# Future Melbourne Committee

**Meeting No 22**
**Tuesday 17 February 2026**
**5:30 pm**

**Town Hall Commons**
**Melbourne Town Hall Administration Building**

## Unconfirmed Minutes

**Present**

Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece (Chair)
Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell
Councillor Dr Olivia Ball
Councillor Rafael Camillo
Councillor Davydd Griffiths
Councillor Owen Guest
Councillor Philip Le Liu
Councillor Gladys Liu
Councillor Kevin Louey
Councillor Andrew Rowse
Councillor Mark Scott

## 1 Commencement of meeting and apologies

The meeting commenced at 5.30pm.

The Chair, Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, welcomed attendees to the meeting, acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land governed by the City of Melbourne, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin, and advised that:

- the meeting was being streamed live and a recording will be made available on the City of Melbourne website.
- no apologies had been received.

**Condolence Statement - Professor Emma Johnston AO**

The Lord Mayor provided the following Condolence Statement:

On behalf of Councillors and the City of Melbourne team I would like to pass on my condolences to the family, friends, colleagues and students of Professor Emma Johnston AO, who sadly passed away on 26 December after a battle with cancer.

Emma was an extraordinary scholar, and a leader and ambassador for science, research and education. A visionary marine scientist, Emma's work transformed Australia's understanding of coastal and marine ecosystems, from founding the Sydney Harbour Research Program to advancing major national research into pollution and climate impacts.

Born and raised in Melbourne, Emma studied at the University of Melbourne before going on to hold leadership roles at some of the country's most significant scientific institutions. She served as a Director of the CSIRO and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, a Governor of the Ian Potter Foundation, and Dean of Science at the University of New South Wales.

Emma returned home to Melbourne in 2025 as the University of Melbourne's first female Vice-Chancellor. Her legacy will endure in the research she advanced, the many students and researchers she inspired, and unwavering belief in the power of science to better understand and care for our oceans and natural environment.

She truly was an inspiration to so many, especially young women considering studies or a career in science.

I extend my heartfelt sympathies to her husband and her two children, and to all whose lives were touched by her presence. Emma was also a good friend of mine, and I will miss her dearly. The world has lost a great mind and a beautiful spirit.

Vale Emma Johnston AO.

## 2 Disclosure of conflicts of interest

The Lord Mayor advised that conflicts of interest should be disclosed as they arise.

## 3 Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting

| | |
|---|---|
| Moved: | Cr Dr Ball |
| | That the minutes of meeting No 21 held on Tuesday 3 February 2026 be confirmed. |
| Seconded: | Cr Liu |

The motion was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

| | |
|---|---|
| Voted for | Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Dr Guest, Cr Rowse, Cr Griffiths, Cr Liu, Cr Le Liu, Cr Scott, Cr Louey and Cr Camillo |

## 4 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting raised by Councillors.

The following person addressed the Committee and submitted an item of correspondence:

- Chris Thrum.

## 5 Public Questions

There were four public questions.

Below is a summary of public questions and responses. The full question time can be heard in the live stream recording of the meeting on Council's website at https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/meeting/future-melbourne-committee-17-february-2026

Racecourse Road - turning lane

Chris Thrum asked a question relating to the turning lane on Racecourse Road / Smithfield Road.

Chris emphasised the need to protect the turning lane and asked if the City of Melbourne understands, recognises and acknowledges that Racecourse Road is an arterial road used by horse transport trucks daily to get to the Flemington Stables.

The Lord Mayor referred the question to Evan Counsel, General Manager Strategy, Planning and Climate Change for response. Evan thanked Chris for the question and offered to meet with Chris along with the team leading the Racecourse Road Implementation Plan and advocacy, to better understand the issues raised and ensure they are adequately addressed.

Southgate Avenue pedestrian crossing

Chris Trueman asked a question relating to concerns about the pedestrian crossing in Southgate Avenue, particularly focused on the slope from the footpath into the gutter at each side. Chris asked if Council would investigate turning the crossing into a raised 'wombat' style crossing to remove the slope for the benefit of all users, and for those using mobility aides. Chris also mentioned that this, complimented with the 30kmph speed limit, would improve safety.

Chris also requested Council develop a Master Plan for Southgate Avenue in consultation with Southbank3006 and nearby residents to upgrade the street landscape and its crossings.

The Lord Mayor noted that it is one of the priority roadworks within the municipality, and advised that works, including to upgrade the foothpath crossfalls and pedestrian crossings, will commence in the coming financial year. These works would include public consultation and project delivery.

Queen Victoria Market - Trader fees and delivery vehicle parking

Fahna Ammett submitted a question regarding fees and charges for traders at the Queen Victoria Market. Fahna advised that a charge is to be passed on to traders where a delivery vehicle arrives after the loading zone has closed. Fahna asked the Lord Mayor what was meant by promises he made regarding fees and charges to traders, given traders are dealing with new charges by QVM Pty Ltd amid rising rents. Fahna also sought to know where unloading activity is to take place when the open air car park is redeveloped.

The Lord Mayor and Mans Bassi, Chief Operating Officer noted that changes to fees and charges were included in Queen Victoria Market Pty Ltd.'s last annual plan and financial plan. The Lord Mayor noted that now there is a new plan for future financial years, it is his intention to do everything he could as a Councillor to see that the commitment made around fees for traders is met.

Mans also advised that traders and delivery vehicles arriving at 9.30am should use the designated B2B loading zone in upper shed A, which does not incur any costs. In response to the question about the future state after the redevelopment of the open air car park, Mans explained that the renewal program of works included a new unloading and loading bay next to the Trader Shed, and there have been a number of engagements with traders in relation to this.

Ghost bike memorials

Aaron Moon asked a question regarding ghost bike memorials in the municipality which are used as informal memorials to those who have lost their lives while riding their bike. Aaron noted that some of these bikes have been removed by City of Melbourne staff and asked if Council would recognise informal road death memorials as legitimate memorials.

The Lord Mayor thanked Aaron for his question and ongoing advocacy, and explained that such memorials were accommodated temporarily due their significance to impacted families and friends. However, given Melbourne's finite public space amid a growing population, there needed to be a balanced approach.

The Lord Mayor then offered the suggestion that as part of the ongoing memorial review, that temporary memorials like this might be considered. This would give rise to the opportunity to formalise a position from the City of Melbourne on this and to test whether the arrangement as it currently is, is appropriate moving forward.

## 6 Reports from management

There were 6 reports from Management.

The Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece called on Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell to assume the role of Chair for consideration of the reports where Council exercises its responsibilities under the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

### 6.1 Planning Permit Application TP-2024-902 - 118 Bellair Street, Kensington

The report from management included the following executive summary:

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Future Melbourne Committee of a planning permit application that seeks permission for partial demolition and construction of a two-storey rear addition, reconstruction of the front fence and external painting of the heritage building at 118 Bellair Street, Kensington (refer to Attachment 1 – Locality Map).

2. The proposal seeks to demolish the rear section of the existing house and construction a two-storey extension (refer to Attachment 2 – Plans).

3. The applicant is Terrain Consulting Group. The draftsperson is New Dimension Drafting Pty Ltd. The estimated cost of development is $600,000.

4. The site is located within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone, Schedule 3 and is affected by the Heritage Overlay, HO9 Kensington Precinct.

5. Public notice (advertising) of the application was undertaken. A total of twenty-two objections have been received. Key concerns raised include visual bulk and prominence, off-site amenity impacts (including overshadowing to private open space, overlooking and loss of daylight) and the proposal’s response to heritage and neighbourhood character.

6. The key matters for Councils consideration in the assessment of this application are the mandatory requirements of the zone, heritage, residential amenity and matters raised by objectors.

7. The assessment as set out in the planning report (refer to Attachment 3 Planning Report) outlines that the application is consistent with the relevant provisions and policies of the Melbourne Planning Scheme, achieves an appropriate heritage outcome and will not result in unreasonable off-site amenity impacts.

The following person addressed the Committee and provided an item of correspondence:

- Lorenzo Rigoni, Terrain Consulting Group

Moved: Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee resolves to:

1.1. Issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit subject to the conditions in the planning report (refer to Attachment 3 – Planning Report).

Seconded: Cr Le Liu

The motion was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Voted for Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Dr Guest, Cr Rowse, Cr Griffiths, Cr Liu, Cr Le Liu, Cr Scott, Cr Louey and Cr Camillo

**6.2 Amendment C444melb: Parkville Heritage - Post Exhibition**

The report from management included the following executive summary:

1. Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C444**:** Parkville Heritage (Amendment C444) implements the recommendations of the Parkville Heritage Review, 2023 (the Review) by updating the heritage controls for Parkville in the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

2. On 14 November 2023 the Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) resolved to seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare and publicly exhibit proposed Amendment C444.

3. Amendment C444 was lodged with the Minister for Planning 21 November 2023, and authorisation to commence public exhibition for Amendment C444 was granted on 28 May 2025, subject to conditions.

4. Public exhibition of Amendment C444 occurred between 18 September to 31 October 2025 and 19 submissions were received.

5. Pursuant to section 22 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, a planning authority must consider all submissions. A detailed Overview and Response to Submissions is provided at Attachment 1, and a copy of all submissions is provided at Attachment 2.

6. Nineteen submissions were received, with a mix of support and objections. Supportive submitters sought minor adjustments (e.g., heritage interpretation, recognition of specific sites), while objectors raised concerns about several proposed heritage overlays affecting educational, research and institutional properties.

7. Several changes are recommended in response to submissions, including updates to The Avenue Precinct citation, realignment of the South Parkville (HO4) boundary, applying an individual heritage overlay to part of 30–36 Flemington Road, and preparing a refined building schedule and adjusted curtilage for the Former Commonwealth Serum Laboratories site.

8. Pursuant to section 23 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, a request to refer unresolved submissions to an independent planning panel is recommended.

Items of correspondence were received from:
- Jonathon Meehan, on behalf of Daniel Baird, University of Melbourne
- Racquel Dowell, Zoetis
- Tim Retrot. Taylors Development Services on behalf of Parkvile Property Investments Pty Ltd
- Martin Turnor, Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd.

The following people addressed the Committee:
- Racquel Dowell, Zoetis

- Martin Turnor, Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd

Moved: Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee resolves to:

    1.1. Consider the submissions received following the exhibition of Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C444**:** Parkville Heritage (refer Attachment 2 of the report from management).

    1.2. Endorse the recommended changes to the Amendment and Management Response to individual submissions received in relation to Amendment C444 (refer Attachment 1 of the report from management).

    1.3. Requests the Minister for Planning appoint an independent planning panel to consider submissions referred to it in relation to Amendment C444 in accordance with section 23 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Seconded: Cr Le Liu

The motion was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Voted for Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Dr Guest, Cr Rowse, Cr Griffiths, Cr Liu, Cr Le Liu, Cr Scott, Cr Louey and Cr Camillo

**6.3 City of Melbourne Heritage Strategy 2026: Stories of People and Place**

The report from management included the following executive summary:

1. The purpose of this report is to present the City of Melbourne Heritage Strategy 2026: Stories of people and place (the Strategy) for adoption following community consultation.

2. Council's current Heritage Strategy, developed in 2013, primarily focused on the built environment. Its key objectives were to complete heritage reviews and update the planning scheme to ensure that under-recognised places across the municipality were appropriately identified through the application of the Heritage Overlay. Extensive work has been undertaken since 2013, and the final two neighbourhood heritage reviews are currently underway.

3. The new Strategy seeks to reflect contemporary community values and respond to emerging challenges. It addresses important issues including housing, economic growth, environment, multiculturalism and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.

4. The Strategy will guide Councils approach to heritage and heritage management in the municipality for the next 10 years and inform the future work program for heritage projects. It takes a 'people-centred' approach which seeks to put community values at the core of how heritage is understood and promoted in the municipality.

5. The Strategy includes 5 priority areas. These are: Stewardship, Distinctive places, Aboriginal heritage, Powerful experiences of our multicultural city and Sustainability and environment.

6. The Strategy is a non-statutory document and does not propose new planning controls or changes to planning systems.

7. The draft Strategy was endorsed for public consultation by Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) on 20 August 2024. Consultation ran from 5 May to 16 June 2025. The Participate Melbourne webpage had over 4,900 views and the survey received 341 responses.

8. The Strategy has been updated to reflect feedback heard from stakeholders and the broader community. The Community Consultation Report is at Attachment 2 of this document.

9. The Strategy includes an Implementation Plan which outlines the objectives of the actions in the Strategy and informs their delivery timelines and outcomes. Please see Attachment 1 for the Strategy including the Implementation Plan.

Items of correspondence were received from:

- B McNicholas, Walk in St Kilda Rd & Environs, Planet Ark National Tree Day, Heritage & Lighting expert events, Campaign for World Heritage nomination of Melbourne Observatory, Friends of Melbourne Observatory and Melbourne Melbourne's Domain Parklands
- Mary-Lou Howie, Friends of Queen Victoria Market
- Samantha Westbrooke, National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
- Tristan Davies, Melbourne Heritage Action
- Nicola Smith

The following people addressed the Committee:

- Dr Stan Capp
- B McNicholas.

Moved: Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee resolves to:

1.1. Adopt the City of Melbourne Heritage Strategy 2026: Stories of people and place (Attachment 1 of the report from management) and

1.1.1. Add a new action 1.6, "Implement coordinated strategic oversight and stewardship of all City of Melbourne heritage places and activities by ensuring clear governance, expertise, and integrated processes across Council's planning, design, management and capital works functions." on page 42 of the strategy, with Council's role defined as 'Deliver, Partner and Advocate' and the implementation timeframe to be 'Ongoing'

1.1.2. Direct the final strategy be annexed to the minutes.

1.2. Prioritise "action 2.6" as the key work item for FY2026/27 and request that Management report progress back to Councillors.

1.3. Authorise the General Manager, Planning and Climate Change to make minor editorial changes to City of Melbourne Heritage Strategy 2026: Stories of people and place prior to publication.

Seconded: Cr Le Liu

Amendment 1:

Moved: Cr Liu

To add the following at 1.1.2:

Change "Melbourne is an Aboriginal city" to "Melbourne is a multi-cultural city" on page 34.

Seconded: Cr Camillo

The amendment was withdrawn by the mover.

Amendment 2:

| | |
|---|---|
| Moved: | Cr Liu |
| | To add the following at 1.1.2: |
| | Change “Melbourne is an Aboriginal city” to “Melbourne is a multi-cultural city respecting Aboriginal heritage” on page 34. |
| Seconded: | Cr Camillo |

Cr Le Liu left the meeting at 7.19pm and returned at 7.21pm.

The amendment was put and LOST

| | |
|---|---|
| Voted for | Cr Liu, Cr Camillo, Cr Le Liu and Cr Dr Guest |
| Voted against | Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Olivia Ball, Cr Griffiths, Cr Louey, Cr Rowse and Cr Scott |

Cr Rowse requested his objection to removing “Aboriginal” from the “Aboriginal heritage and future of the city” section be recorded in the minutes.

The substantive motion was put in two parts.

Motion 1:

That the Future Melbourne Committee resolves to prioritise “action 2.6” in the City of Melbourne Heritage Strategy 2026: Stories of People and Place, as the key work item for FY2026/27 and request that Management report progress back to Councillors.

The motion was put and CARRIED

| | |
|---|---|
| Voted for | Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Camillo, Cr Le Liu, Cr Louey, Cr Rowse, and Cr Scott |
| Voted against | Cr Dr Ball, Cr Griffiths, and Cr Liu |

Cr Dr Guest, being present but having abstained from voting, was taken to have voted against the motion.

Motion 2:

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee resolves to:

    1.1. Adopt the City of Melbourne Heritage Strategy 2026: Stories of people and place (Attachment 1 of the report from management) and

        1.1.1. Add a new action 1.6, "Implement coordinated strategic oversight and stewardship of all City of Melbourne heritage places and activities by ensuring clear governance, expertise, and integrated processes across Council’s planning, design, management and capital works functions." on page 42 of the strategy, with Council's role defined as 'Deliver, Partner and Advocate' and the implementation timeframe to be 'Ongoing'

        1.1.2. Authorise the General Manager, Planning and Climate Change to make minor editorial changes to City of Melbourne Heritage Strategy 2026: Stories of people and place prior to publication.

1.1.3. Direct the final strategy be annexed to the minutes.

The motion was put and CARRIED

| | |
|---|---|
| Voted for | Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Griffiths, Cr Le Liu, Cr Louey, Cr Rowse, and Cr Scott |
| Voted against | Cr Liu and Cr Dr Guest |

Cr Camillo, being present but having abstained from voting, was taken to have voted against the motion.

The Lord Mayor resumed the role of Chair.

**6.4 Melbourne Cleaning and Graffiti Management Outcomes and Next Steps**

The report from management included the following executive summary:

1. This paper informs councillors of the actions taken by management in response to the Council resolution at the Future Melbourne Committee meeting on 18 February 2025 regarding Item 6.1, Melbourne Cleaning and Graffiti Management – Outcomes and Next Steps. The resolution of Council required the Chief Executive Officer to report back to Council no later than 28 February 2026.

2. This is further strengthened by the establishment of significant agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the City of Yarra, the M9 councils, and the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS), enabling more efficient and effective graffiti management and improved cost recovery. This approach also supports the “You Spray, You Pay” principle for graffiti management.

3. The report highlights how these measures strengthen service delivery and support Council’s long-term objectives in line with recommendations in the Council Plan 2025-2029.

Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell and Cr Dr Guest left the meeting at 7.53pm.

The Deputy Lord Mayor returned to the meeting at 7.56pm.

Cr Dr Guest returned to the meeting at 7.58pm.

Cr Louey left the meeting at 8.02pm.

The following person addressed the Committee and provided an item of correspondence:
- Tony Penna, Southbank Residents Association

Cr Louey returned to the meeting at 8.06pm.

Moved: Cr Camillo

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee resolves to:

1.1. Note the success of partnerships and working groups established to improve graffiti management, which will continue to operate within the municipality.

1.2. Acknowledge the complexities and challenges following successful trials to establish Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with private third-party asset holders and State Government agencies.

1.3. Acknowledge the new agreement with the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS), which prioritises graffiti offenders to complete their corrections orders within the municipality of Melbourne under DJCS supervision.

1.4. Note the publication of new Graffiti Management FAQs and guidelines for preparing Victim Impact Statements on Council's website.

1.5. Requests management to continue to strengthen engagement with major asset owners, businesses and resident associations to improve coordination, information-sharing and cost recovery in relation to graffiti removal across the municipality.

1.6. Investigate innovative funding mechanisms to strengthen resourcing for enhanced cleaning and graffiti removal within targeted precincts across the municipality.

1.7. Report to Councillors the outcomes in those proceedings in which Council has been involved in providing Victim Impact Statements on a quarterly basis.

1.8. Report to Councillors by 21 April on high-cost graffiti or vandalism cleaning jobs that may be suitable for civil proceedings.

Seconded: Cr Liu

Cr Dr Ball left the meeting at 8.12pm and returned at 8.17pm.

The motion was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Voted for Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Dr Guest, Cr Rowse, Cr Griffiths, Cr Liu, Cr Le Liu, Cr Scott, Cr Louey and Cr Camillo

**6.5 Post travel report - Mission to India November 2025**

The report from management included the following executive summary:

1. At its 2 September 2025 meeting, the Future Melbourne Committee endorsed the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and Councillor Rowse to lead an India Mission (the Mission) from 16 to 23 November 2025.

2. The Mission took place from 16 to 22 November 2025 in Bengaluru, Delhi and Goa. The City of Melbourne partnered with in-country government, industry and community partners to deliver this Mission and drive trade, investment and global leadership outcomes.

3. The Mission was anchored around key in-market events such as the Bengaluru Tech Summit, DIDAC Education Trade Fair, Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry TURF: Global Conference on Business of Sport, and International Film Festival of India/WAVES Film Bazaar. These events were selected to reinforce Melbourne's international relationships, promoted its capabilities in the tech and innovation, higher education, business of sport, tourism and major events, creative and entertainment economy sectors, generate tangible trade and investment outcomes, and amplify Melbourne's profile as a global city.

4. Metrics demonstrate the Mission's broad and tangible success. Over one week, councillors visited 3 cities, delivered 13 speeches, held 3 Heads of Government meetings, visited 5 major companies, signed or witnessed 6 international agreements, supported 5 priority sectors, attended 4 conferences as the Chief Australian representative, undertook 6 site visits and announced 520 new tech and innovation sector jobs with an estimated economic value of over $95 million to the City of Melbourne economy.

Moved: Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece

1. That Future Melbourne Committee resolves to:

1.1. Note the benefits and outcomes of the Mission to India 2025 (refer to Attachment 2 of the report from management).

Seconded: Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell

Cr Camillo left the meeting at 8.21pm and returned at 8.22pm.

The motion was put and CARRIED.

Voted for Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Rowse, Cr Griffiths, Cr Liu, Cr Le Liu, Cr Scott, Cr Louey and Cr Camillo

Cr Dr Guest, being present but having abstained from voting, was taken to have voted against the motion.

**6.6 Post travel report by Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, C40 World Mayors Summit and COP30 Bloomberg Philanthropies Local Leaders Forum, November 2025**

The report from management included the following executive summary:

1. The Lord Mayor travelled to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to participate in the C40 World Mayors Summit (Summit) and COP30 Bloomberg Philanthropies Local Leaders Forum from 3-5 November 2025, at the invitation of COP30 President André Corrêa do Lago, Bloomberg Philanthropies Founder Michael Bloomberg, and C40 Cities Executive Director Mark Watts, who paid the full cost of participation.

2. The Lord Mayor's intensive program included 8 speaking engagements, over 20 bilateral meetings with mayors and senior officials from leading global cities and contributing to the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate Board Meeting, positioning Melbourne as a credible voice in global climate discussions.

3. Melbourne was announced as a founding member of the C40 Cool Cities Accelerator, a new global coalition of 33 cities launched at the Summit to protect residents from extreme heat and redesign cities for a hotter future.

4. The Lord Mayor co-led a landmark initiative with Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego, uniting 10 major cities - including Paris, Portland, Milan, Barcelona, and Athens - to establish principles for sustainable data centres and AI infrastructure, reinforcing the role of city leadership in advancing sustainable technology and climate-aligned digital infrastructure.

5. The Lord Mayor showcased the city’s investment in green spaces and renewable energy with the mayoral yearly offer of action on the main stage in opening remarks to all delegates. Melbourne also signed the COP30 Local Leaders Joint Outcome Statement, ensuring city climate priorities on urban resilience, renewable energy, and climate financing were represented in global advocacy ahead of COP30 negotiations.

6. The Summit strengthened Melbourne's international networks and created opportunities for climate finance partnerships, knowledge exchange with peer cities, and positioning Melbourne as an attractive destination for climate technology innovation and future international climate events.

Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece declared a material conflict of interest in this matter pursuant to section 128 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Governance Rules. The Lord Mayor is a beneficiary of the travel. The Lord Mayor left the meeting at 8.31pm prior to any discussion taking place.

In the absence of the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell assumed the role of Chair.

Moved: Cr Griffiths

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee resolves to:

1.1. Note the outcomes and benefits of the 2025 C40 World Mayors Summit and COP30 Bloomberg Philanthropies Local Leaders Forum.

1.2. Note that the cost to City of Melbourne associated with the Lord Mayor's participation was $1915 and approves coverage of the variance amount of $765.

Seconded: Cr Dr Ball

The motion was put and CARRIED

Voted for Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Rowse, Cr Griffiths, Cr Liu, Cr Le Liu, Cr Scott, Cr Louey and Cr Camillo

Cr Dr Guest, being present but having abstained from voting, was taken to have voted against the motion.

The Lord Mayor returned to the meeting at 8.35pm and resumed the role of Chair.

Cr Scott left the meeting at 8.35pm.

## 7 General Business

There were four items of general business.

### 7.1 Notice of Motion, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell: Fairer Melbourne – Better Early Years

The following person addressed the Committee:
- Aaron Moon.

Cr Le Liu left the meeting at 8.40pm.

Cr Scott returned to the meeting at 8.40pm.

Moved: Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee:

1.1. Notes that local councils play a significant role in improving community health and wellbeing and that the role is recognised through the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.

1.2. Notes Council's existing commitments in the Council Plan 2025–2029 to a healthy, fair and inclusive city including to:

1.2.1. all people in the City of Melbourne deserve the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and to strengthening their health and wellbeing so they can thrive through all stages of life;

1.2.2. health equity and delivery of strong health outcomes regardless of an individual's financial position;

1.2.3. increasing access to family violence support and prevention initiatives;

1.2.4. increasing access to nutritious and affordable food; and supporting culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

1.3. Recognises that:

1.3.1. local government plays a key role in delivering and coordinating universal and targeted services for children and families, including immunisation, maternal and child health, parenting services (such as

playgroups), early childhood education through children's centres, libraries, community hubs and family violence support and prevention services;

1.3.2. early childhood development from birth to 8 years but particularly 0-5 years is critical for lifelong physical and mental wellbeing and learning;

1.3.3. approximately 22% of children start school developmentally vulnerable in Victoria and the rate is even higher at 24% in the City of Melbourne;

1.3.4. early literacy and language development strongly influences educational, social and economic outcomes; and

1.3.5. families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those experiencing family violence and households on low income may face additional barriers to attaining strong early years development outcomes.

1.4. Requests the Chief Executive Officer undertake a review, including by reference to best international models, to be reported to Councillors within 2 months (for the purpose of informing the next Annual Plan and Budget) addressing how the City of Melbourne can:

1.4.1. improve early years literacy outcomes through existing services such as maternal and child health services, parenting services (such as Access to Early Learning and Playgroups), early childhood education, and libraries;

1.4.2. increase levels of physical activity in the early years;

1.4.3. increase access to family violence support and prevention programs through Family and Children's Services, or other council assets and resources;

1.4.4. increase access to nutritious and affordable food through Family and Children's Services (including maternal and child health services) or other council assets and resources;

1.4.5. explore resources, partnerships, innovative diagnostic tools and pathways to the provision of timely access to early years interventions for children with developmental delays including considering provision at maternal and child health centres; and

1.4.6. increase support for families to empower them with knowledge and resources (for example nutritious food, books, play based learning toys) to deliver a family-centred approach to improved developmental outcomes.

1.5. Requests that the review includes a summary of:

1.5.1. current City of Melbourne, State Government and not-for-profit programs that address the outcomes in paragraph 4, participation patterns, identified gaps and areas for improvement; and

1.5.2. touch points that the City of Melbourne has with children 0-5 years old (e.g. Immunisation services, library story time, playgroups) and a desktop review of the touch points that other local governments domestically and internationally have that may influence the outcomes in paragraph 4.

1.6. Requests that the review considers how equality of access can be embedded within Council's strategic frameworks.

Seconded: Cr Liu

Cr Le Liu returned to the meeting at 8.43pm.

Cr Dr Guest left the meeting at 8.44pm and returned at 8.46pm.

The motion was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Voted for Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Dr Guest, Cr Rowse, Cr Griffiths, Cr Liu, Cr Le Liu, Cr Scott, Cr Louey and Cr Camillo

**7.2 Notice of Motion, Cr Philip Le Liu: Supporting the 40th anniversary of the 2026 Melbourne Writers Festival**

Moved: Cr Le Liu

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
    1.1. Acknowledges that Australia's literary and festival sector is facing ongoing financial and delivery pressures, with rising operating costs and changing sponsorship and philanthropic support placing strain on major cultural events and institutions across the country.
    1.2. Notes the recent cancellation of Adelaide Writers' Week and the adverse impact on the literary community and recognises that the 2026 Melbourne Writers' Festival presents a timely opportunity to promote and celebrate creative writing.
    1.3. Affirms Council's support for Melbourne's literary ecosystem, including writers, readers, libraries, bookshops, publishers, schools, community groups, and festivals, recognising their contribution to Melbourne's liveability, education, cultural participation, and night-time economy.
    1.4. Notes the upcoming 40th anniversary of the Melbourne Writers' Festival in May 2026 as a timely opportunity to showcase Melbourne's identity as a City of Literature through a visible and inclusive program of city-wide activations.
    1.5. Requests management to allocate $20,000 towards the use of Melbourne Town Hall facilities for a special 40th birthday celebration event delivered as part of the 2026 Melbourne Writers' Festival.
    1.6. Requests management to support the festival's major milestone through in-kind support, including visible promotion of the festival across the city, as determined by management
    1.7. Given that future Melbourne Writers' Festivals will suffer without Writers Victoria, Australian Poetry and Express Media, especially their support for early and mid-career writers, editors and poets, asks the CEO to write to the Victorian Premier and Minister for Creative Industries urging the restoration of multi-year state funding to these organisations, which, if withdrawn, would make Victoria the only mainland state in Australia without a state-funded peak body supporting writers.

Seconded: Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece

The motion was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Voted for Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Dr Guest, Cr Rowse, Cr Griffiths, Cr Liu, Cr Le Liu, Cr Scott, Cr Louey and Cr Camillo

### 7.3 Notice of Motion, Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece: Commonwealth Defence Estate Divestment Opportunities (Southbank and Carlton)

The following people addressed the Committee and provided items of correspondence:

- Tony Penna, Southbank Residents Association
- David Hamilton, Southbank3006
- Natalie Roberts, Southbank Royale Owners Corporation.

Moved: Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
    1.1. Requests management to:
        1.1.1. Develop options for the potential future uses of the Victoria Barracks Melbourne site (5.7 hectares), Repatriation Clinic – 310 St Kilda Rd (0.17 hectares) and the Carlton Training Depot (0.26 hectares) should they become available for acquisition or partnership opportunities, including: opportunities for community infrastructure, potential to enhance open space and public realm, opportunities for heritage-led adaptive reuse, alignment with Council's draft Community Infrastructure Plan and long-term precinct planning.
        1.1.2. Provide advice on the land use and built form controls that should apply to the identified Defence Estate sites once they are no longer owned or used by the Commonwealth for Defence purposes.
        1.1.3. Prepare an initial assessment of the potential community, economic, cultural, environmental and civic benefits that could be realised should the Victoria Barracks Melbourne site, Repatriation Clinic – 310 St Kilda Rd and the Carlton Training Depot become available, including identifying gaps in community infrastructure across the St Kilda Road–Southbank–Domain Precinct and the Carlton Precinct; and
        1.1.4. Report back to Councillors:
            1.1.4.1. On the role of City of Melbourne and its partnership with the Commonwealth Government throughout the Defence Estate divestment process, including anticipated timeline.
            1.1.4.2. With findings and recommended next steps within six months, or earlier should new information become available.
    1.2. Notes the draft Community Infrastructure Plan, which identifies the Victoria Barracks Melbourne site as a significant longer-term opportunity should it become available, with potential to deliver much needed community infrastructure and expanded open space consistent with the City of Melbourne's Open Space Strategy (2024). The Open Space Strategy highlights the site (or the VCA site) as a priority location for a 1–3-hectare neighbourhood open space offering play areas, informal courts, exercise equipment and barbeques.
    1.3. Notes Council undertook preliminary work to understand the feasibility of acquiring 310 St Kilda Road after being approached by ANVAM and the Department of Defence in April 2021. At the Council meeting on 26 October 2021, Councillors resolved not to proceed with the purchase because no State or Federal funding commitments were available to meet the significant site remediation costs estimated around $21 million and ongoing management costs. Without this external support, the acquisition posed an unacceptable financial risk for Council.

1.4. Requests the Lord Mayor write to the Minister for Defence, the Minister for Finance, the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, the Minister for Housing, the State Minister for Planning, and the Members for Melbourne and Macnamara, expressing Council's interest in working collaboratively with both the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments on future planning for the identified Defence Estate assets to ensure any future use reflects the needs of the City of Melbourne community.

Seconded: Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell

The motion was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Voted for Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Dr Guest, Cr Rowse, Cr Griffiths, Cr Liu, Cr Le Liu, Cr Scott, Cr Louey and Cr Camillo

**7.4 Petition: Residents opposition to Hawke St greening concepts**

Moved: Cr Camillo

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee resolves:
   1.1. To receive and note:
      1.1.1. The hard copy petition received on 12 February 2026 from the Hawke Street Residents "opposing Council's Hawke Street greening concept"
      1.1.2. The online petition created on 30 January 2026 to "Have Melbourne City Council green Hawke Street's South Side"
   1.2. To refer the petitions to the General Manager Infrastructure and Amenity
   1.3. That the first named signatory to the petitions will receive a written response in due course advising of Council's action in response to the request.

Seconded: Cr Dr Guest

The motion was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Voted for Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Dr Guest, Cr Rowse, Cr Griffiths, Cr Liu, Cr Le Liu, Cr Scott, Cr Louey and Cr Camillo

## 8 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

## 9 Public Questions

There were six public questions.

Below is a summary of public questions and responses. The full question time can be heard in the live stream recording of the meeting on Council's website at https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/meeting/future-melbourne-committee-17-february-2026

Cr Dr Guest retired from the meeting at 9.20pm.

Bike Lane Infrastructure

Aaron Moon asked a question to the Lord Mayor as Infrastructure Portfolio Lead, how the City intends to leverage the State election year to secure faster approvals and stronger commitments from the State Government to accelerate the roll-out of the protected bike network 2030 program.

The Lord Mayor thanked Aaron for the question and responded by advising of current works taking place rolling out bike lanes on St Kilda Road which has been funded by the Victorian Government. The Lord Mayor went on to advise that the City of Melbourne is in the process of finalising its advocacy strategy for the election year and this will be publicly communicated in a transparent way, and noted local infrastructure will be a feature of that work.

Victoria Barracks

Callum asked if Council had determined a position on the sale of the Victoria Barracks.

The Lord Mayor advised the decision made by the Future Melbourne Committee earlier in the meeting, requests management to provide further information to Council, to enable Council to determine in due course if a position will be taken.

Questions from Dr Kate Kennedy, Kensington Association

The Lord Mayor advised that a written response would be provided to the four questions from Dr Kate Kennedy following the meeting.

Cr Dr Ball requested the questions be included in the minutes in full.

The questions submitted by Dr Kate Kennedy read as follows:

*The Kensington Association made submissions about Racecourse Road at the previous two FMC meetings, in December and February. The Committee did not consider those submissions or the issues raised within them. We wish to press the council for answers to the questions raised in our February submission.*

1. *The 3 February FMC report stated that the Department of Transport and Planning is seeking a net reduction of tram stops on Racecourse Road, and that the new tram stop to be built near Coronet Street will not be fully accessible. The Racecourse Road Strategic Implementation Plan did not anticipate reductions in the number of tram stops, but it did anticipate that all new tram stops will become fully accessible. Can the Council please tell us more about what it knows about the Department's plans, and explain what it intends to do to influence those plans, in order to ensure full accessibility?*

2. *The 3 February FMC report mentioned safety improvements to Racecourse Road to commence in November 2026 as part of Flemington public housing renewal. Can we seek an assurance that the Council is advocating for improvements in line with the Strategic Improvements Plan, including for safe and physically separated bicycle lanes on both sides of Racecourse Road in this section, given how unsafe the current arrangement is with painted bike lanes that stop and start intermittently amid four-lane traffic?*

3. *The FMC resolved in July 2025 to call for the February 2026 report, and to endorse the Racecourse Road Strategic Improvements Plan Advocacy Plan. However, no provisions have been made for further public updates after the 3 February meeting, and the Advocacy Plan was never published on the Council's website. Given how much is happening, and the need to understand the conclusions of the upcoming Movement and Place assessment of Racecourse Road, and the potential for major changes to Racecourse Road in late 2026, will you please commit to bringing another report to FMC with a general update and the findings of the Movement and Place assessment in the second half of 2026?*

4. *And will you please publish the endorsed Advocacy Plan on the council's website, alongside the Racecourse Road Strategic Improvements Plan?*

## 10 Closure of Meeting

The Lord Mayor declared the meeting closed to the public at 9.25pm.

To be confirmed at the meeting of the Future Melbourne Committee on Tuesday 3 March 2026.

Chair
Future Melbourne Committee

# CITY OF MELBOURNE HERITAGE STRATEGY 2026

## STORIES OF PEOPLE AND PLACE




CITY OF MELBOURNE

## Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection they maintained to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to walking together to build a better future.

## Melbourne's 2050 vision

# Liveable Melbourne, growing stronger together




For more information please visit **melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan-vision**

# Contents


**1. Foreword** 6

**2. Introduction** 7

**3. Heritage snapshot** 9

**6. Why heritage?** 13

*6.1 What is heritage?* 13

*6.2 What can heritage do for us?* 13

*6.3 Heritage, wellbeing and sustainable development* 14

**7. Our role** 15

*7.1 What is our role in heritage?* 15

**8. Creating the strategy** 17

*8.1 What have we achieved?* 17

*8.2 A snapshot of changes to local heritage controls since 2013* 18

*8.3 Why do we need a new strategy?* 20

*8.4 Who has been involved?* 20

*8.5 Project methodology* 21

*8.6 What we heard from our community* 22

*8.7 Making the link to other plans* 24

**9. Mission and approach** 25

*9.1 Mission* 25

*9.2 A people-centred approach* 26

*9.3 A whole-of-City-of-Melbourne approach* 26

Six ways of working 26

**10. Our priorities** 28

*10.1 Stewardship* 28

The value of stewardship 28

Opportunities and challenges 28

Our priority 29

*10.2 Distinctive places* 30

How heritage can create distinctive places and neighbourhoods 30

Opportunities and challenges 31

Our priority 32

*10.3 Aboriginal heritage* 33

Aboriginal heritage and the future of the city 33

Opportunities and challenges 34

Our priority 35

*10.4 Powerful experiences of our multicultural city* 36

How heritage interpretation creates powerful experiences in our multicultural city 36

Opportunities and challenges 37

Our priority 38

*10.5 Sustainability and environment* 39

How heritage can help address sustainability and the environment 39
Opportunities and challenges 40
Our priority 40

**11. Implementation plan 41**

Priority 1: Stewardship 41
Priority 2: Distinctive Places Priority 42
Priority 3: Aboriginal Heritage Priority Area 44
Priority 4: Powerful Experiences of our Multicultural City 46
Priority 5: Sustainability and environment 48

**12. Glossary 50**

**13. Bibliography 51**

# 1. Foreword

The rise and rise of Melburnians' appreciation for our heritage buildings and places is a wonderful thing. Our hearts have been captured by documentaries like *The Lost City of Melbourne*, books like Robyn Annear's *Whelan the Wrecker,* and a blossoming of social media accounts lovingly dedicated to streetscapes of Melbourne past.

As a result, more of us than ever are celebrating and cherishing our city's incredible heritage architecture and also mourning its losses.

City of Melbourne's Heritage Strategy 2026 was created in consultation with you, the people who care so deeply about our city's unique and remarkable character. Thank you to everyone who told us what they value.

This Strategy provides a clear guide for preserving the very best of our urban environment for the next ten years and beyond. It helps to ensure future generations need never lament the destruction of our treasured buildings, places and traditions.

Melbourne's heritage is for everyone to enjoy. That's why this Strategy takes existing protections even further by telling the many stories of Melbourne's people in all their diversity – including Aboriginal people, whose perspective is central to our heritage vision.

Protecting our past is also vital to our economy, particularly for tourism and creative industries. And by extending the lives of buildings and trees, we help mitigate the climate emergency.

It's a joy and an honour to live alongside you in a city with such a rich legacy. We have lost so much. But we have saved a lot as well. At Council, we work hard every day to preserve that legacy for the next generation of Melburnians.

Nick Reece

Lord Mayor

# 2. Introduction

This is our new Heritage Strategy for the City of Melbourne. The strategy sets a new direction, based on a broad, people-centred and city-wide approach to cultural heritage.

As our city continues to grow and change, we are challenged to find new and more creative ways to honour and care for people's heritage, while also responding to the evolving needs of our community. Our city is a welcoming place for people from a wide range of backgrounds, and our heritage strategy reflects this diversity. Australia's story is made up of multiple threads: the deep and continuous First Nations history, the British and Commonwealth influences that have shaped many of our institutions and the rich contributions from our multicultural communities that evolve our identity daily. These threads intertwine to create a layered and interconnected story that informs who we are today and who we are becoming.

We have taken the opportunity to review our achievements since the last strategy was published in 2013 and consider some of the challenges ahead. We are proud of to have achieved a series of comprehensive Heritage Reviews for our neighbourhoods, an updated heritage protection system and the first online map of Aboriginal Melbourne; working with Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with connections to the City of Melbourne to capture the places and landmarks that hold special significance.

Our city has significantly changed since 2013, and we need to reconsider our priorities in light of the major challenges that we face. In this strategy, we outline five priorities for our work on heritage:

- Stewardship
- Distinctive places
- Aboriginal heritage
- Powerful experiences of our multicultural city
- Sustainability and environment

*Plan on a page*

# PLAN ON A PAGE

## HOW DO WE DEFINE HERITAGE?

| Activities | | Assets | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Active involvement | Engagement | Tangible heritage assets | Intangible heritage assets |

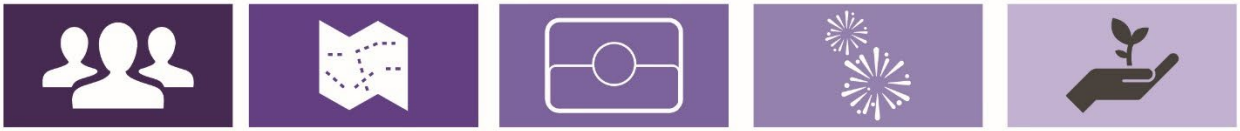


## MISSION

*The City of Melbourne embraces a broad, people-centred, city-wide approach to cultural heritage that is respectful and informed, inclusive, integrated and collaborative, and recognises the long-term contribution heritage can make to the city's future.*

## OUR PRIORITIES

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stewardship | Distinctive places | Aboriginal heritage | Powerful experiences of our multicultural city | Sustainability and environment |



## OUR WAYS OF WORKING



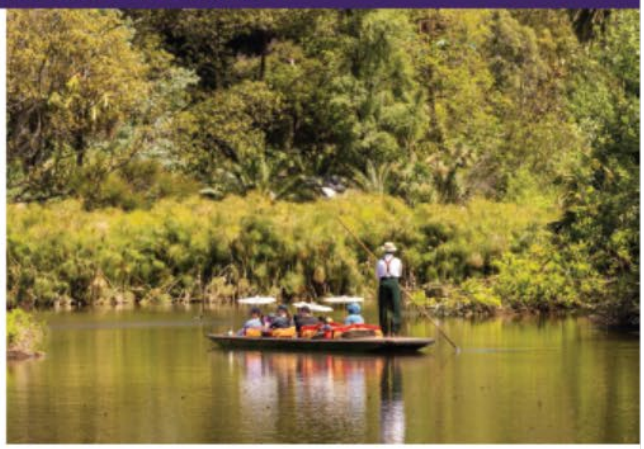
Long-term and sustainable | Respectful and informed | Collaborative | Integrated | Inclusive | Self determination

# 3. Heritage snapshot

We have compiled an overview of the rich diversity of the City of Melbourne's heritage, including some of the people and organisations involved.

## HERITAGE PLACES IN THE CITY OF MELBOURNE





**740** Locally protected heritage places and precincts

**332** Victorian Heritage Register places





**8** National Heritage List Places

**1** UNESCO World Heritage site Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens

### Our heritage listings include:



*Aboriginal heritage*

Vast areas of cultural heritage sensitivity across the municipality have been identified, which may contain Aboriginal heritage. The local Heritage Overlay lists three places as Aboriginal heritage places and many more potential places have been identified through our recent heritage reviews. Mapping Aboriginal Melbourne, an interactive digital map developed with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities, maps places of Aboriginal historical and cultural significance within the municipality.




Top left: *Birrarung Wilam (Common Ground)*, 2006, Vicki Couzens (Kirrae Whurrong/Gunditjmara), Lee Darroch (Yorta Yorta, Mutti Mutti and Trawlwoolway) and Treahna Hamm (Yorta Yorta), location – ArtPlay, Birrarung Marr
Top right: Smoking ceremony at narrm ngarrgu Library and Family Services, Munro development, 2024

### Parks and gardens

The City of Melbourne has nearly 480 hectares of internationally acclaimed parks and gardens. Most of our 14 major parks and gardens have some form of heritage protection or include important cultural assets, such as the World Heritage-listed Carlton Gardens and Royal Exhibition Building. While not all are heritage-listed, smaller local parks and reserves also add definitive character to our neighbourhoods. Many trees on private properties and in public spaces have heritage protection.



### Heritage buildings as creative hubs and exhibition and community spaces

City of Melbourne manages galleries, exhibition spaces and studio spaces, some of which are housed in historic buildings. For example, the Meat Market is an iconic heritage-listed building, which provides a hub for creative arts and cultural productions. A former railway signal box houses the Signal creative hub, while other historic buildings such as Kathleen Syme Library, Kensington Town Hall, Boyd Community Hub and Melbourne Town Hall provide public facilities and host exhibitions and events.



### Heritage fleet

Melbourne is home to a significant number of historic vessels and replicas of historic ships. The heritage fleet comprises the Alma Doepel, Enterprize, Steam Tug Wattle, Polly Woodside and the Mission to Seafarers building, which opens vessels to the public and provides sailing experiences. The Australian Register of Heritage Vessels includes many other historic vessels with connections to Melbourne.

### Our collections

Our City Collection is an eclectic and important range of cultural material, comprising 8000 items from public art and memorials to historical artefacts, photography and more. The City Gallery at Melbourne Town Hall presents frequent exhibitions on city life past and present. Specialist curators collaborate with artists and filmmakers to offer intriguing views of Melbourne life. Our seven public libraries provide physical and digital resources to help visitors explore the history of their house, create a family tree, research history, or simply browse. The libraries also offer interactive self-guided walks and access to various exhibits.



### Languages and cultural diversity

Melbourne is home to one of the most multicultural communities in Australia. More than half of residents were born overseas and use a language other than English at home. The city's residents speak more than 100 languages and come from around 140 different cultures.
Cultural diversity is also celebrated within our streetscapes. Chinatown and Lygon Street boast a rich and long-standing history of migration to the municipality. Chinatown was first protected over 40 years ago and today maintains a vibrant and ever-evolving network of colourful traditional signage, food and cultural events.

**People and organisations**

Many other people and organisations are involved in heritage in the municipality.

- **Owners and occupiers** – The majority of protected heritage places are owned or occupied by individual householders. Others are owned or occupied by businesses or not-for-profit organisations. A relatively small percentage of heritage assets are open to the public – the majority are in everyday use as residences, business premises or public services.
- **Volunteers** – Heritage relies heavily on volunteers. Approximately 14 per cent of people in the municipality volunteer, although we don't know how many of those volunteer for heritage activities.
- **Heritage organisations, museums and galleries** – Melbourne hosts a range of museums, galleries and heritage visitor attractions, including the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne Immigration Museum, Melbourne Museum, National Gallery of Victoria, Shrine of Remembrance and the Old Treasury Building Museum.
- **Community** – Many passionate local organisations advocate for community heritage including a wide range of Aboriginal community organisations, six historical societies including the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 16 resident and community groups and the Genealogical Society of Victoria, which represents 46 member societies. A range of other not-for-profit organisations look after cultural heritage, often opening it up to the public by providing exhibitions and heritage experiences. These include the National Trust (Victoria), which opens places like Old Melbourne Gaol to the public for interactive tours. Working Heritage manages 16 sites across Victoria, including several in our municipality. There are many other wonderful museums and heritage attractions across the city.






# 6. Why heritage?

## 6.1 What is heritage?

Heritage shapes our neighbourhoods and the places where we work and play. It is beneath our feet and all around us. The often-untold stories of the people of Melbourne are written in buildings, streets and open spaces. Food, cultural traditions, languages, stories and memories are also part of our heritage. Heritage contributes to the distinctiveness that makes Melbourne special and is core to the cultural diversity of our city.

The word heritage can be confusing. Is it just buildings that are formally protected under heritage and planning legislation? Or does it go beyond that?

Our new strategy starts with a very broad view of heritage, defining it as the things people care about and want to hand on to the future. It is inspired by the Aboriginal philosophy of caring for Country, and the idea that if we care for Country, Country will look after us.

This document uses the terms ‘heritage’ and ‘cultural heritage’ interchangeably. Although Victorian heritage legislation distinguishes Aboriginal cultural heritage from other heritage, this strategy takes an integrated approach to the term.

This broad view includes physical places, landscapes and buildings, collections and other physical things that matter to us, as well as intangible stories and memories. While all of these may be important to people, only some are formally protected.

Heritage is also something that we experience. Festivals and activities such as Open House Melbourne, NAIDOC Week events or Lunar New Year events bring people together to encounter cultural heritage. Museums, libraries, public parks and cultural hubs all provide ways to engage with our past.

Heritage activities can also be the things we do in our own lives when we research, share, protect or advocate for history, tradition or our own heritage. Perhaps you have researched your family history, restored a much-loved object, building or vehicle, or belong to one of Melbourne’s many active historical societies, or community, multicultural and neighbourhood groups, or heritage technology groups?

## 6.2 What can heritage do for us?

So why does heritage matter? Heritage can be seen as a luxury, or, sometimes, an impediment to growth.

Yet comprehending our heritage and history is vital to understanding, inclusion and belonging. All who live and work in the municipality encounter heritage in our daily lives. Heritage experiences can impact people in many different ways, perhaps through encountering new or surprising stories. Heritage can bring people together, but it also has the potential to divide us.

Caring for heritage can also deliver wider public benefits. Older buildings are an important carbon sink and reusing them can contribute to decarbonisation. Heritage activities can foster social connections and new skills; seeing one’s heritage and stories reflected in the city can create a powerful sense of belonging and inclusion. Heritage makes the places people live, work and visit distinctive and special.

Heritage sectors (for example, museums and architecture) are a key part of the creative industries which play an important role in Victoria’s economy, contributing $38.5 billion as a whole in the financial year ending 2022. International research has also shown that creative businesses located in historic places can be more successful than those located elsewhere.

Heritage is a large contributor to Melbourne’s visitor economy. Melbourne is considered Australia’s capital for culture and history, which are major drivers of visitation. Individual heritage sites are core to the visitor experience, such as Old Melbourne Gaol, the Queen Victoria Market, or Federation Square – Melbourne’s premier meeting place, visitor destination and event location. More than one in four international tourists to Melbourne visit historic or heritage buildings.

## 6.3 Heritage, wellbeing and sustainable development

Cultural heritage can also play an important role in wellbeing and sustainable development. There is a move toward placing people's wellbeing at the heart of our thinking about the economy and how society functions now and in the future. Heritage can contribute to wellbeing through both caring for heritage assets and engaging in heritage activities.

Sustainable development meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Cities around the world are now promoting culture as part of sustainability, noting that the arts, culture, and heritage can contribute to sustainable development in their own right and by contributing to other goals.

City of Melbourne recognises the importance of sustainability – how we balance ecological, social and economic factors in order to protect the planet, halt climate change and promote social development for present and future generations. We were one of the first cities to sign up to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and create a Voluntary Local Review of our progress towards them. The review provides a guiding framework for us to assess how we are tackling global challenges with local action – to end poverty, protect the planet and support peace and prosperity by 2030. Heritage can contribute to our efforts to achieve a number of the SDGs.

*Heritage and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*



# 7. Our role

## 7.1 What is our role in heritage?

As a local government authority, City of Melbourne provides municipal services for our community, including planning, community services, recreation and arts and culture.

Heritage is relevant to many aspects of this work, including:

- Strategic projects: we take an active role in shaping Melbourne's future through city-shaping initiatives such as the Greenline Project, where heritage is core to the creative design approach. These projects celebrate Melbourne's identity as a proudly multicultural city, recognising the many cultural traditions, stories and design influences that make the city unique.

- Planning services: heritage is part of the wider role we play in both strategic and statutory planning processes. As the local planning authority, we work in partnership with communities from diverse cultural backgrounds to research, identify, protect and manage heritage across the municipality. We keep the local Heritage Overlay up to date so it reflects expert knowledge, contemporary community values and Melbourne's evolving multicultural identity. As the responsible authority for most planning permits, we ensure heritage is given due weight in decisions that support a thriving, inclusive city and deliver net community benefit.

- Support for Aboriginal cultural heritage: we are committed to working with Traditional Owners and other First Nations people connected to Melbourne to ensure First Nations heritage continues to enrich the city and is respected in planning and development processes. Aboriginal cultural heritage is central to Melbourne's identity and contributes to the broader story of a diverse, multicultural city.

- Cultural and community services:heritage activities underpin many of our cultural and community services, including arts services, libraries, public programs and events. These programs celebrate Melbourne's diverse communities, showcasing their histories, languages, traditions and creative expressions as an integral part of the city's heritage.

- Property management services – we maintain and manage a wide range of heritage places and items, including parks, buildings, collections and public art.These are accessible to the public and reflect our city's layered history. Many of these places highlight the contributions of Melbourne's culturally diverse communities.

- Support for heritage owners: we support heritage owners through the Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund and by providing advice and information, such as the recent Heritage Owner's Guide. We work closely with owners to ensure that diverse cultural stories and built forms are preserved and celebrated into the future.

*Heritage organisations and their responsibilities*

# HERITAGE AND LEVELS OF RESPONSIBILITY

| | Organisation | Responsible for... | Authority |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | **Community and local heritage groups** | Providing input and guidance on the identification, protection and celebration of heritage places and objects of significance. Through engagement, these groups can provide much-needed information on the value of these places at the local level. | Local / Regional |
| | **Registered Aboriginal Parties** | Representing the Traditional Owners of particular lands throughout Victoria. These owners act as the primary source of knowledge and guidance on matters relating to Aboriginal places or objects and speak on matters of management and protection within their lands. | |
| | **Local council** | The identification, protection, management and celebration of heritage places and objects that are of significance to their community. Councils identify places of significance, list them in the local Heritage Overlay and manage changes through planning permit applications. | |
|  | **Department of Transport and Planning** | Administer any changes to the Planning Scheme including the local Heritage Overlay and local Heritage Policies. | Victoria |
| | **Heritage Victoria** | Recommend places for the Victorian Heritage Register and Victorian Inventory and manage changes to these places though heritage permit applications. | |
| | **Heritage Council of Victoria** | Decide which recommended places should be included on the Victorian Heritage Register and review permit decisions made by Heritage Victoria. | |
| | **Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council** | The obligations of the state under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, seeking to represent the Reconciliation Action Plans, return First Nations ancestors to Country, protect secret and sacred objects and provide advice to federal and state authorities on Aboriginal cultural heritage. | |
| | **First Peoples State Relations (FPSR)** | Victorian Government branch working with Traditional Owners on cultural heritage management and the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria on treaty negotiations. FSPR are also involved in the State response to the Yoo-rrook Justice Commission, and provide support to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council. | |
| | **National Trust of Australia (Victoria)** | Advocates to protect heritage through restoration, management and research. The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) operates a number of historic places across the state for visitors to experience. The National Trust of Australia is the national body representing each state and territory National Trust and advocates for improved heritage funding and policy outcomes. | |
|  | **The Uluru Dialogue** | Represents the cultural authority of, and leads education on, the Uluru Statement from the Heart. | National |
| | **Australian Heritage Council** | Advises the Minister for the Environment in making recommendations to the National Heritage Register. | |
|  | **UNESCO** | Identification, protection and preservation of sites deemed to be of "outstanding value to humanity". | International |
| | **International Council on Monuments and Sites** | Advocates for the protection of cultural heritage places internationally through providing research and guidance for conservation and management. | |
| | **United Nations** | Support the implementation and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals that aim to provide peace and prosperity for all people and protect our environment. | |

# 8. Creating the strategy

## 8.1 What have we achieved?

Our last heritage strategy was published in 2013. It focused on heritage protection, including managing our extensive heritage information, creating new ways to protect heritage, looking after our existing heritage and celebrating and communicating heritage in partnership with the community and other stakeholders. The significant amount of work done since 2013 ensures the future growth of the city will be informed by its distinctive heritage.

We are proud that we have achieved much of what we set out to do. We commissioned a series of neighbourhood heritage reviews, which captured what is special and distinctive about each of our local areas. These reviews included investigating previously unloved or under-protected heritage, such as modernist buildings. The table at Section 8.2 shows the status of our heritage reviews. All of the reviews recommend changes to our heritage controls, and some of these changes are still being progressed through Planning Scheme Amendments.

In the last two years alone, our Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund has helped 36 heritage building owners to repair their buildings in order to help keep them in use. We updated our system of categorising heritage places and introduced a new policy to guide the development of heritage places, which applies to all new heritage planning permit applications. We created a Heritage Design Guide to provide simple advice for developers and key stakeholders. Our Heritage Owner's Guide helps owners understand how they can maintain, change or develop heritage buildings. We have improved the way we identify, assess and document gaps in the recording of items and places of cultural and natural heritage significance. Our art and heritage collection at Town Hall is now publicly accessible, helping everyone access, understand and celebrate parts of Melbourne's history and heritage.

We have also pioneered a new collaborative approach toward heritage studies through the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review co-research model. It sets a methodology for identifying places of significance to Aboriginal people and how these places can be protected, working with Traditional Owners to better understand their connections and stories.

The Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan was published in 2015. It has directed our work with Traditional Owners to create an online map of Aboriginal Melbourne – which establishes a vital starting point for telling stories and planning for the future – as well as many projects that celebrate Melbourne as an Aboriginal place, including narrm ngarrgu Library and Family Services.




*Linda, Library Branch and Community Heritage Team Leader, standing at the front of the Boyd Community Hub in Southbank*

## 8.2 A snapshot of changes to local heritage controls since 2013

The 2013 Heritage Strategy commissioned a series of heritage reviews. Since 2013, the Council has overseen a rolling program of suburb-by-suburb heritage reviews and other policy changes, to ensure that contemporary understandings about where heritage fabric exists are reflected in the Melbourne Planning Scheme. Prior to these reviews, most parts of the municipality were relying on heritage studies completed in the 1980s.

The most significant local heritage related changes to the planning scheme are shown in the table below:

*City of Melbourne's heritage review history and completion dates*

| Heritage Review | Planning Scheme Amendment | Gazetted date* / Other status |
|---|---|---|
| Central City Heritage Review Part 1 | C186Ptl | 2013 |
| Kensington Heritage Review | C215 | 2015 |
| City North Heritage Review | C198 | 2015 |
| Arden-Macaulay Heritage Review | C207 | 2016 |
| Central City Heritage Review Part 2 | C186Pt2 | 2016 |
| Guildford And Hardware Lanes Heritage Review | C271 | 2019 |
| Local Heritage Policy Review | C258 | 2020 |
| Heritage Gradings Conversion Part 1 | C258 | 2020 |
| West Melbourne Heritage Review | C258 | 2020 |
| Southbank Heritage Review | C305 | 2021 |
| Fishermans Bend Heritage Review | C394 | 2022 |
| Hoddle Grid Heritage Review | C387 | 2022 |
| Heritage Gradings Conversion Part 2 | C396 | 2022 |
| North Melbourne Heritage Review | C403 | 2023 |
| Carlton Heritage Review | C405 | 2023 |
| South Yarra Heritage Review | C426 | 2025 |
| Parkville Heritage Review | C444 | On public exhibition, 2025 |
| East Melbourne Heritage Review | - | Review completed, 2025 |

** Date gazetted into the planning scheme*

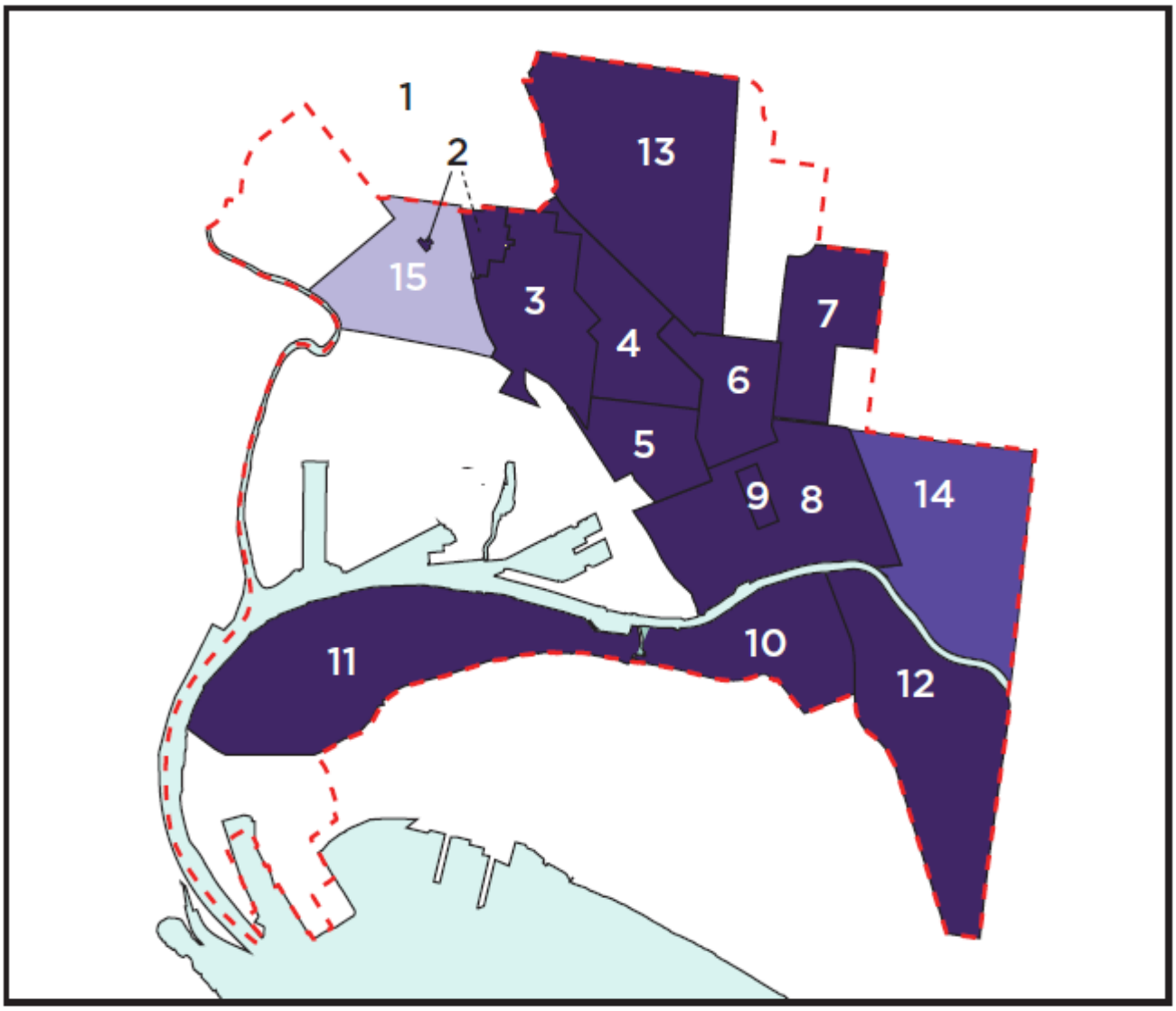
Planning scheme amendments are not retrospective, in that they do not alter planning permissions already granted. As such, it takes some time for any changes to heritage policies and controls to take effect. This is particularly true of the changes to the local heritage policy secured in 2020: these changes resist 'facadism' in the central city, and support more solar panels on roofs outside the central city, for example, but will only result in changes to the built environment by planning permit.

Together, these changes to the Melbourne Planning Scheme constitute more strategic work on heritage than had been undertaken in a generation. We have been getting our house in order, so that the extraordinary pace of infill development and population growth in the inner city is guided by, and not inhibited by, contemporary understandings about where built heritage exists.

For these reasons, the Heritage Strategy does not commission significant new updates to heritage controls in any particular precinct.

*City of Melbourne's heritage review status, January 2026*

# CITY OF MELBOURNE HERITAGE REVIEW STATUS




KEY

**COMPLETED HERITAGE REVIEWS**

1. Updated heritage categorisation system and local heritage policy – whole municipality
2. Kensington (part)
3. Arden-Macaulay
4. North Melbourne
5. West Melbourne
6. City North
7. Carlton
8. Hoddle Grid
9. Guildford and Hardware Lane Precinct
10. Southbank
11. Fishermans Bend
12. South Yarra
13. Parkville

**CURRENT HERITAGE REVIEWS**

14. East Melbourne and Jolimont

**FUTURE HERITAGE REVIEWS**

15. Kensington

City of Melbourne boundary

## 8.3 Why do we need a new strategy?

Melbourne has significantly changed since our 2013 strategy was published, bringing new challenges and opportunities. We can now look beyond heritage protection and think differently, exploring how heritage can contribute to our wider work. We want to better understand how people in Melbourne  experience and engage with heritage.We recognise that there needs to be a mechanism that captures heritage outside of the statutory process. We must ensure that stories are not lost as our city changes and evolves.

City of Melbourne is made up of a diverse community, with many ethnicities and cultural groups contributing to our vibrant city. We must ensure that the many layers of our history and people are represented in how we manage, protect and promote heritage. This includes migrant, working class, women and gender-diverse people, LGBTIQA+ communities and other under-represented groups and sharing stories of adversity, hardship and activism.

Aboriginal stories and connections are central to the story of Melbourne. There is more we can do to acknowledge First Nations stories in everything we do, respecting the authority and knowledge of Traditional Owners and learning how best to care for Country.

We need to ensure that heritage does not prevent us from addressing our problems. Melbourne has been growing fastthere is immense pressure to provide affordable, secure and well-located housing. In this context, heritage can be seen as a barrier rather than a feature that can contribute to positive change. Heritage can similarly be seen as a barrier to responding to the climate emergency, but this needs to change. We need to consider how heritage can help achieve a zero-carbon future.

Above all, we need to acknowledge that heritage is complex. People value heritage in different ways, and when untold stories finally come to light, they can change our understanding of our city and its history. Our new plan reflects on how Ideas of heritage have changed and will continue to change over time.

## 8.4 Who has been involved?

Developing this strategy has been a collaborative process. To start the conversation, we published the Heritage, People and Place Discussion Paper 2024. We put forward the idea of a people-centred approach to heritage that focused not just on why heritage matters to people, but ways to empower people to get involved. It explored how this could be achieved through five focus areas – reflecting Aboriginal heritage at the centre of the municipality; heritage interpretation; heritage, urban change and economic growth; heritage and climate change; and innovative heritage planning approaches.

Over four weeks in early 2024, we reached out to residents, businesses, government agencies, industry partners and other relevant stakeholders by conducting workshops, exhibiting promotional tools and releasing an online survey. Our aim was to understand what aspects of heritage are valued by the community and how the community would like to see heritage protected, managed and celebrated. We also met with Traditional Owners to discuss this strategy and a potential approach to heritage interpretation.

Informed by feedback from the Discussion Paper, we developed a draft Heritage Strategy which contained five priority areas and ‘ways of working’. We undertook engagement on the draft Heritage Strategy in mid-2025. Engagement was designed to be far-reaching and use a variety of methods including an online survey, workshops and live panel discussions. We spoke with the general community, business owners, parents and full-time carers, young people, peak bodies, Traditional Owners and the broader Aboriginal community.

We heard that there was a need for more emphasis on the rich multicultural histories that make up Melbourne. We also heard about the continued importance of built heritage in the municipality and the need for clear communication of the stories behind these places. There was a strong desire for Aboriginal cultural heritage to feature prominently throughout the city. The feedback we heard through all stages of consultation has been incorporated into this Heritage Strategy.




*Anthony standing in the wine cellar of a restaurant in a heritage building*

## 8.5 Project methodology

The strategy was an in-depth process spanning a number of years. The timeline below outlines its stages of development, including periods of consultation for the Discussion Paper and the draft Heritage Strategy.

*Timeline of the development of the Heritage Strategy*

### Timeline

**Development of Discussion Paper**
2023 to February 2024

**Community consultation on Discussion Paper**
20 Feb 2024 to 19 March 2024

**Analysis of feedback and development of draft City of Melbourne Heritage Strategy 2024: Stories of people and place**
April to July 2024

**Draft Heritage Strategy endorsed by Future Melbourne Committee for community consultation**
2 August 2024

**Community consultation on draft Heritage Strategy**
5 May to 16 June 2025

**Analysis of feedback and finalisation of Heritage Strategy**
July to October 2025

**City of Melbourne Heritage Strategy 2026: Stories of people and place presented to Future Melbourne Committee for adoption**
Scheduled for 17 February 2026

## 8.6 What we heard from our community

*Community consultation responses*

"New developments must all take significant steps towards the recognition of Indigenous culture, land and Lore"

survey participant

"Ensure "community" feedback represents an accurate cross-section of the community. The current structure of "community consultations" enables certain demographics to have louder voices"

survey participant

"We cannot keep adding housing developments to the city fringe. It's not fair or equitable to lock people out of amenity. Ultimately it will make most of Melbourne unliveable"

survey participant

"Melbourne has had waves of immigration, there is a multicultural history to tell"

workshop participant

"There are important Aboriginal places in South Yarra and Melbourne and they should be identified and explained on site (with pictures if possible) so people will understand what went on here before colonisation. Over the last 50 years or more developers and those with money have been the winners, not our heritage. This needs to change"

survey participant

"Tell multiple stories at the same place. You are always on Country"

workshop participant

"Deep research, "real" meaningful consultation, embrace the difficult and challenging"

workshop participant

"Understanding our past equips us to understand and deal with the future"

survey participant

"Try to ensure that the stories that we tell are relevant to the demographic / transient population"

workshop participant

Over the past 10 years, we have also received thousands of community comments on heritage in response to many other projects.

*Community feedback on heritage over the last 10 years*

## OUR COMMUNITY




City of Melbourne's Community Vision shows that the community's aspirations include:

- We celebrate and protect Melbourne's unique places.
- Aboriginal cultures are central to Melbourne's identity.

Understanding the city's history is also important to visitors, who are often interested in experiencing history through our places and people. Many tourists visit a heritage building, site or monument during their stay.

City of Melbourne has **six historical societies.**

We have **16 resident and community groups** across the municipality.

**West Melbourne**
The continued liveability and character of West Melbourne rely on future development that produces high-quality, sustainable buildings that respect the neighbourhood's highly valued and unique heritage.

**Parkville**
Residents highly value the protection and retention of Parkville's unique character as one of Melbourne's most intact neighbourhoods.

**Southbank**
There is limited heritage protection in this area. Many residents believe that Aboriginal heritage identification, protection and interpretation should be a key neighbourhood priority.

**Carlton**
Many residents have pointed to Carlton's rich history of multiculturalism, which can be found in the diversity of shops and residences throughout the suburb.

**East Melbourne**
As one of Melbourne's oldest suburbs, East Melbourne is home to many iconic heritage buildings that many residents believe add to its charm, character and village feel.

**Flemington**
No applicable data as this area contains Flemington Racecourse.

**North Melbourne**
The area hosts some of Melbourne's oldest buildings alongside new developments. Residents believe North Melbourne needs better promotion for its unique character and identity.

**South Yarra**
Residents are seeking greater protection of the eclectic mix of building typologies, as well as Aboriginal culture and stories that are represented in the area.

**Melbourne CBD**
Residents identified heritage buildings as crucial parts of the city's character that should be protected.

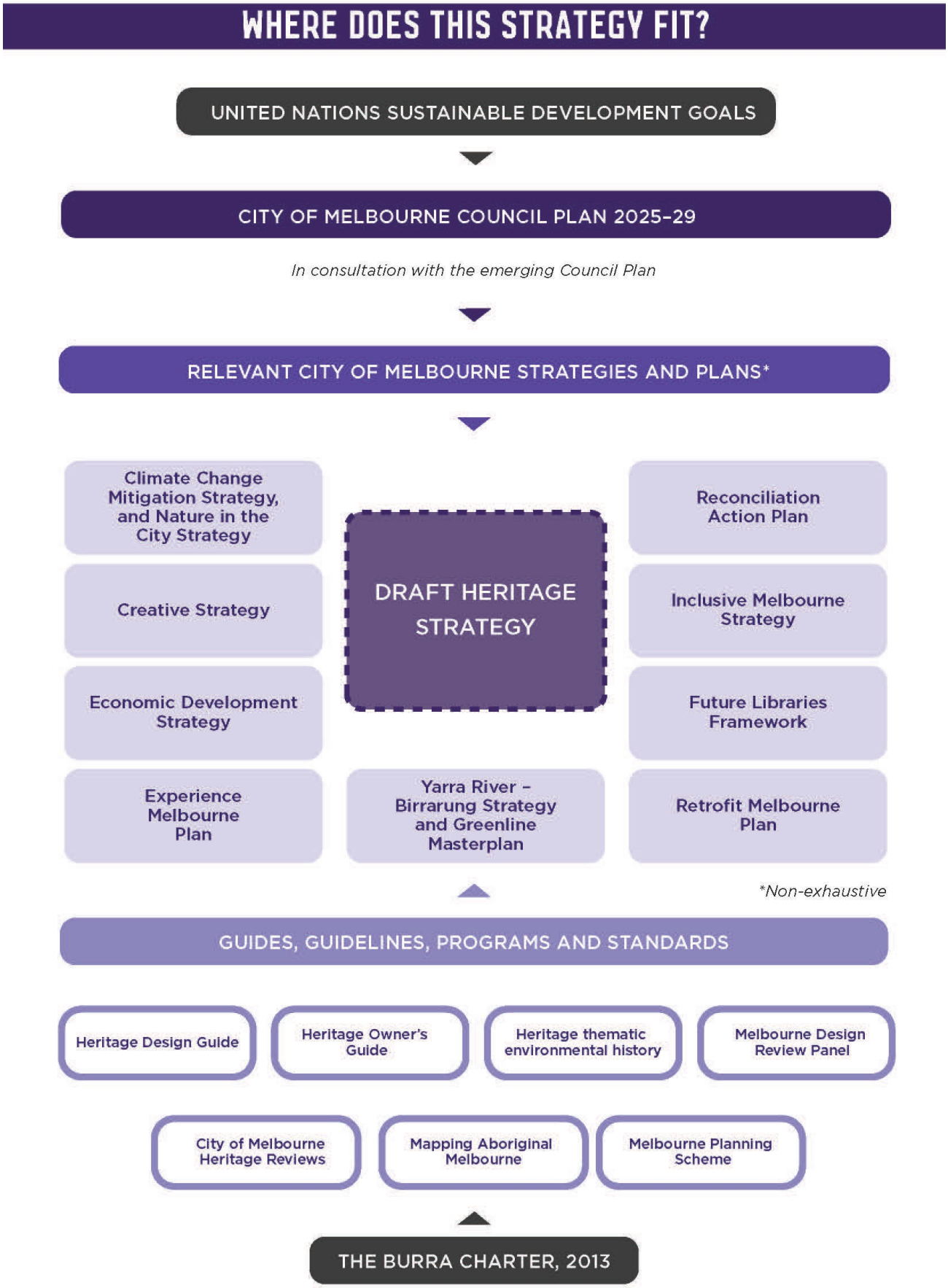
**Docklands**
As a new suburb, Docklands is still developing. There are many projects underway to make the area a connected, activated and welcoming place for visitors and residents.

**Kensington**
Many residents value the existing heritage homes in the area and growth will respect its village-like feel, maintain the green streets and protect the views of the city.

**Fishermans Bend**
No applicable data.

## 8.7 Making the link to other plans

*How the Heritage Strategy relates to other City of Melbourne plans, policy and programs*



# 9. Mission and approach

## 9.1 Mission

**City of Melbourne embraces a broad, people-centred, city-wide approach to cultural heritage that is respectful and informed, inclusive, integrated and collaborative, and recognises the long-term contribution heritage can make to the city's future.**

An inclusive view of heritage embraces both Aboriginal cultural heritage and the heritage of the many other culturally diverse groups that make up the City of Melbourne. We recognise and respect the leadership and authority of Traditional Owners and other cultural leaders.

It includes places that are formally protected for their cultural and natural significance. It acknowledges the importance of Country and recognises the responsibilities of caring for Country. It extends to other tangible (or physical) heritage that people value and want to pass on to the future, such as collections, public artworks and memorials, historic ships and technology and archives. It also recognises the importance of intangible cultural heritage – the stories, traditions and languages of the diverse communities of Melbourne.

We understand that places can have layers of history and heritage that intersect across different interests. The heritage and memories of a place can be complex and do not belong to a single group or entity; one location can hold the stories of all those who have interacted with it over many generations.

This broad view also recognises that heritage is something we experience in our city every day, as visitors, workers and residents, shaping the places we live, work and play. It reflects the value of heritage activities – the things that we do in our own lives, or collectively when we come together to research, care for, or advocate for our shared heritage.



*People dining on the footpath in a heritage streetscape in Carlton*

## 9.2 A people-centred approach

This strategy takes a people-centred approach, by finding ways to connect and work with our community. Since our last heritage strategy, we have focused on identifying and protecting places that are important to people across the City of Melbourne. We can now focus on finding new ways to work with people to care for and understand heritage, involving diverse members of our community and respecting heritage expertise.

A people-centred approach is key to everything we do at City of Melbourne. Listening to the voices of the community is critical to success. We recognise that heritage is significant because of people's connection to it and that caring for heritage can create wider public value. To take this approach, we must involve and empower communities in our heritage work, ensuring that the heritage and stories of all people are acknowledged and celebrated, reflecting current values. This means moving beyond statutory processes. It could result in more underrepresented places being considered for protection and could provide more opportunities for community involvement in heritage reviews, but it does not change the statutory process for applying heritage controls, which must be done in accordance with Victorian Government guidelines.




*John and customers standing in front of a heritage shopfront in the Block Arcade*

## 9.3 A whole-of-City-of-Melbourne approach

Cultural heritage does not exist in a silo. It is part of the identity of our city and can be a foundation that helps us achieve other things. This is a strategy for how heritage can contribute to our wider work.

### Six ways of working

An inclusive, people-centred, whole-of-city approach to heritage means working differently. We propose six ways of working that will help us do that, recognising that how we work with people is as important as what we do. They are not specific to heritage but are inspired by international thinking on sustainability and wellbeing, which require us all to work differently. They draw on guiding principles set out in other City of Melbourne strategies.

**Respectful and informed** working means ensuring we understand and respect the values and perspectives of others. It means listening to and learning from others and gathering data and information before making decisions.

**Collaborative** working involves co-creation and co-production. It recognises that we can achieve more by working together on projects and initiatives to find shared goals.

**Integrated** working focuses on our integrated approach to policymaking. Integrated means considering the full range of consequences or impacts of action so that activity in one policy area or strategy can complement, rather than undermine, the work of others.

**Inclusive** working recognises the importance of involving a diverse range of people in helping to shape the decisions that will affect their lives. It goes beyond consultation to finding ways to involve people in the ongoing realisation of actions within the strategy in conjunction with final decision-making.

**Long-term and sustainable** working ensures we focus on long-term solutions. It includes a shift to how actions can be preventative, acting early to tackle the root of the problem, by considering how decisions will impact the wellbeing of future as well as current generations.

**Self-determination** for Traditional Owners and the broader Aboriginal community is supported. We seek to ensure they have the power to determine priorities and be involved in decisions that affect them by establishing pathways that encourage reciprocal engagement with Council.

# 10. Our priorities

## 10.1 Stewardship




*Emma standing inside heritage venue Meat Market in North Melbourne*

### The value of stewardship

Our job is to care for the city's heritage. Practising heritage in all forms is about stewardship – caring for the things people value and want to pass on to the future, whether physical or intangible.

Stewardship starts with everyday care. It can include maintaining or repairing things to extend their life. Keeping things in use is one of the best ways to sustain our heritage, whether languages, traditions or buildings. Traditional Owners have an ongoing stewardship role in caring for Country and people on Country.

Caring for our shared heritage creates wider public value. There are economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits from caring for heritage. It delivers wider rewards, from the mental health benefits of connecting with stories and seeing one's history acknowledged, to the economic impact of the heritage sector. Importantly, caring for heritage does not stop change – it is simply a starting point for how we shape the future. Innovative design, writing and creativity often spring from exploring, honouring and reimagining our past.

At City of Melbourne, we are proud heritage stewards. We care for a portfolio of heritage buildings, open spaces and collections. Some are open to the public and others support our core services and functions. We also assist others to care for their heritage, helping them keep heritage buildings in use and providing support for conservation through our Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund. We work in partnership with a range of community and not-for-profit organisations that care for Melbourne's heritage.

### Opportunities and challenges

We have already highlighted how caring for heritage contributes to wider City of Melbourne goals, from planning and placemaking, addressing climate change and reducing waste, to the visitor and creative economies. There are a range of tools, such as conservation management plans, that can help property owners or managers care for their buildings in a way that also respects their cultural significance.

But stewardship is not always easy. As a property manager, we know how important it is to maintain and manage what we have. Day-to-day maintenance – sometimes known as preventative conservation, or repair works are vital, but often unglamorous aspects of caring for heritage and can require access to heritage craft skills or Traditional Owner knowledge in caring for Country. Property managers can face technical challenges.

People told us that we need to do more to acknowledge the value of heritage, including the wider cultural and social benefits. We heard that we need to do more to recognise unsung heritage heroes – the community groups and individuals who play a vital role in caring for our past. We were reminded of the benefits of adaptive reuse as a way to care for heritage places and deepening their history, allowing existing buildings to be reinvigorated as they are repurposed as spaces for housing and commercial uses such as the recent City of Melbourne Make Room initiative. Participants pointed to examples of arts organisations that reuse heritage buildings, keeping them in community use while protecting urban distinctiveness.




*Brendan standing in his workshop in the Nicholas Building*

## Our priority

**We will take a sustainable approach to heritage stewardship, in a way that recognises not just why heritage matters to people, but also the wider social, economic, place-based and cultural impacts and benefits of conserving it.**

We will collaborate with others to explore the following actions:

1.1 Demonstrate leadership by actively caring for our own properties, collections and open spaces by maintaining them to a high standard and ensuring they are accessible and inclusive for all

1.2 Build strong relationships with heritage managers and custodians - including Traditional Owners, community groups, businesses, and individual owners - by providing ongoing support and creating regular opportunities for these groups to meet, collaborate, and share knowledge

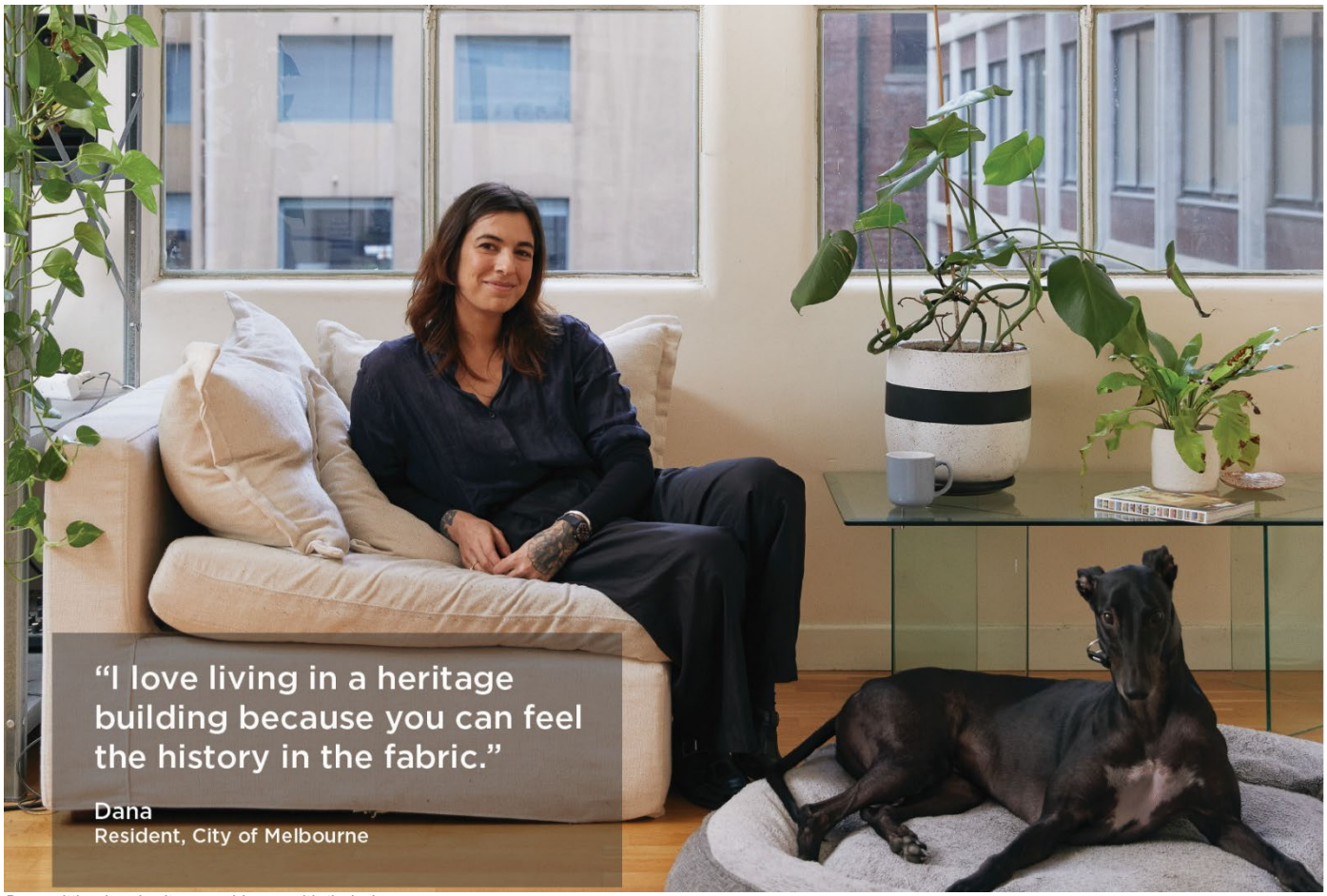
1.3 Identify and understand the barriers that prevent people and organisations from caring for or investing in heritage, and explore practical solutions to overcome obstacles to the adaptive reuse of buildings

1.4 Support more heritage research to understand how it creates public value for the municipality

1.5 Explore ways to celebrate Melbourne's unsung heritage heroes, including community groups and individuals who are leading the way in caring for, researching or interpreting heritage.

1.6 Implement coordinated strategic oversight and stewardship of all City of Melbourne heritage places and activities by ensuring clear governance, expertise, and integrated processes across Council's planning, design, management and capital works functions

## 10.2 Distinctive places




*Dana sitting in a heritage residence with their dog*

### How heritage can create distinctive places and neighbourhoods

Heritage is what makes Melbourne different. Country, history, place and water have shaped the Melbourne of today. They give our city its special character and the distinctiveness that drives our visitor economy, attracts creative industries and businesses and makes Melbourne a great place to live, work and play. While there is a growing need to acknowledge culture and intangible heritage, built heritage is also greatly important in telling the story of our city.

Melbourne boasts established neighbourhoods with distinct cultural identities, from the Italian enclave of Lygon Street in Carlton to the longest continuing Chinatown in Australia. Through it all is the ongoing cultural heritage of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples, and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who connect to this place. The city blends well-preserved Victorian architecture with cutting-edge modern landmarks. From the iconic Flinders Steet Station to the world heritage-listed Royal Exhibition Building and the contemporary marvels of heritage-listed Federation Square, the city's architecture, vibrant streets and iconic laneways mirror its evolving cultural narrative.

Planning for the city's future is integral to its sustainability, prosperity and distinctiveness. From an early focus on building controls to more strategic planning in the 1980s that highlighted Melbourne's unique character and the role of parks, boulevards and historic precincts, our role has always been to care for what makes it special.

The full public value of heritage is not well understood. Heritage can play a vital role in shaping the future. Conserving heritage is not about creating monuments frozen in time – instead, it is a way of managing change to celebrate the defining elements of our history. Change includes alteration, development and adaptive reuse; indeed, the best way to conserve a building is to keep it in use.

People's changing view of heritage and its cultural significance is critical to shaping this process. Heritage is one of the planning goals in Victoria and must be considered alongside other priorities in achieving net public benefit. Caring for heritage can also contribute to other planning goals, such as economic or environmental benefit.



*Michael standing in front of the doorway of his restaurant in a heritage building*

## Opportunities and challenges

Heritage is an opportunity to shape better places, not to create a barrier to change. We can celebrate heritage as an important feature of our city's sustainable development and economic growth, and there are many examples of how heritage has facilitated high-quality design. Heritage buildings can be adapted and complemented by modern additions, giving places another life and meaning – ensuring they continue to contribute to our city's culture and story. Heritage places can also complement more affordable housing and increase in supply by playing a role in shaping high quality design and planning of better quality and denser housing. The relationship between heritage and housing supply and affordability needs to be better understood as we work to tackle the housing crisis. However, through our engagement on the Discussion Paper, we heard that we need to find ways to protect what is important while allowing our city to grow and prosper. Survey and workshop feedback reminded us that urban living should be accessible and heritage should not be a barrier to a more inclusive city.

'City identity' and 'place' were the two most important benefits of heritage identified by survey participants. Nevertheless, most survey participants felt that we do not provide the right balance between heritage protection and opportunity for new development. Some said heritage has a negative effect on housing which is a growing issue; others were concerned about the quality of new developments and missed opportunities for placemaking and integration. Some felt that developers were winning out over residents and communities advocating for heritage protection.

We heard that Country can be hard to discern and we need to do more to make it legible – reflecting the views, waterways, landforms and topography that shaped Melbourne and restoring some of the lost indigenous species and planting that once flourished.

We heard about the need for innovative heritage planning and processes, such as engaging communities more, so that underrepresented stories can be acknowledged. Others said heritage processes and systems are not always easy to understand. People asked how we can protect places that are important for their social function, such as a

pub, cafe or a much-loved venue. Some were concerned about preserving individual sites: keeping the facade may not be sufficient because the heritage is inside the building, but, in most cases, interiors are not protected.

There were mixed views on the need for flexibility in managing changes to heritage, with equal numbers of survey participants advocating for more, less or targeted flexibility. Some felt that heritage protection might be driving construction in greenfield developments, while others were concerned at the perception that heritage is anti-development, rather than part of the evolving story of Melbourne. We need to better understand the contribution that heritage makes to tourism, character, amenity and liveability, and the retention of unique skills and trades.

Our new neighbourhood model provides an opportunity for people-centred heritage. It uses a place-based approach to bring diverse perspectives into neighbourhood planning by understanding the priorities of residents, students, businesses, workers and visitors.

## Our priority

**We will celebrate and preserve the city's diverse cultural heritage. We will embed heritage into planning and design at an early stage to ensure that the distinctive and special qualities of the city and its neighbourhoods continue to be legible and inform the way they grow.**

We will collaborate with others to explore the following actions:

2.1 Continue to review and strengthen our heritage protection approaches, ensuring they recognise the heritage of underrepresented groups, multicultural communities, post war heritage and previously overlooked places such as modernist buildings and building interiors

2.2 Partner with our multicultural and Aboriginal communities to make heritage more inclusive and accessible, supporting them to direct how their cultural heritage can be embedded in future planning and design

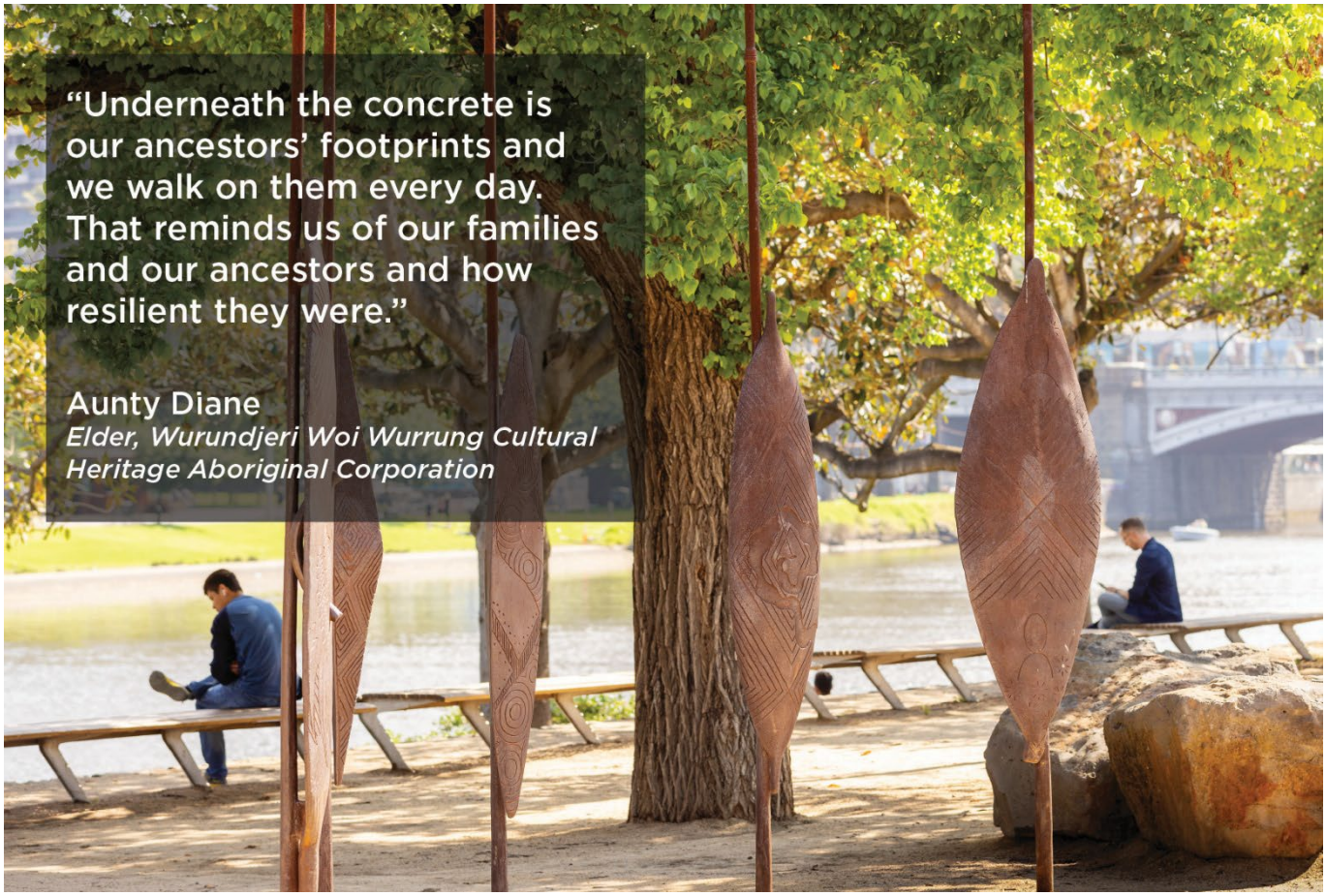
2.3 Foster creative methods of engagement, encouraging active participation in how our city's heritage is shaped through storytelling and helping us understand what makes our neighbourhoods distinctive

2.4 Balance expert heritage advice with diverse community perspectives to make well informed planning decisions

2.5 Promote examples where heritage has enabled sustainable development, good design and economic activity

2.6 Develop clearer guidance and policy tools that define when economic, social or environmental considerations may appropriately outweigh objectives to retain heritage building fabric.

## 10.3 Aboriginal heritage




*Birrarung Wilam (Common Ground) sculpture at Birrarung Marr, Wurundjeri Country*

### Aboriginal heritage and the future of the city

Melbourne is an Aboriginal city. Aboriginal culture and heritage is important to the stories we tell, the way we care for place and our approach to climate change. Traditional Owners provide leadership on Aboriginal cultural heritage issues. Other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples also continue to have important connections to the municipality.

The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council describes Aboriginal cultural heritage as including meaningful places and objects, and going beyond that to include intangible heritage including knowledge and lore. Aboriginal cultural heritage cannot be isolated from other heritage. Past, contemporary and continuing Aboriginal stories are woven into the places, heritage buildings and landscapes of the city. Aboriginal stories, language and traditions are intrinsically linked to the landscape and our heritage experiences today.

The principles of self-determination are vital to cultural heritage management, set out in Dhawura Ngilan: A vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage in Australia and the Best Practice Standards in Indigenous cultural heritage management and legislation.

In addition to mapping Aboriginal Melbourne and the activities in the Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015–18, we have been working with Traditional Owners on a co-creation approach to heritage research as part of the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review. But that is only part of the transformation to embed Aboriginal cultural heritage into our work.

It is also important to acknowledge that Aboriginal heritage in Victoria is protected under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (the Act) and local councils do not influence its application. The Act recognises Registered Aboriginal Parties as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal cultural heritage. Our role is to acknowledge Aboriginal heritage and celebrate continuing Aboriginal culture as vital to our city identity.

## Opportunities and challenges

Aboriginal cultural heritage, language and storytelling are already reflected in so many different aspects of our work, from the Council Plan 2025–29, which speaks of Aboriginal self-determination and reconciliation, to planning and development, creativity, the visitor economy, the Melbourne Arts Precinct and the Greenline Project. We have much to learn from Aboriginal people about Country and Caring for Country, which is inspiring new urban design thinking.

However, there are also challenges. During our consultation, we heard that truth-telling about our heritage is vital as we strive for reconciliation. The places and stories of the Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin, as well as other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have a connection to the city, should be told as part of our living history and identity. Engagement must be meaningful and we should not shy away from learning from uncomfortable stories that are appropriate to be shared.

We heard that non-Aboriginal people want to know more about the Aboriginal culture and stories of Melbourne but also recognise the need to respect culturally sensitive knowledge.

Traditional Owners and workshop and survey participants told us we need to centralise Aboriginal culture, heritage and knowledge into heritage planning and change standard approaches to provide Traditional Owners with more opportunities to influence future change. Most respondents saw the design of public spaces, community events, public art and on-site interpretation as priorities for acknowledging Aboriginal cultural heritage. People were also interested in Aboriginal place names for different parts of the city.

The Hoddle Grid Heritage Review taught us about the value of a co-creation approach to research, in line with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies' ethical principles. This approach demonstrates the potential to continue taking a layered approach to heritage, recognising that all heritage places in Melbourne are on Country and side-by-side with other heritage values.




*Robert standing in the Koorie Heritage Trust on Wurundjeri Country*

## Our priority

**We will respect the knowledge and authority of Traditional Owners regarding the municipality's Aboriginal cultural heritage. We will work together with Traditional Owners and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with connections to the City of Melbourne to ensure their culture and stories they want shared are elevated in all our heritage activities, including experiences, placemaking, stewardship and addressing the climate emergency.**

We will collaborate with Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with connections to the City of Melbourne to explore the following actions:

3.1 Empower Traditional Owners and the Aboriginal community to lead how Aboriginal cultural heritage is recognised, respected and interpreted across all City of Melbourne heritage activities
3.2 Embed Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Leadership within the Aboriginal City Framework
3.3 Develop guidance within the Aboriginal City Framework, working with Traditional Owners and broader Aboriginal community to co-create ways for Aboriginal culture, stories and language to be visible across the city. This could be through immersive experiences, events, festivals, public art, signage, place naming and more
3.4 Progress the initiatives identified through engagement with Traditional Owners and the broader Aboriginal community, along with outstanding actions from recent heritage reviews – recognising that this strategy provides the foundation for ongoing work, commitments and collaboration
3.5 Increase the use of indigenous plant species across all projects, drawing on Traditional Owner knowledge and expertise to strengthen biodiversity, support ecological resilience and advance our Garden City priorities of caring for Country and creating culturally connected landscapes
3.6 Identify and map significant view lines of Country, working with Traditional Owners to understand their cultural meaning so these can inform planning, design and community interpretation
3.7 Continue to create and enhance digital and interpretive tools that deepen public understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage, such as Mapping Aboriginal Melbourne.



*Re-established indigenous plants in West Gate Park on Bunurong Country*

## 10.4 Powerful experiences of our multicultural city




*Elizabeth, CO.AS.IT. Manager Italian Historical Society and Museo Italiano standing in the Museo Italiano*

### How heritage interpretation creates powerful experiences in our multicultural city

Melbourne is a diverse city with a rich migrant history. The story of a community's connection to place is not always obvious by looking at a building alone; there is often more to history than what can be told through built fabric. This strategy enables us to explore new ways of telling the layered story of our multicultural city through heritage interpretation and other mechanisms that go beyond buildings.

Heritage buildings need to be understood to remain meaningful and supported by the community. Seeing your own story reflected in the city – whoever you are – is part of our vision to make heritage more diverse, meaningful and inclusive. Heritage interpretation aims to strengthen the relationship between people and heritage places by sharing the stories and connections a place holds with those who live, work in or visit the city. It can take many forms, commonly including signage and artwork, but can also include wayfinding, events, digital media, building and public realm design.

Creative and cultural experiences are one of the top three reasons people visit the City of Melbourne. Across the city, artists, curators, designers, historians and community leaders tell stories that connect us with the past. For example, 40 of Melbourne's historic laneways have been revitalised by artists through the recent Flash Forward visual and acoustic art initiative. At the Old Treasury building, curators work with filmmakers and other artists to showcase the history of Melbourne and Victoria.

The city is an open-air gallery. We encounter culture, heritage and stories in the public realm through signage and tours as we meander through heritage buildings like the Block Arcade or see monuments against the city skyline. Precincts such as Chinatown, Lygon Street's Italian Precinct and Lonsdale Street's Greek Precinct are highly valued by both local residents and visitors and are key to understanding the Melbourne's living migrant history. To ensure these places remain readable, even as the city evolves, we must find new ways to communicate these important migrant stories. We also experience the past through digital media, festivals, exhibitions and performances.

Heritage interpretation should be a key component of our work to reveal and celebrate our city's different layers of history. Good interpretation requires care; it should capture the attention and connect heritage and people's own personal experiences to meet the needs of different audiences. Communicating heritage requires compassion: not everyone wants to celebrate the past. Many of Melbourne's public institutions are multi-layered places that also hold stories of pain and trauma.




*People walking through Chinatown, Little Bourke Street*

## Opportunities and challenges

Heritage activities, storytelling and interpretation can contribute directly to many of our city-wide ambitions. It is important to capture the layered histories of the many multicultural, religious and ethnic groups that make up the City of Melbourne. In addition, embedding Aboriginal culture, heritage and stories into the public realm helps people understand whose Country they are on and can transform the very essence of the Melbourne experience.

This strategy seeks to make heritage more inclusive by ensuring that people can see and experience their own stories reflected throughout the city. Heritage information should be accessible and offered in multiple formats and languages so that people of all backgrounds and abilities can participate.

There are also challenges. As people's ideas about the past change, we must rethink how we tell stories and whose stories are being told and not told. For example, fewer than 2 per cent of the 580 statues in Melbourne, and only five of the 25 on City of Melbourne land, represent women. We must tell a more diverse story of Melbourne's past.

Through engagement, participants told us that a respectful and inclusive approach to interpreting heritage is important, recognising that many places have more than one story. They argued for a layered approach, telling multiple stories of places and involving people in interpretation and storytelling. We heard that the layered multicultural history and intangible cultural heritage of Melbourne needs to be better captured and communicated. We also heard more from Traditional Owners about how they interpret the city, and the need to share their stories so we better understand the meaning and history of places.

## Our priority

### Create many more powerful heritage experiences that connect people to the multi-layered stories of Melbourne, through creative, informed, inclusive and accessible interpretation.

We will collaborate with others to explore the following actions:

4.1 Develop and test innovative engagement approaches to better include diverse and cultural groups whose stories are underrepresented

4.2 Work with neighbouring municipalities to share multicultural stories that carry across boundaries.

4.3 Establish a role for a city historian to raise awareness of the city's history and embed heritage across everything we do

4.4 Co-create heritage interpretation guidance for the municipality with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and multicultural communities connected to Melbourne, historical societies and local residents. This guidance will:

- collect and elevate community-identified stories – including multiple layers of tangible and intangible heritage – and add new narratives to historic places
- promote high quality interpretation in new development, ensuring storytelling meaningfully informs design
- ensure plaques, memorials and other interpretive elements reflect the diversity of Melbourne's people and contemporary values, including underrepresented groups
- establish city-wide guidelines for hoardings, including heritage hoardings, so temporary structures can share heritage stories, represent diverse community voices and affirm distinct local and cultural identities – celebrating each area's unique sense of place
- use technology and digital tools to enhance interpretation, improve accessibility and create engaging heritage experiences.

4.5 Elevate Melbourne's history and heritage within our city brand and cultural experiences, reinforcing our reputation as Australia's cultural capital, and enable businesses to adopt and promote this heritage led approach

4.6 Investigate options for a more integrated and user-friendly heritage information management system to improve public access to the City of Melbourne's heritage and historical content

4.7 Strengthen the management, visibility and coordinated planning of heritage cultural places and precincts.

## 10.5 Sustainability and environment




*Two people standing in a lush, green, welcoming Melbourne laneway*

## “The greenest building is the one that already exists”

Carl Elefante – former president of the American Institute of Architects.

### How heritage can help address sustainability and the environment

Heritage conservation can help promote sustainability by retaining the energy and carbon embodied in heritage building fabric and by reducing waste.

Existing buildings account for more than two-thirds of energy consumption and emissions in the municipality. However, retrofitting and adapting buildings causes fewer construction emissions than a knockdown rebuild approach. Retrofitting with an innovative design can improve environmental performance and liveability. Reusing existing buildings reduces construction waste and avoids demand for new steel or concrete.

Heritage can also foster nature and ecology in the city. Aboriginal approaches to caring for Country, including knowledge of indigenous plant species, have much to teach us about biodiversity and ecological resilience. Many of our major parks and green spaces are cultural heritage assets. Our system of local heritage protection also involves protecting urban trees, and other important trees are protected through our Exceptional Tree Register. Our canopy contributes to ecological resilience and cooling the city.

On the other hand, climate change-driven fire, flood and extreme weather events pose a risk to heritage. Existing buildings may need to be adapted to respond to more extreme weather. Loss of cultural heritage, including places, stories and treasured items, can have a significant impact on individuals and whole communities.

## Opportunities and challenges

In 2019, City of Melbourne declared a climate and biodiversity emergency. We are committed to net zero emissions by 2040. Our Climate Change Mitigation Strategy commits us to four priorities for achieving our emissions reduction targets. Heritage can contribute to two of these: zero emission buildings and precincts, and reducing the impact of waste.

To reach zero emissions, the city's buildings must be transformed – so we are driving better reuse of existing buildings, including heritage buildings. Our Retrofit Melbourne framework helps facilitate investment to retrofit mid-tier commercial buildings to make them zero-carbon ready. The heritage sector is also learning more about modest retrofit mechanisms that may not always need a permit, such as improving heating and cooling systems, secondary glazing and insulation. However, we learned from workshop feedback that the private sector continues to struggle with meeting heritage requirements as well as building codes designed for modern buildings.

Making better use of existing buildings and infrastructure, including heritage buildings, can reduce waste. Cities consume three-quarters of all natural resources globally, which is why Melbourne has adopted the principles of the circular economy. A circular economy keeps products and materials in use and preserves and regenerates natural capital.

We must value embodied energy in existing buildings. There is a risk that current energy efficiency ratings can create unintended incentives to demolish existing buildings.

We also have an opportunity to strengthen the link between heritage and nature in the city. Our ambition is for thriving biodiversity and ecosystem resilience. As we protect heritage trees and facilitate the greening of buildings and heritage laneways, we can also increase people's thermal comfort on the streets.

## Our priority

### We will contribute to our zero emissions target by encouraging the retrofit and reuse of existing buildings to make use of their embodied carbon, and contribute to nature in the city by protecting heritage trees and encouraging initiatives such as greening historic places.

We will collaborate with others to explore the following actions:

3.1 Help achieve the city's emissions goals by exploring the need for clearer guidance on how to retrofit heritage and older buildings (including strategies for addressing issues such as glazing, solar panels and particular types of heritage, such as post-war buildings)

3.2 Explore ways to address both energy efficiency and cultural significance in heritage buildings

3.3 Understand more about the value of embodied carbon in existing buildings, including heritage buildings, in decarbonising construction

3.4 Protect heritage trees and encourage new plantings around heritage spaces and buildings

3.5 Advocate for incentives to promote retrofit and adaptive reuse as an alternative to new construction

3.6 Consider whether planning permits should continue to be required for visible solar panels on local heritage places across the municipality.

# 11. Implementation plan

### Priority 1: Stewardship

| Action | Why this action is important and how we'll achieve this | City of Melbourne's role | Implementation timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action 1.1**<br>**Demonstrate leadership by actively caring for our own properties, collections and open spaces by maintaining them to a high standard and ensuring they are accessible and inclusive for all.** | Lead by example as the custodian of heritage places. | Deliver | Ongoing |
| **Action 1.2**<br>**Build strong relationships with heritage managers and custodians - including Traditional Owners, community groups, businesses, and individual owners - by providing ongoing support and creating regular opportunities for these groups to meet, collaborate, and share knowledge.** | Collaborate with organisations including museums, community groups, and historical societies to share knowledge and support heritage initiatives. | Deliver,<br><br>Partner | Ongoing |
| **Action 1.3**<br>**Identify and understand the barriers that prevent people and organisations from caring for or investing in heritage, and explore practical solutions to overcome obstacles to the adaptive reuse of buildings** | Explore ways to highlight the incentives for investing in and celebrating heritage, understanding what matters to our community and getting them involved in adaptive reuse of buildings. | Deliver<br><br>Partner | Ongoing |
| **Action 1.4**<br>**Support more heritage research to understand how it creates public value for the municipality.** | Explore how we can best showcase the public value of heritage in a similar way to how the arts is celebrated and promoted. | Deliver,<br><br>Partner | Ongoing |
| **Action 1.5**<br>**Explore ways to celebrate Melbourne's unsung heritage heroes, including community groups and individuals who are leading the way in caring for, researching or interpreting heritage.** | Recognise unsung heritage heroes to strengthen community stewardship, to raise awareness of heritage values, and encourage more people to get involved in protecting and celebrating local places. | Deliver,<br><br>Partner,<br><br>Advocate | Ongoing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action 1.6**<br>**Implement coordinated strategic oversight and stewardship of all City of Melbourne heritage places and activities by ensuring clear governance, expertise, and integrated processes across Council's planning, design, management and capital works functions** | Ensure proper strategic oversight and expertise is embedded into Council processes across the organisation where heritage is a consideration. | Deliver,<br><br>Partner,<br><br>Advocate | Ongoing |

**Priority 2: Distinctive Places Priority**

| Action | Why this action is important and how we'll achieve this | City of Melbourne's role | Implementation timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action 2.1**<br>**Continue to review and strengthen our heritage protection approaches, ensuring they recognise the heritage of underrepresented groups, multicultural communities, post war heritage and previously overlooked places such as modernist buildings and building interiors.** | Acknowledge that community values around heritage are continually evolving.<br><br>Ensure our built heritage protections reflect community values. | Deliver | Ongoing |
| **Action 2.2**<br>**Partner with our multicultural and Aboriginal communities to make heritage more inclusive and accessible, supporting them to direct how their cultural heritage can be embedded in future planning and design.** | Ensure that heritage continues to become more relevant and accessible to the community.<br><br>Embed the heritage of diverse communities in design through heritage interpretation (see Action 4.4) | Deliver | Medium, ongoing |
| **Action 2.3**<br>**Foster creative methods of engagement, encouraging active participation in how our city's heritage is shaped through storytelling and helping us understand what makes our neighbourhoods distinctive.** | Design engagement processes are broad and inclusive of a range of cultural needs and a celebration of local stories. | Deliver,<br><br>Partner | Ongoing |
| **Action 2.4**<br>**Balance expert heritage advice with diverse community perspectives to make well-informed planning decisions.** | Recognising there are diverse views about heritage in our city that influence planning decisions and ensure our policies support balanced outcomes. | Deliver<br><br>Partner | Ongoing |
| **Action 2.5**<br>**Promote examples where heritage has** | Explore ways to communicate how | Deliver | Ongoing |

| Action | Why this action is important and how we'll achieve this | City of Melbourne's role | Implementation timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| **enabled sustainable development, good design, and economic activity** | heritage can enable good design outcomes can encourage the retention of heritage fabric in development projects. | | |
| **Action 2.6**<br>**Develop clearer guidance and policy tools that define when economic, social or environmental considerations may appropriately outweigh objectives to retain heritage building fabric.** | Ensure our heritage policy enables balanced decision making to deliver net community benefit and a liveable Melbourne in line with our M2050 Vision. | Deliver | Ongoing |

**Priority 3: Aboriginal Heritage Priority Area**

| Action | Why this action is important and how we'll achieve this | City of Melbourne's role | Implementation timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action 3.1**<br>**Empower Traditional Owners and the Aboriginal community to lead how Aboriginal cultural heritage is recognised, respected and interpreted across all City of Melbourne heritage activities.** | Seeks to support the self-determination of Traditional Owners, building on key principles from the Reconciliation Action Plan and Council Plan 2025-29. | Deliver<br><br>Partner<br><br>Advocate | Ongoing |
| **Action 3.2**<br>**Embed Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Leadership within the Aboriginal City Framework.** | Engage with Aboriginal cultural heritage across multiple projects and work areas.<br><br>Embed Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Leadership within the Aboriginal City Framework, as outlined in the Council Plan 2025-29 under "Governing for our future". | Deliver<br><br>Partner | Ongoing |
| **Action 3.3**<br>**Develop guidance within the Aboriginal City Framework, working with Traditional Owners and broader Aboriginal community to co-create ways for Aboriginal culture, stories and language to be visible across the city. This could be through immersive experiences, events, festivals, public art, signage, place naming and more.** | Ensure that Aboriginal culture is embedded in place-making and that interpretation communicates that we are always on Country. An example of this could be through Aboriginal place naming. | Deliver<br><br>Partner | Medium |
| **Action 3.4**<br>**Progress the initiatives identified through engagement with Traditional Owners and the broader Aboriginal community, along with outstanding actions from recent heritage reviews – recognising that this strategy provides the foundation for ongoing work, commitments and collaboration.** | Our Heritage Reviews identified several Aboriginal Cultural Values assessments that require progressing. This work includes auditing Aboriginal heritage to confirm our current management practices and processes comply with legislation. | Deliver<br><br>Partner | Ongoing |

| Action | Why this action is important and how we'll achieve this | City of Melbourne's role | Implementation timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action 3.5**<br>**Increase the use of indigenous plant species across all projects, drawing on Traditional Owner knowledge and expertise to strengthen biodiversity, support ecological resilience and advance our Garden City priorities of caring for Country and creating culturally connected landscapes.** | Encourage the use of indigenous plantings to boost biodiversity and strengthen recognition of Country. | Deliver<br><br>Partner | Ongoing |
| **Action 3.6**<br>**Identify and map significant view lines of Country, working with Traditional Owners to understand their cultural meaning so these can inform planning, design and community interpretation.** | Identify remaining important view lines that exist in the city and communicate their significance of Country, for example, through mapping and interpretation. | Partner | Medium |
| **Action 3.7**<br>**Continue to create and enhance digital and interpretive tools that deepen public understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage, such as Mapping Aboriginal Melbourne.** | Explore better ways to communicate Aboriginal cultural heritage through technology and innovation. Enhance the accessibility and user experience to achieve more widespread use. | Deliver | Ongoing |

**Priority 4: Powerful Experiences of our Multicultural City**

| Action | Why this action is important and how we'll achieve this | City of Melbourne's role | Implementation timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action 4.1**<br>**Develop and test innovative engagement approaches to better include diverse and cultural groups whose stories are underrepresented.** | Ensure that all multicultural heritage stories are shared and that these are translated into powerful experiences to celebrate our diverse community | Deliver<br><br>Partner | Ongoing |
| **Action 4.2**<br>**Work with neighbouring municipalities to share multicultural stories that carry across boundaries.** | Acknowledge that history of places and multicultural stories of the city are not confined to existing boundaries and may cross over to other municipalities. | Partner | Long-term |
| **Action 4.3**<br>**Establish a role for a city historian to raise awareness of the city's history and embed heritage across everything we do** | Take cues from other major cities that have been enhanced by the promotion and sharing of multicultural heritage stories and have successfully engaged communities in their city's history to elevate pride and social connection. | Advocate | Medium |
| **Action 4.4**<br>**Co-create heritage interpretation guidance for the municipality with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, multicultural communities connected to Melbourne, historical societies and local residents. This guidance will:**<br>• **collect and elevate community-identified stories – including multiple layers of tangible and intangible heritage – and add new narratives to historic places**<br>• **promote high-quality interpretation in new development, ensuring storytelling meaningfully informs design**<br>• **ensure plaques, memorials and other interpretive elements reflect the diversity of Melbourne's people and contemporary values, including under-represented groups**<br>• **establish city-wide guidelines for hoardings, including** | Encourage meaningful interpretation of multicultural heritage to support localised design excellence and inform city policies and projects.<br><br>Communicate and make our multicultural heritage more accessible to the public through oral histories, art and other creative channels. | Deliver<br><br>Partner | Immediate |

| Action | Why this action is important and how we'll achieve this | City of Melbourne's role | Implementation timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| **heritage hoardings, so temporary structures can share heritage stories, represent diverse community voices and affirm distinct local and cultural identities – celebrating each area's unique sense of place**<br><br>• **use technology and digital tools to enhance interpretation, improve accessibility and create engaging heritage experiences.** | | | |
| **Action 4.5**<br>**Elevate Melbourne's history and heritage within our city brand and cultural experiences, reinforcing our reputation as Australia's cultural capital, and enable businesses to adopt and promote this heritage-led approach.** | Recognise the public value of First Nation and multicultural heritage to the city and promote this as part of our corporate brand.<br><br>Promote heritage experiences as a way to enhance commercial activity in Melbourne. | Deliver<br><br>Partner | Ongoing |
| **Action 4.6**<br>**Investigate options for a more integrated and user-friendly heritage information management system to improve public access to the City of Melbourne's heritage and historical content.** | Ensure heritage information and processes are organised, accessible and easy to understand, including heritage data, heritage reviews and heritage statements of significance. | Deliver | Immediate |
| **Action 4.7 Strengthen the management, visibility and coordinated planning of heritage cultural places and precincts.** | Develop an integrated approach to identifying, managing and promoting the City of Melbourne's heritage cultural places and precincts, ensuring heritage values are consistently recognised and embedded across strategic planning, urban renewal, place activation, and community-facing information systems | | |

## Priority 5: Sustainability and environment

| Action | Why this action is important and how we'll achieve this | City of Melbourne's role | Implementation timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action 5.1**<br>**Help achieve the city's emissions goals by exploring the need for clearer guidance on how to retrofit heritage and older buildings (including strategies for addressing issues such as glazing, solar panels and particular types of heritage, such as post-war buildings).** | Provide simple guidance on how property owners can upgrade their heritage buildings within existing planning controls.<br><br>Showcase examples where best practice retrofit and adaptive reuse has occurred within the City of Melbourne. | Deliver | Immediate |
| **Action 5.2**<br>**Explore ways to address both energy efficiency and cultural significance in heritage buildings.** | Monitor our heritage policy to ensure that it addresses energy efficiency and cultural significance elements. This will ensure local policy is current and helps us to achieve balanced and considered planning outcomes. | Deliver | Medium |
| **Action 5.3**<br>**Understand more about the value of embodied carbon in existing buildings, including heritage buildings, in decarbonising construction** | Advocate to the Victorian Government for more research into the value of embodied carbon to advocate for more sustainable development outcomes. | Advocate | Medium |
| **Action 5.4**<br>**Protect heritage trees and encourage new plantings around heritage spaces and buildings.** | Recognise that heritage trees have climate value in reducing urban heat in the city. | Deliver | Immediate, ongoing |
| **Action 5.5**<br>**Advocate for incentives to promote retrofit and adaptive reuse as an alternative to new construction.** | Acknowledge the financial barriers to retrofitting buildings in Australia.<br><br>Advocate to Victorian and Australian governments for support to grow this industry to enable the viability of retrofit buildings, as it is overseas. | Advocate | Ongoing |

| Action | Why this action is important and how we'll achieve this | City of Melbourne's role | Implementation timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action 5.6**<br>**Consider whether planning permits should continue to be required for visible solar panels on local heritage places across the municipality.** | Ensure heritage policy enables balanced decision making to deliver net community benefit and a liveable Melbourne in line with our M2050 Vision. | Deliver | Immediate |

# 12. Glossary

**Burra Charter –** the basic principles and procedures to be followed in the conservation of Australian heritage places, published by ICOMOS Australia.

**Country** – a term Aboriginal people use that can be described as the lands with which they have a traditional attachment or relationship. Caring for Country is an approach that embraces the Aboriginal philosophy that if we care for Country, Country will care for us.

**Cultural heritage** – Victorian heritage legislation refers to Aboriginal cultural heritage and uses the term heritage to refer to non-Aboriginal heritage. However, cultural values are central to both.

**Heritage** – what people value and want to pass on to the future. It includes Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage, and tangible and intangible heritage. Some but not all of that heritage is formally protected.

**Heritage activities** – used here to mean the many ways people actively engage with heritage, including their heritage or that of others, including researching family history or restoring vintage vehicles or buildings.

**Heritage assets** – the things people value and want to pass on to the future including physical things such as buildings, places, landscapes or objects and intangible heritage such as traditions, stories and memories.

**Heritage building** – formally defined in heritage legislation as a building that is a place, or forms part of a place, that has been given heritage protection under a planning scheme.

**Heritage experiences** – the different ways that people encounter the past in their lives and as residents, workers and visitors, including public programs and events, exhibitions, walks, signage and digital media.

**Heritage Overlay** – one of several overlays in the Victorian Planning Provisions. The Heritage Overlay protects sites with heritage value and includes lists of places of local and state significance.

**Intangible heritage** – things people value that don't have a physical form, such as knowledge, skills and languages. They are not usually protected in planning but can be protected through intellectual property rights.

**Interpretation** – the different ways of telling stories that enable people to encounter and understand the past, whether online or in-person, including exhibitions, productions, events, public programs, artworks, talks, plaques and signage.

**People-centred approach** – a way of working that recognises that heritage is what people value, that it delivers wider benefits, and that it is important to involve people and communities in heritage activities and in caring for heritage assets.

**Planning scheme** – a statutory document setting out objectives, policies and provisions relating to the use, development, protection and conservation of land in this area to which it now applies.

**Protected heritage places** – buildings and sites formally protected under local, state or national heritage legislation, including places under World Heritage, the Victorian Heritage Register and the Heritage Overlay.

**Statement of Significance** – a document that describes what, how and why a place has heritage significance. It is incorporated into the planning scheme and guides planning decisions.

**Sustainable development** – development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by member nations in 2015.

**Sustainable development goals** – seventeen goals that provide a roadmap for global efforts to achieve sustainability to 2030 and beyond. City of Melbourne is committed to the goals as a framework for shaping action.

**Tangible heritage** – heritage that has a physical form such as buildings, places, landscapes, collections and infrastructure. It distinguishes physical heritage assets from intangible heritage assets.

**Victorian Heritage Register** – lists places deemed to be of cultural significance to the State of Victoria. Places on the list are protected by Heritage Victoria under the *Heritage Act 2017.*

**Wellbeing** – wellbeing approaches to policy go beyond macroeconomic statistics to recognise that social progress is about improving the wellbeing of people and households. Local councils have a role in supporting community members to achieve optimal health and wellbeing under the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*. Australia's new wellbeing framework measures our progress towards a more healthy, secure, sustainable, cohesive and prosperous Australia.

# 13. Bibliography


Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 2020, 'AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research', AIATSIS website: https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-02/aiatsis-code-ethics-jan22.pdf

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 'The benefits associated with caring for country – literature review', AIATSIS website: https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/research_pub/benefits-cfc_0_2.pdf

Commonwealth of Australia, 2023, 'Measuring what matters – national wellbeing framework', Treasury website: https://treasury.gov.au/policy-topics/measuring-what-matters

Capire Consulting Group, 2024, 'Heritage, people and place discussion paper 2024 – engagement report'.

City of Melbourne, 'Mapping Aboriginal Melbourne': https://aboriginal-map.melbourne.vic.gov.au

City of Melbourne, 2013, 'Heritage Strategy 2013'

City of Melbourne, 2015, 'Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015–18': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/aboriginal-heritage-action-plan-2015-18.pdf

City of Melbourne 2016, 'Plaques and Memorials Policy': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/policy-plaques-memorials.pdf

City of Melbourne 2016, 'Future Melbourne 2026': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/future-melbourne-2026-plan.pdf

City of Melbourne, 2017, 'Nature in the City – thriving biodiversity and healthy ecosystems': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/nature-in-the-city-strategy.pdf

City of Melbourne 2018, 'Climate Change Mitigation Strategy to 2050: Melbourne together for 1.5 C': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/vision-goals/eco-city/Pages/climate-change-mitigation-strategy.aspx

City of Melbourne 2018, 'Creative Strategy 2018–2028': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/sitecollectiondocuments/com-creative-strategy.pdf

City of Melbourne 2019, 'Waste and resource recovery strategy 2030': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/waste-resource-recovery-strategy.pdf

City of Melbourne 2020, 'Heritage Owner's Guide': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/building-and-development/heritage-planning/heritage-owners-guide/Pages/heritage-owners-guide.aspx

City of Melbourne 2025, 'City of Melbourne Council Plan 2025–29': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan-vision

City of Melbourne, 2021, '(Innovate) Reconciliation Action Plan June 2021–June 2023'.

City of Melbourne, 2021, 'Future Libraries Framework 2021'.

City of Melbourne, 2021, 'Community Engagement Policy': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/community-engagement-policy.pdf

City of Melbourne, 2022, 'Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022–32', https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/strong-communities/Pages/inclusive-melbourne-strategy.aspx

City of Melbourne, 2022, 'United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Voluntary Local Review': https://hdp-au-prod-app-com-participate-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/4816/5595/7875/SDGs-FINAL_21_06_2022_4195_Voluntary_Local_Review_ONLINE-compressed.pdf

City of Melbourne, 2023, 'Heritage Design Guide': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/building-and-development/heritage-planning/heritage-design-guide/Pages/heritage-design-guide.aspx

City of Melbourne, 2023, 'The Greenline Project Master Plan'.

City of Melbourne 2023, 'Retrofit Melbourne – framework to enable mid-tier commercial buildings to transition to be zero carbon ready': https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/business/sustainable-business/building-retrofits/Pages/retrofit-melbourne.aspx

City of Melbourne, 2024, ‘Heritage, people and place discussion paper 2024’

City of Melbourne, 2024, ‘Experience Melbourne 2028 – a destination management plan for Melbourne’s visitor economy.

City of Melbourne and Capire Consulting Group, 2024, Engagement Report Summary – Heritage, people and place discussion paper 2024.

Colliers International, 2018, ‘Creative industries in historic buildings and environments: Conservation area case studies’: https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/research/creative-industries-case-studies/

Context, 2012, ‘Thematic History – a history of the City of Melbourne’s urban environment’:

Creative Victoria, 2024: https://creative.vic.gov.au/resources/data-insights/victorias-creative-economy

Department of Transport and Planning, ‘Melbourne Planning Scheme 43.01 Heritage Overlay’: https://planning-schemes.app.planning.vic.gov.au/Melbourne/ordinance/43.01

Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand, 2020, ‘Dharuwa Ngilan: A vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage in Australia and the best practice standards on Indigenous cultural heritage management and legislation’: https://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/heritage/publications/dhawura-ngilan-vision-atsi-heritage

ICOMOS, Cultural heritage and sustainable development: https://www.icomos.org/en/focus/un-sustainable-development-goals/76821-cultural-heritage-and-sustainable-development-2

Jones, RL, Waghorne, J and Langton, M 2024, *Dhoombak Goobgoowana: A History of Indigenous Australia and the University of Melbourne, Volume 1: Truth*, University of Melbourne Press: https://www.unimelb.edu.au/dhoombak-goobgoowana

NSW State Government, 2023, ‘Connecting with Country Framework – good practice guidance on how to respond to Country in the planning, design and delivery of built environment projects in NSW’: https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-10/connecting-with-country.pdf

Public Value Consulting and Extent, 2023, ‘Why heritage; a synthesis of evidence for the social, economic and environmental impact of heritage’, Report for the Heritage Council of Victoria: https://heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/research-projects/valuing-victorias-heritage/

SHP (Sue Hodges Productions) 2024, ‘City of Melbourne Heritage Interpretation Scoping Study’.

Tourism Australia, 2022, ‘Future of Global Tourism Demand’: https://www.tourism.australia.com/content/dam/digital/corporate/documents/future-of-demand/tourism-australia-global-future-of-tourism-demand-research-public-report.pdf

United Cities and Local Governments, ‘Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development’: https://agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/files/documents/en/zz_culture4pillarsd_eng.pdf

United Cities and Local Governments, ‘Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals – A guide for local action’: https://uclg.org/sites/default/files/culture_in_the_sdgs.pdf

UNESCO, 2013, ‘The Hangzhou Declaration – placing culture at the heart of sustainable development’

UNESCO, 2017, ‘Culture at the heart of sustainable development goals’: https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/culture-heart-sustainable-development-goals

United Nations, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council https://www.aboriginalheritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/

Welsh Council of Voluntary Associations, 2020, ‘The Well-being of Future Generations Act – Ways of working factsheet’: https://wcva.cymru/resources/the-well-being-of-future-generations-act-five-ways-of-working/