> <li>Increase in general maintenance of the Precinct and surrounds</li> <li>Fire risk in the area to be monitored.</li> </ul> |
| Accessibility and inclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pathway improvements</li> <li>Acknowledgement that the site is on the side of a hill and not all paths will be fully accessible</li> <li>Review pathway locations</li> <li>Paths nearer to ELP road supporting people to walk to the precinct</li> <li>Increase maintenance particularly after weather events</li> <li>Widening of Pathways and removal of overhanging vegetation</li> <li>Lighting for events, access to playgrounds and internal pathways</li> <li>Toilet improvements - DDA compliant facilities.</li> </ul>  |

**Online survey results**

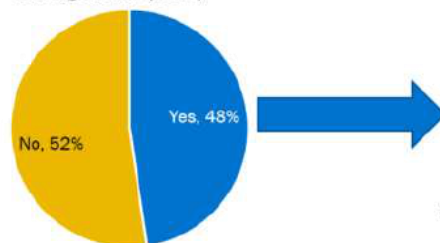
An online survey was prepared for external stakeholders, community and internal council staff. There were 15 completed submissions received from the community, and 7 received from internal Council staff. The survey asked respondents if they participated in the initial round of consultation and if they did, to rate the process and how well they felt they were heard. The survey also asked respondents to rate the precinct goals in order of preference, in order for Council to understand community priorities, and to then provide feedback about goals, and general feedback about the Strategic Plan.

The results are summarised below:

**Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan feedback**

Total responses:

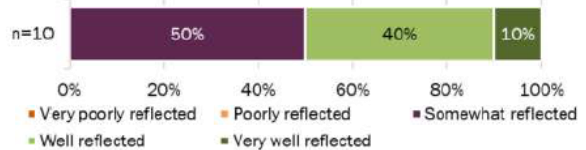
Did you participate in the initial round of consultation for the Emerald Lake Precinct Strategic Plan? (n=21)



Please rate the consultation process we undertook for you to contribute to the Strategic Plan?



Please rate how well you believe the community feedback has been reflected in the draft Strategic Plan







The results show that more than half (52%) of the respondents did not participate in the online survey. Of those who did participate, 80% felt that the process was very good. 50% felt the feedback was well reflected/very well reflected, and 50% felt it was somewhat reflected. This may be due to the lack of more practical explanation of what will happen on the ground, explained by the amount of questions from community members about topics such as accessibility, signage, pathways, and general maintenance.

**Recommended changes to the ELP Strategic Plan**

Each individual feedback response received from all methods were assessed and considered. Feedback regarding changes in the Strategic Plan are outlined in the below table:

| GOAL  | SUGGESTION   | AMMENDMENT   |
|---|--|--|
| Environmental, Cultural and Historical Significance | Include an objective about preserving and enhancing the environmental assets of the precinct or a conservation target.             | Additional objective in 7.1.2: Preserve and enhance the natural environmental assets within the precinct.  |
|   | Complexity of site - natural vs. build - native v. exotic.   | Sentence amended in 7.1.1 - Why<br>The feedback on the draft Strategic Plan also told us that it was important to protect and enhance the environmental significance of the precinct; promoting the native and indigenous flora and fauna as well as significant tree species. |
|   | Increase maintenance levels; current maintenance levels not in line with number of visitors to the Park.                           | Objective 7.1.2 amended: Ensure upkeep and maintenance of natural and built assets is proactive and meets service standards that balance community expectations and Council resources.   |
|   | Ensure during any construction work that preventative measures are put into place to protect the natural environment and waterways | Additional objective 7.1.2: Ensure measures are put in place for the protection of significant built and natural assets, including waterways, during any upgrade or new build works.   |
| Activation and Engagement                           | Need a reporting mechanism for maintenance and fallen  | Objective added 7.2.2: Support opportunities for community to be more involved and informed with what is happening in the precinct from  |

|                             |   |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
|                             | trees so as visitors know when something has already been reported  | both an events, maintenance and operational perspective.  |
| Sociability and Comfort     | Further clarification on 7.3.2 "Encourage and foster diversity in visitor demographics"   | Objective in 7.3.2 amended:<br>Encourage and foster diversity in visitor demographics through provision of infrastructure that considers all ages, abilities and interests.   |
|                             | PBR seems absent from the strategic plan  | Additional objective in 7.3.2:<br>Continue to build a strong relationship and support Emerald Tourist Railway Board in continuing to provide visitors with opportunities to explore the precinct during their travels on Puffing Billy. |
| Sustainability              | Clarify what are the diverse cost recovery avenue   | Objective in 7.4.2 amended:<br>Ensure a diverse range of cost recovery avenues and opportunities to generate income are sought to enhance and support the operation and management of the precinct                                      |
|                             | Suggest recycled plastic materials are selected for furniture choices as Timber furniture rots and is removed not necessarily replaced. | Objective added in 7.4.2:<br>Explore and implement sustainable options when upgrading existing and creating new infrastructure  |
| Accessibility and inclusion | Accessibility and inclusion: 2nd line "community" should read "the community" or "community members". Same with line 3.                 | Readability in 7.5.1 improved.  |
|                             | Understand the Park cannot be everything to everyone. Manage conflict of different users.   | Objective added in 7.5.2:<br>Provide accessible and inclusive facilities and trails where appropriate, recognising that not all areas in the precinct can meet all abilities due to the natural topography of the landscape.            |
| General comments            | Show goals in order of priority   | Changes to reflect priority order based on community feedback balanced with Council   |
|                             | Change to a 10 year plan to allow more time to implement the actions.   | Amend to make 10 year plan: 2020-2030.  |
|                             | Removal of the word faith, how can we support faiths if there are no facilities provided, such as prayer rooms.                         | Amended in Precinct vision<br>Amended in 7.5.2 - Ensure the precinct supports social connections across ages, abilities and cultures.   |

## Conclusion

Due to the large scale community engagement process for the development of the Strategic Plan, it is understandable that not as much feedback was received in this process. It also suggests that

there is general satisfaction with the Strategic Plan with the content reflecting what was captured in the initial engagement process.

Out of 146 individual responses, 14 led to amendments to the draft Strategic Plan with the remaining comments falling in one of the following categories:

- already accommodated in the Plan
- to be actioned in future Council documents
- noted for consideration in Council officers existing roles and responsibilities
- noted but not agreed with – did not fit with the Strategic Plan or direction.

Majority of these concerns will be addressed in future documents such as the Masterplan, and Promotions and Marketing Plan, considered in existing or future work processes to be followed through by the Emerald Lake Precinct Place Maker, or Operations for maintenance.