

GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL

Draft Elsternwick Structure Plan 2022
Community Engagement Report

FEBRUARY 2023

Background

In 2018, Glen Eira City Council adopted a structure plan for Elsternwick. We are now revisiting that structure plan to incorporate recent strategic work and to reflect new Council directions such as the *Glen Eira Housing Strategy* and *Our Climate Emergency Response Strategy 2021-2025*, adopted in late-2022 and mid-2020 respectively. The first structure plan embedded extensive community consultation throughout the preparation process.

We revised the previous structure plan with the draft *Elsternwick Structure Plan 2022*, which builds on previous community consultation and aims to help achieve a vibrant and viable shopping strip that includes economic and land use needs, heritage protection, buildings and development, transport and parking, open space and place making opportunities.

This report summarises the methods used to engage with the Glen Eira community and the feedback we received from the engagement period that occurred in late 2022.

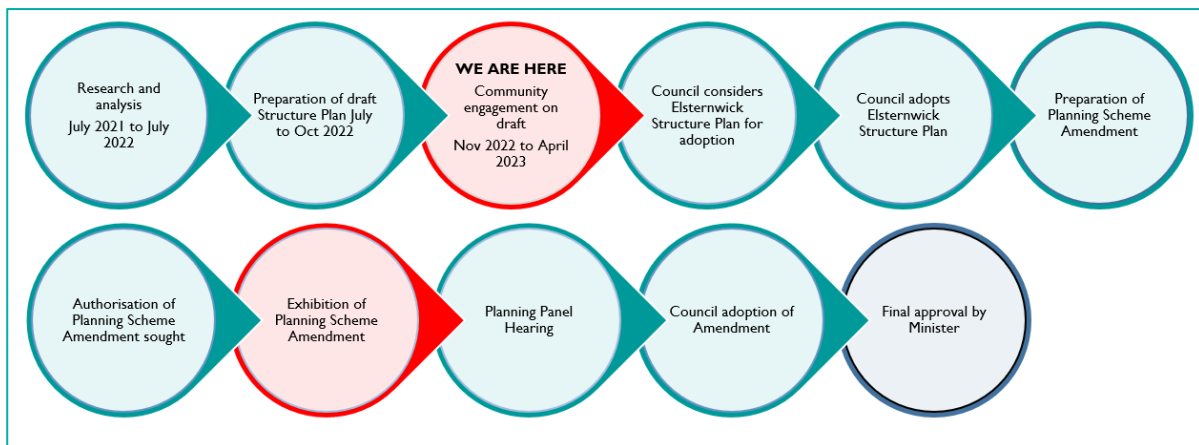


Figure 1: Structure Plan and Planning Scheme Amendment process. Red denotes public consultation phases.

Executive Summary

Community engagement for the draft *Elsternwick Structure Plan* occurred over a six-week period from 3 November to 16 December 2022. We promoted it through Glen Eira News articles, e-newsletter and a mailout to more than 5,300 households. We had a project engagement web page, social media posts and a postcard for businesses and events. We also sent updates as required to interested recipients via email.

To engage participants, we held five in-person drop-in sessions, one online session, a walking tour and a presentation for the Elsternwick Traders' Association. People could provide their feedback via the online survey, by email, by phone or at the events.

Online community survey

A total of **103** surveys were completed. Please note, these survey responses appear to have been submitted by 99 community members suggesting that four completed the survey twice. A split of **43% (43 participants)** a-piece indicated they were either a woman or man. About **50%** of survey participants were between the 50-69 age bracket (**49 participants**).

Despite promoting the engagement through Council's social media channels and in *Glen Eira News*, there were no survey participants under 30 years of age.

Note: Percentages used in this report are rounded to the nearest whole number.

92% (91 of 103) of survey participants indicated they were a **local resident**, while 35% (36) were a **person who shops/socialises or dines in the area** and 31% (31) were a **landowner within the precinct**.

The following themes reflect each section of the survey:

Vision and objectives

There were responses that were supportive of the vision and its objectives but queried whether measures specified in draft *Structure Plan* would help see these sentiments materialise.

Some participants indicated they would like to see the permitted amount of development scaled back by lowering allowed building heights. Some respondents indicated they cared about heritage and supported its protection and were concerned that increased built form would in fact reduce heritage values and the village feel of the centre.

Climate and sustainability

52% of responses (54 of 103) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that measures in the draft *Plan* would successfully address climate and sustainability objectives in the activity centre.

Conversely, **27%** of responses (28) either strongly agreed or agreed the draft *Plan* would successfully address climate and sustainability objectives with a further **20%** (21) stating they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Some participants indicated environmental considerations were very important, and wanted more green space, green buildings and trees. Also, some felt that language should be firmer to ensure environmental outcomes would be adhered to in future developer considerations.

Heritage and character

57% of responses (59 of 102) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that that the draft *Plan* would successfully preserve heritage and character in the study area.

Meanwhile **27%** of responses (28) either strongly agreed or agreed the draft *Plan* would successfully preserve heritage and character in the study area, while a further **15%** (15) stated they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Some respondents supported protection of the centre's heritage and were concerned that increased built form would deteriorate the centre's heritage value and village feel. Some participants considered the lowering of permitted building heights to be the appropriate response.

Activity and Land Use

59% of responses (58 of 99) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the draft plan would successfully provide the right land use mix in the activity centre.

22% of responses (22) either strongly agreed or agreed that the draft plan would successfully provide the right land use mix in the activity centre, with a further **19%** (19) stating they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Some thought growth in the local population would exacerbate existing problems, such as traffic and noise. Car parking was considered important to some for local businesses, and some supported the repurposing of car parks for things such as open space with more provision for off-street parking of interest.

Buildings

70% of respondents (68 of 97) said they disagreed or strongly disagreed that measures in the draft *Plan* would balance growth and change with protection of heritage and public amenity.

25% of respondents (24) said they strongly agreed or agreed that the draft *Plan* would balance growth and change with protection of heritage and public amenity, with **5%** (5) indicating their neither agreed nor disagreed.

Some were unhappy with permitted building heights in the draft *Plan* and felt increased building heights would deteriorate heritage value and the village feel of the centre.

Public spaces

53% of respondents (52 of 99) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that measures in the draft *Plan* would successfully ensure our public spaces are protected and well-planned for future needs public spaces around Staniland Grove and Orrong Road.

24% of respondents (24) either strongly agreed or agreed that proposed measures would successfully ensure our public spaces are protected and well-planned for future needs, while **23%** (23) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Some supported improving the provision of open green space. Some thought any removal of car parking should be considered carefully. i.e., for those who are less physically able.

Transport

33% of survey respondents (32 of 98) indicated they strongly agreed or agreed that the draft *Plan* would help to ensure the transport network would serve our community well in the activity centre, with a further **23%** (23) neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Some participants mentioned the busy-ness of public transport was a deterrent, as there were difficulties with ramp steepness or steps for those who are less physically able. Some said cycling and other modes of sustainable transport made sense and noted that doing so around Elsternwick was currently difficult due to safety concerns. Some wondered whether traffic and car parking problems could become worse with more people.

Emails

We received 56 email submissions from community members for the draft *Plan*. The feedback received covered much of the same themes that were reflected through the online survey. The main themes were:

- building height limits
- character and heritage protection
- car parking provision
- traffic congestion
- a desire for more green space and better environmental outcomes
- better amenity for residents today
- concerns about changes envisioned at specific locations.

Read more about the themes brought up in the full Engagement Report further below.

Drop-in information sessions

A total of 34 community members attended our five face-to-face drop-in information sessions and spoke with strategic planners about the draft *Plan*.

While questions asked were often of a personal nature and how the draft *Plan* would impact their own properties, discussions included the following themes:

- concerns about provision of on-street parking in residential areas
- interest in development potential in specific areas
- clarification about heritage overlays in area
- the future of the Elsternwick Library site
- height limits and setbacks, generally and particular locations
- character and heritage protection
- preservation of trees and open green space
- environmental protection.

Attendees were encouraged to complete the online survey or send Council an email.

Phone calls

Council received **10 phone calls** from community members about the draft *Plan*. They spoke with a strategic planner often seeking clarification on several aspects of the draft *Plan*.

The themes covered included:

- timelines
- proposed rezoning and height limits
- Elsternwick Library site
- traffic and congestion.

Online information session

The online information session was attended by 27 community members. All community member comments were noted, and Council provided a Question and Answer document afterwards responding to community questions.

The themes that were raised included:

- height limits and risk of overshadowing
- population growth and pressures
- character and heritage protection
- affordable housing
- traffic flow
- creation of open space around train station.

Engagement Report

The draft *Elsternwick Structure Plan* offers a shared vision for Elsternwick to be a safe, connected, accessible and liveable centre that embraces its historic character and strong cultural and village feel as it grows and changes. This is supported by strategies in sustainability, heritage, land use, buildings, public spaces and transport.

Community engagement for the draft *Elsternwick Structure Plan* occurred over a six-week period from 3 November to 16 December 2022. For the duration of the engagement period, our online survey was open to everyone, and we sought feedback on the proposed vision and objectives, along with a series of key ideas covered in the draft *Structure Plan*. While the online survey was our main method of gaining community insights and feedback, we also provided a phone number for community members to call our strategic planners to discuss the project and an email address to receive questions and feedback from community members.

An online Zoom information session was held during the engagement period where strategic planners presented on the draft *Plan*, and there were also face-to-face drop-in information sessions and a walking tour of the Elsternwick Major Activity Centre available to community members interested in talking through the proposals in the draft *Structure Plan* with officers as they walked through the precinct.

There were several ways the engagement was promoted, including a mailout that went to all properties within a 300-metre radius of the draft *Structure Plan* study area boundary and their owners. Postcards were also developed to promote the engagement and hand-delivered to local businesses in Elsternwick. Other communication included articles in *Glen Eira News*, the Glen Eira Council Community Engagement E-Newsletter, social media and various email blitzes with updates and reminders of upcoming engagement activities for interested community members.

Communication activities	Reach
Glen Eira News articles, including a page 3 standalone on the consultation (November and December editions)	All households in Glen Eira
Mailout to all properties within a 300m radius of the structure plan study area boundary	5300+ residents and landowners
Community Engagement E-Newsletter feature of draft <i>Elsternwick Structure Plan</i> (November and December editions)	4221 recipients 2368 opens 280 clicks
Have Your Say project engagement page live with survey available, and updates made as required	103 surveys completed 1700 page visits 1330 documents downloaded
Social Media posts via the Glen Eira Council platforms	Instagram 1600 reached, clicks NA Facebook 1200 reached, clicks 7

Hand-delivered postcards on the draft <i>Elsternwick Structure Plan</i> consultation to Elsternwick businesses	500 postcards
Emails to community members with updates and reminders of upcoming engagement activities	About 300 recipients
Glen Eira Council website homepage banner and ribbon	N/A

Engagement activities	Number who participated
Online community survey	103 surveys completed 1700 total visits 1330 document downloads
Emails	56 email submissions
Calls	10 calls to City Futures
Community drop-in sessions (face-to-face) x 5	34 attended
Walking tour through Elsternwick Major Activity Centre	6 booked, 2 attended
Online (Zoom) community information session	27 booked, 17 attended
Online information session with Elsternwick Traders' Association	6 attended

We are aware that a number of community-led meetings were held on the matter, however, this report provides feedback on Council-led engagement.

HAVE YOUR SAY ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES

We received **103** survey responses during the community engagement phase. Please note, these survey responses appear to have been submitted by 99 community members suggesting that four completed the survey twice.

VISION AND OBJECTIVES

We asked survey participants for their comments about the vision and objectives in the draft *Elsternwick Structure Plan 2022*.

Though the responses were varied, **25%** of responses (23) indicated they were generally supportive of the vision and objectives, but did not know how the draft *Plan* measures would see these materialise.

Some respondents offered suggestions to the objectives with the scaling back of the permitted amount of development by lowering permitted building heights suggested (**33%**, 30). Some respondents thought the vision could go even further.

Character and heritage protection (**33%**, 30) was mentioned and the sentiment that they cared about heritage and supported its protection. Some were concerned that increased built form would reduce heritage values and the centre's village feel.

A comprehensive list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 91)
Character and heritage protection	33% (30 of 91 mentions)
Building heights	33% (30)
Generally supportive of vision and objectives	25% (23)
Car parking	23% (21)
Environmental protection	22% (20)
Residential amenity	22% (20)
Sustainable transport	18% (16)
Traffic	16% (15)
Trees	13% (12)
Overshadowing	12% (11)
Other	10% (9)
Land use and activities	8% (7)
Building design	8% (7)
Overlooking	5% (5)
Population growth	4% (4)
Visual bulk	1% (1)

Key comments included:

"Sound vision and objectives. Could go further in same direction." (Man, 40-49, Elsternwick)

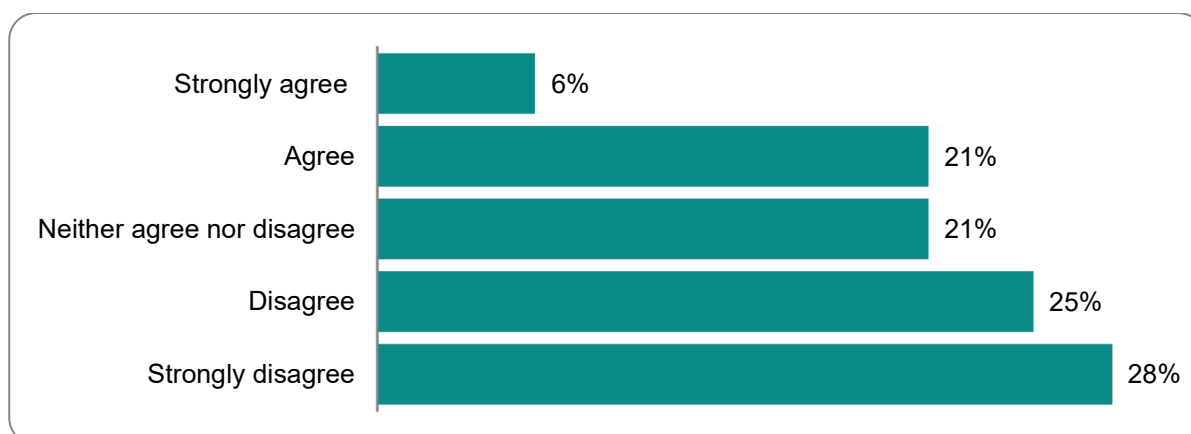
"The 'Objectives & Vision' are insulting to us as residents. Allowing up to 12 storey high housing developments goes against nearly all of the 'Objectives'" (Woman, 50-59, Elsternwick)

"I dispute the need for additional accommodation required for Elsternwick. If there is no more housing availability, then people will move elsewhere and not here." (Man, 60-69, Elsternwick)

"As a cyclist I do not very safe along Glen Huntly Road. Coloured bicycle lanes would hopefully make car owners think twice before entering or exiting their vehicle and the same applies for pedestrians." (Man, 30-39, Caulfield North)

CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY

We asked survey participants the extent to which they agreed that measures in the draft *Plan* would successfully address climate and sustainability objectives in the activity centre.



53% of responses (54 of 102) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that measures in the draft *Plan* would successfully address climate and sustainability objectives in the activity centre.

Conversely, **27%** of responses (27) either strongly agreed or agreed the draft plan would successfully address climate and sustainability objectives with a further **21%** (21) stating they neither agreed nor disagreed.

We followed the multi-choice question with an open response question asking participants if they had **anything else to add about the draft *Plan* and how it would address climate and sustainability objectives.**

Environmental considerations (**65%**, 43 of 66) were often mentioned as very important and this was equated with more open/green space, green buildings and trees. Some did not see the draft *Plan* going far enough and queried the wording used, feeling that it needed to go further or be stronger, such as 'ensuring' environmental outcomes from developers rather than just 'encouraging' them. Some thought that climate change was outside Council's role.

23% of responses (15) mentioned the importance of open space and the public realm with some stating they liked the idea proposed for new open space in Staniland Grove, with fewer interested in open space at Stanley Street. The introduction of more trees was another sentiment mentioned (**23%**, 15).

A comprehensive list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 66)
Environmental protection	65% (43 of 66 mentions)
Open space and public realm	23% (15)
Trees	23% (15)
Building design	15% (10)
Car parking	15% (10)
Traffic	14% (9)
Sustainable transport	11% (7)
Population growth	9% (6)
Building heights	9% (6)
Land uses and activities	8% (5)
Character and heritage protection	2% (1)

Key comments included:

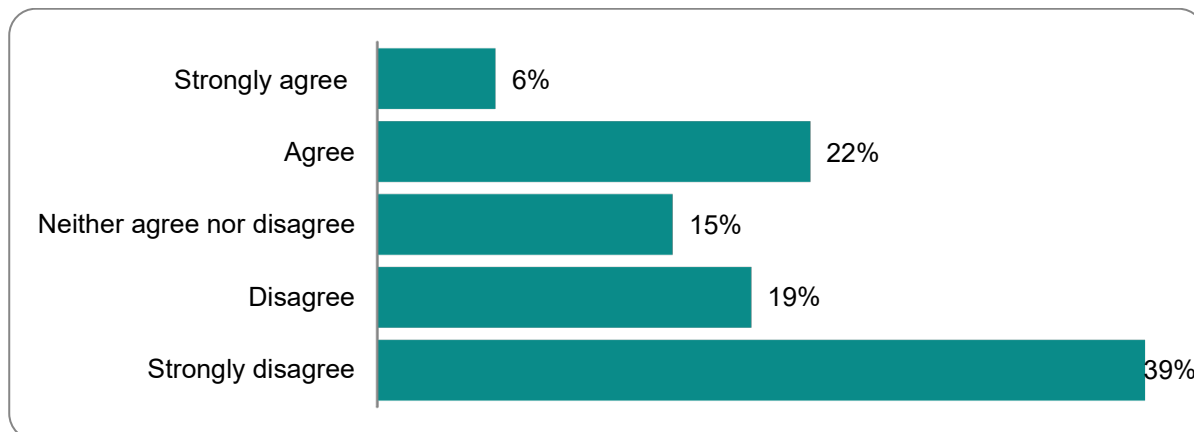
"More urban greening is necessary. Both within the housing developments and the community areas." (Woman, 40-49, Elsternwick)

"There is nothing in the draft structure plan that addresses the council's climate emergency concerns, and we continue to have large concrete structures built with poor amenity, hard paving and no green space." (Man, 50-59, Elsternwick)

"Encourage sustainable building design in all new developments" - 'Encourage' does not enforce. Specific and stringent high standards must be required as part of each proposal, including how these will be enforced and monitored. Support urban greening in the private realm, including new residential developments. Once again, this means nothing without setting high requirements of greening, including dedicated green space in each building - courtyards, entrances, roof top, balconies, walls, streetscape, even open space within the building boundaries. Encourage green walls and green roofs in new development". Enforce would mean something. Encourage is meaningless. The strategies listed are meaningless without minimum requirements set at a high level and without a plan to implement and enforce." (Woman, 60-69, Elsternwick)

HERITAGE AND CHARACTER

We asked survey participants the extent to which they agreed measures in the draft plan would successfully preserve heritage and character in the study area.



58% of responses (59 of 102) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that that the draft plan would successfully preserve heritage and character in the study area.

Conversely, **28%** of responses (28) either strongly agreed or agreed the draft Plan would successfully preserve heritage and character in the study area, with a further **15%** (15) stating they neither agreed nor disagreed.

We followed the multi-choice question with an open response question asking participants if they had **anything else to add about the draft Plan and how it would preserve heritage and character in the study area.**

78% of responses (54 of 59) mentioned character and heritage protection, with some supportive of protection of the centre’s heritage. Some were concerned that increased built form would deteriorate its heritage value and village feel.

57% of responses (39) mentioned building heights and that they wanted to see permitted limits reduced particularly on Glenhuntly Road and in the urban renewal area. Some tied this to heritage and overshadowing, and sometimes to overlooking, visual bulk and wind tunnelling.

A comprehensive list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 69)
Character and heritage protection	78% (54 of 69 mentions)
Building heights	57% (39)
Car parking	6% (4)
Trees	3% (2)

Key comments included:

“Heritage should be given greater priority even if abutting large development sites.” (Man, 30-39)

“The continual multi storey buildings under construction in and around Glenhuntly Road are ruining the suburbs heritage character.” (Woman, 30-39, Elsternwick)

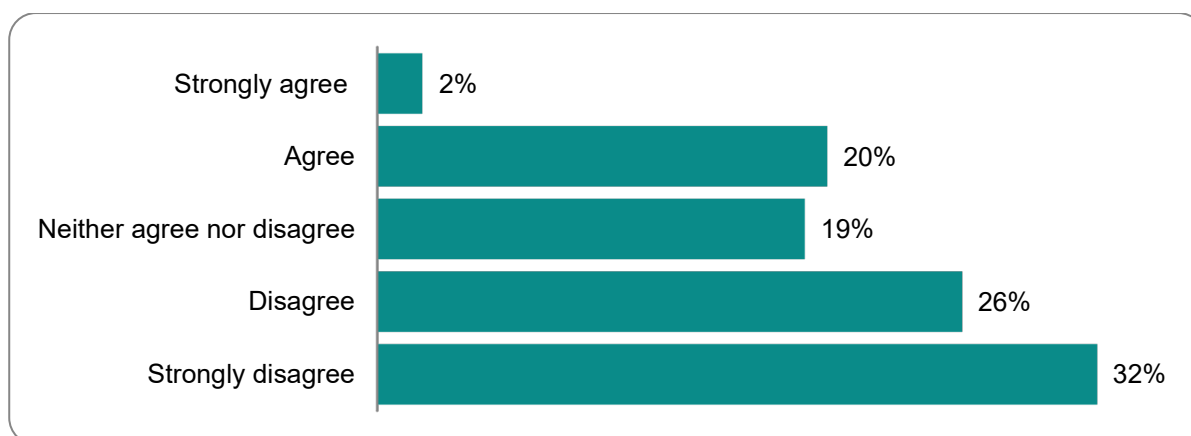
“Vision includes preservation of character and village feel. Height limits proposed for Glenhuntly Road are excessive and in no way aligned with this vision.” (Man, 40-49, Elsternwick)

“Consideration of overshadowing is fair for main strips and plazas but is an exaggerated concern for maintaining the amenity of one or two back yards. A lot of anti-height folks are anti-development and will use overshadowing or visual bulk cynically because all they want is less competition for parking their car for free on the street even though they have a driveway and garage.” (Man, 30-39, Caulfield North)

“Sounds good. Keep heights down and allow dual developments that don’t disrupt heritage character.” (Woman, 70-79, Elsternwick)

ACTIVITY AND LAND USE

We asked survey participants the extent to which they agreed measures in the draft plan would successfully provide the right land use mix in the activity centre.



58% of responses (58 of 99) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the draft *Plan* would successfully provide the right land use mix in the activity centre.

22% of responses (22) either strongly agreed or agreed that the draft *Plan* would successfully provide the right land use mix in the activity centre, with a further **19%** (19) stating they neither agreed nor disagreed.

We followed the multi-choice question with an open response question asking participants if they had **anything else to add about the draft *Plan* and how it would provide the right land use mix in the activity centre.**

44% of responses (27 of 61) mentioned population growth in the area in their responses and from the perspective that more growth would exacerbate problems - some questioned the assumption that Elsternwick has a role in accommodating Glen Eira's and Melbourne's growth.

Some respondents reiterated that they care about heritage and support its protection (**34%**, 21) and some said they were concerned that increased built form relating to building heights (**31%**, 19) would deteriorate heritage value and the village feel of the centre.

21% of responses (13) mentioned car parking in their responses, either that it was already limited or that they were supportive of repurposing public car parks for other uses while others noted the importance of car parking for local businesses.

A comprehensive list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 61)
Housing/population	44% (27 of 61 mentions)
Character and heritage protection	34% (21)
Building heights	31% (19)
Car parking	21% (13)
Trees	11% (7)
Traffic	8% (5)

Key comments included:

"The Elsternwick activity centre is already densely populated. I'm not sure we need more growth or high rises. There are already noise and traffic problems." (Man, 40-49, Elsternwick)

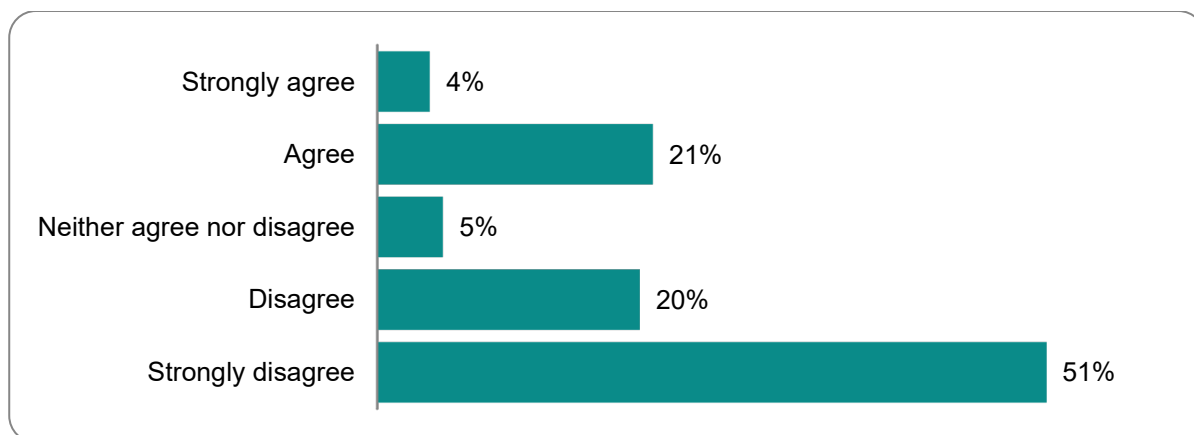
"Elsternwick was attractive for its intimate village flavour. With so much high-rise development taking place at present it is losing its attractiveness as an intimate friendly space. With the plans outlined this will be highly exacerbated!! It will no longer be our Elsternwick as we know it. It is also already increasing markedly the amount of traffic on the road, especially on Glenhuntly Road. Parking is also becoming more of an issue due to the amount of new residences." (Woman, 70-79, Elsternwick)

"Council needs to look at more recreation parks and off-street parking." (Man, 70-79, Brighton East)

"Elsternwick has already reached its expansion peak and is saturated with too many apartments and too many people for safe and clean environment. In order to maintain its character no further high rise of more than 2 storeys should be allowed. Concentration should be focused on improving current character and increasing parkland spaces and NO reduction in parking for apartments only some to include green spaces. This is more likely in line with climate change and cramping it full of apartments with loss of green space and parking." (Woman, 60-69, Elsternwick)

BUILDINGS

We asked survey participants the extent to which they agreed measures in the draft *Plan* would balance growth and change with protection of heritage and public amenity.



71% of responses (68 of 97) said they disagreed or strongly disagreed that measures in the draft plan would balance growth and change with protection of heritage and public amenity.

25% of responses (24) said they strongly agreed or agreed that the draft plan would balance growth and change with protection of heritage and public amenity, with 5% (5) indicating their neither agreed nor disagreed.

We followed the multi-choice question with an open response question asking participants if they had **anything else to add about the balancing of growth and change with protection of heritage and public amenity**.

40% of responses (25 of 63) mentioned building heights and that they were unhappy with them, asserting they should be reduced, particularly on Glenhuntly Road and in the urban renewal area. As previously mentioned, some tied this to heritage and overshadowing (14%, 9).

21% of responses (13) also indicated that the proposed increased built form would deteriorate heritage value and the village feel of the centre.

A comprehensive list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 63)
Building heights	40% (25 of 63)
Unhappy	37% (23)
Character and heritage protection	21% (13)
Over developed	17% (11)
Overshadowing	14% (9)
Car parking	6% (4)
Lack of open space	5% (3)

Key comments included:

“Don’t up-zone any parts for increased residential growth. Elsternwick is fine as it is. If people want more housing build it on the outskirts of Melbourne!” (Man, 30-39, Elsternwick)

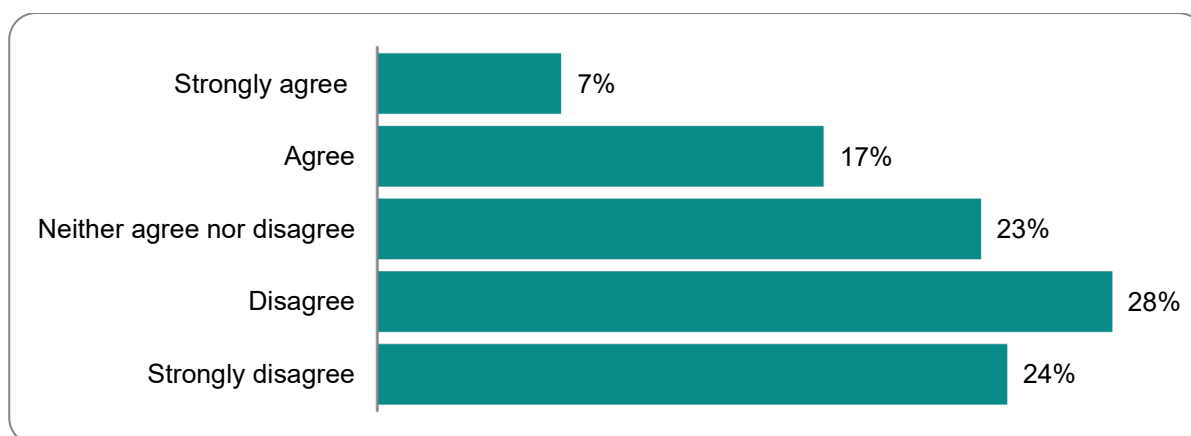
“I agree as long as we show more courage when it comes to dictating design over speed or developer profit.” (Man, 50-59, Elsternwick)

“Public amenity will be affected by the extra number of people and cars in the vicinity.” (Woman, 60-69, Elsternwick)

“Disagree with Council’s vision that “Buildings along Glenhuntly Road in the main retail precinct can reach six storeys without overwhelming the heritage streetscape if setback adequately above the street wall. The proposed Woolworths development will provide too much visual bulk and leave the area in shade, similar to Coles making the streets very cold and no winter sun for cafes and restaurants. How does the proposed Woolworths development and these proposed 6 storey buildings protect the residents’ existing residential amenity or private amenity?” (Woman, 50-59, Elsternwick)

PUBLIC SPACES

We asked participants the extent to which they agreed measures in the draft *Plan* would successfully ensure our public spaces are protected and well-planned for future needs.



53% of responses (52 of 99) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that measures in the draft plan would successfully ensure our public spaces are protected and well-planned for future needs public spaces around Staniland Grove and Orrong Road.

24% of responses (24) either strongly agreed or agreed that proposed measures would successfully ensure our public spaces are protected and well-planned for future needs, while **23%** (23) neither agreed nor disagreed.

PUBLIC SPACES AROUND STANILAND GROVE AND ORRONG ROAD

We asked survey participants if they had anything else to add about the draft *Plan's* proposal to explore options for public spaces around Staniland Grove and Orrong Road.

29% of responses (20 of 70) mentioned car parking and that the removal of them had to be considered carefully - particularly for those who are less physically able - and 13% of responses (9) told us about the considerable traffic issues they experience on Glenhuntly Road and surrounding streets.

21% of responses (15) were supportive of measures provided to increase provision of open green space and some thought more could be done.

A comprehensive list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 70)
Car parking	29% (20 of 70 mentions)
Open space and public realm	21% (15)
Traffic	13% (9)
Land uses and activities	11% (8)
Population growth	4% (3)
Wind tunnelling	3% (2)
Sustainable transport	11% (8)
Building heights	7% (5)
Trees	4% (3)
Population growth	3% (2)
Character and heritage protection	1% (1)

Key comments included:

"If we look to reduce traffic on Glenhuntly Rd then reducing parking in side streets becomes an issue for retailers. I think that the overall plan for this area is a great idea." (Man, 50-59, Elsternwick)

"I think these are fine in principle but there are opportunities in Elsternwick for more public spaces, urban forests and green links which have not been investigated here, or in some cases, only just starting to be looked at despite Council being alerted to these several times over many years." (Man, 50-59, McKinnon)

"Carparking underground? More public open space and greenery is only to be encouraged. As long as these spaces are not surrounded by towers." (Woman, 50-59, Elsternwick)

"The development of shared zones impacts travel times, parking and safety. I would be happier if Council focussed on ensuring the existing pedestrian access (footpaths and crossings) are properly maintained so more could be spent on the increased availability of the open spaces in particular." (Man, 50-59, Elsternwick)

RE-PURPOSING OF SELECT ON-STREET PARKING FOR OUTDOOR DINING AND TREE PLANTING

We asked survey participants for their feedback on the potential re-purposing of select on-street parking for uses such as outdoor dining and tree planting.

60% of responses (45 of 77) mentioned car parking in their responses. Some indicated the removal of car parking along Glenhuntly Road was a good thing, some also acknowledged there is a need for car parking for businesses and for those who are less mobile. Some felt that car parking needed to be accommodated off-street.

Some respondents who were local residents said they had experienced overflow parking in their residential streets and had trouble parking near their homes.

A comprehensive list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 77)
Car parking	60% (46 of 77 mentions)
Trees	12% (9)
Traffic	10% (8)
Sustainable transport	9% (7)
Land uses and activities	9% (7)
Open space and public realm	6% (5)
Environment protection	3% (2)

Key comments included:

"The ambition is good, however, car parking in Elsternwick is bad at the best of times and will need to be considered given that as a MAC it is trying to attract business/customers outside the 20-

minute access range. Will Council need to consider underground parking?” (Prefer not to say, Elsternwick)

“Turning car parks into dining is always a winner. People think they will miss those few spots, but the space can be used so much more productively.” (Man, 30-39, Caulfield North)

“This would be an improvement.” (Man, 40-49, Elsternwick)

“Recommend retaining streetscape scale on main road as is, retaining on-street parking. Footpath trading works, and tree planting on Glen Huntly is not the best place for trees. Focus on tree planting in side streets. The main street should stay to similar scale as current.” (Woman, 40-49)

“Outdoor dining is limited to weather. More parks and wider footpaths are required with tree are required.” (Prefer not to say, 50-59, Elsternwick)

RE-PURPOSING OF SELECT CAR PARKS FOR OPEN SPACE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES OR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

We asked survey participants for their feedback on the potential re-purposing of select on-street parking for other uses such as open space community activities or affordable housing, in addition to ongoing public car parking.

62% of responses (48 of 77) mentioned car parking followed by about public space and the public realm (**34%, 26**). Some participants thought that open space was a necessity but were split on whether car parking should be removed to make way for this, unless other off-street public car parking is made available or is moved underground to offset potential loss in the future.

Some cited existing car parking issues, including the spilling of cars parking in streets away from Glenhuntly Road. Some participants were divided about whether affordable housing was necessary, and some were sceptical as to whether more dwellings would in fact be more affordable.

A comprehensive list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 77)
Car parking	62% (48 of 77)
Open space and the public realm	34% (26)
Other	23% (18)
Land use and activities	5% (4)
Trees	5% (4)
Building heights	3% (2)
Character and heritage protection	3% (2)
Traffic	1% (1)

Key comments included:

“Open space, yes, affordable housing, no. The Council should not sacrifice open space to development of any kind. The supposedly legislated affordable housing in large private developments is minimal, while public housing requires state government land. The loss of that

council asset would only benefit the few. Also, open space car parking is safer for all and offers the ability to add to the tree canopy.” (Prefer not to say)

*“The existing parking is fully used and should not be converted apart from extra tree planting.”
(Woman, 40-49, Elsternwick)*

“Prefer Council car parks to be retained - improve tree planting throughout car parks - they have not been maintained well for decades.” (Woman, 40-49)

ANYTHING TO ADD

We provided another open-ended question for anything further participants wanted to add about public spaces.

A list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 35)
Building heights	20% (7 of 35 mentions)
Traffic	17% (6)
Car parking	14% (5)
Trees	11% (4)
Character and heritage protection	11% (4)

Key comments included:

“Keep building heights to a maximum of 6 stories along the main streets and double the mandatory parking required for underground parking (may eventually be used for additional underground living space when the weather gets rougher like in Coober Pedy or Canada!)” (Woman, 70-79, Elsternwick)

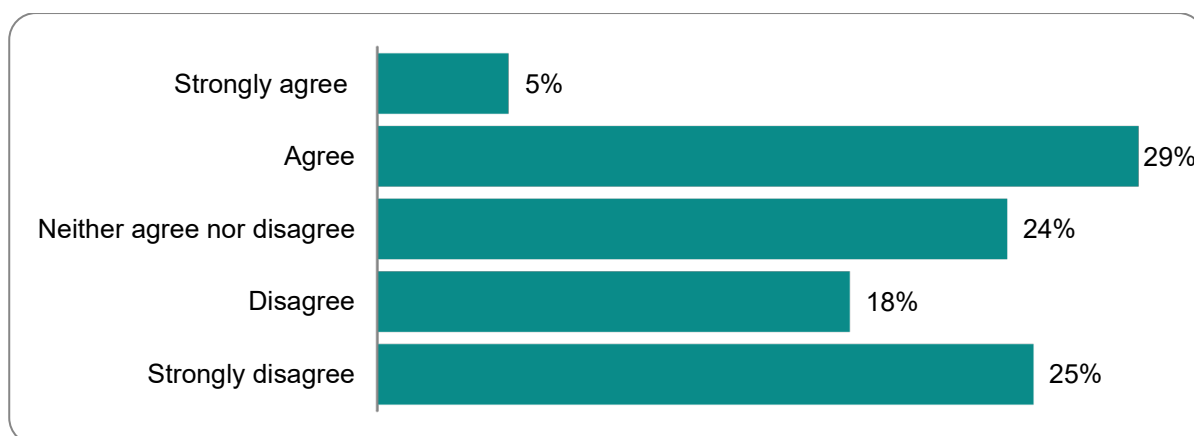
“Go lightly with structure plan, lower heights, do less. The scale and amenity of Elsternwick is great and is slowly being eroded by poor built form that overshadows the street. Strengthen green and solar on roof tops. keep council car parks, and most important lower building heights and increase setbacks. Enforce solar studies and wind studies on all proposals to ensure minimum impact to community around. Green side streets and roof tops, not main street.” (Woman, 40-49)

“Please make sure that available car spaces grow to accommodate growth in the population. And include electric charging stations. The reality is that cars will still exist.” (Woman, Prefer not to say, Elsternwick)

“Some streets can be made one-way so that the other half can be made into parkland.” (Man, 70-79, Brighton East)

TRANSPORT

We asked survey participants the extent to which participants agreed measures in the draft *Plan* would ensure the transport network will serve our community well in the activity centre.



43% of responses (42 of 98) indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed that the draft *Plan* would help the transport network serve our community well in the activity centre.

34% of responses (32) indicated they strongly agreed or agreed that the draft *Plan* would help to ensure the transport network would serve our community well in the activity centre, with a further **24%** (23) neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

We followed the multi-choice question with an open response question asking participants if they had **anything else to add about how the draft *Plan* could ensure the transport network would serve our community well in the activity centre.**

56% of responses (31 of 55) mentioned sustainable transport in their responses. Some participants said the busy-ness of public transport is currently a deterrent for people using it as well as the steep ramp at Elsternwick train station and steps onto the trams on the route.

Some participants said while cycling and other modes of sustainable transport made sense, the dangers of doing so around Elsternwick were difficult due to safety concerns. Some were supportive of improvements to walking and cycling networks and safety.

36% of responses (20) mentioned traffic or car parking (**27%, 15**) in their responses. Some queried whether new residents in new dwellings would in fact not drive cars without having off-street carparking, and whether no provision for the potential loss of car parking or increase in population would exacerbate existing issues regarding traffic and safety of Glenhuntly Road.

A comprehensive list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 55)
Sustainable transport	56% (31 of 55)
Traffic	36% (20)
Car parking	27% (15)
Population growth	18% (10)
Residential amenity	7% (4)
Open space and the public realm	4% (2)

Key comments included:

“In principle I see that both the traffic mix and public amenity would be improved. I am all for improving this aspect of our lives.” (Prefer to not to say, 70-79, Elsternwick)

“Prioritising cycling paths excellent idea. It is a mistake to think, in the near term, that people won’t use cars and need parking. While re-purposing carparks for open space use is entirely appealing, other parking options must be incorporated. The wider planning issues to accommodate the increased population in the area requires the PTV to adapt to the changes accordingly. Effective planning is useless without it.” (Woman, 50-59, Elsternwick)

“Disagree with the Council's view that limiting the provision of car parking in new residential development at select locations will assist in lowering the number of cars and car trips in the centre per capita over time. No resident parking should be approved for new developments that also seek reduced parking conditions. People might use public transport to commute to work but still require a car, e.g. I require a car to get to Council offices as there is no public transport. While it is true that our area is near existing transport, this transport is already at capacity, additional population increase will impact our already over-crowded train, tram and bus facilities.” (Woman, 50-59, Elsternwick)

ANYTHING ELSE TO ADD

We invited survey participants to tell us anything else they wanted to about the draft *Elsternwick Structure Plan*.

A comprehensive list of themes mentioned for this question are below:

Key themes of participant feedback	Number of mentions by respondents (Total 60)
Building heights	28% (17 of 60)
Unhappy	25% (15)
Over developed/population growth	18% (11)
Environment/open space	10% (6)
Character and heritage protection	8% (5)
Improve existing amenities	3% (2)
Trees	3% (2)
Traffic	2% (1)
Accessibility for all	2% (1)

Key comments included:

“There is a tension between population growth and associated demand for housing and the environment. At this particular time of history, the sustainability of the design and the protection and enhancement of the environment has to be central to any proposed structure plan.” (Woman, 60-69, Elsternwick)

“Maintaining heritage facades is very important but a lot of development opposition is cynical, and heritage and tree loss is used as a weapon. The measures in the draft seem reasonable. Tall towers at the car dealerships seemed like the perfect spot to increase housing stock so I am surprised we have ruled this out. Even with lower heights there is lots of room for dense housing along the Nepean. Keep up the pressure on bike and ped safety. Our lives are at stake.” (Man, 30-39, Caulfield North)

“Looks good in concept, it remains to be seen how closely it will be followed when deep-pocketed developer pressure comes to bear. We have no need of a second major grocery store on Glen Huntly Rd, just blocks away from Coles, for example.” (Man, 50-59, Elsternwick)

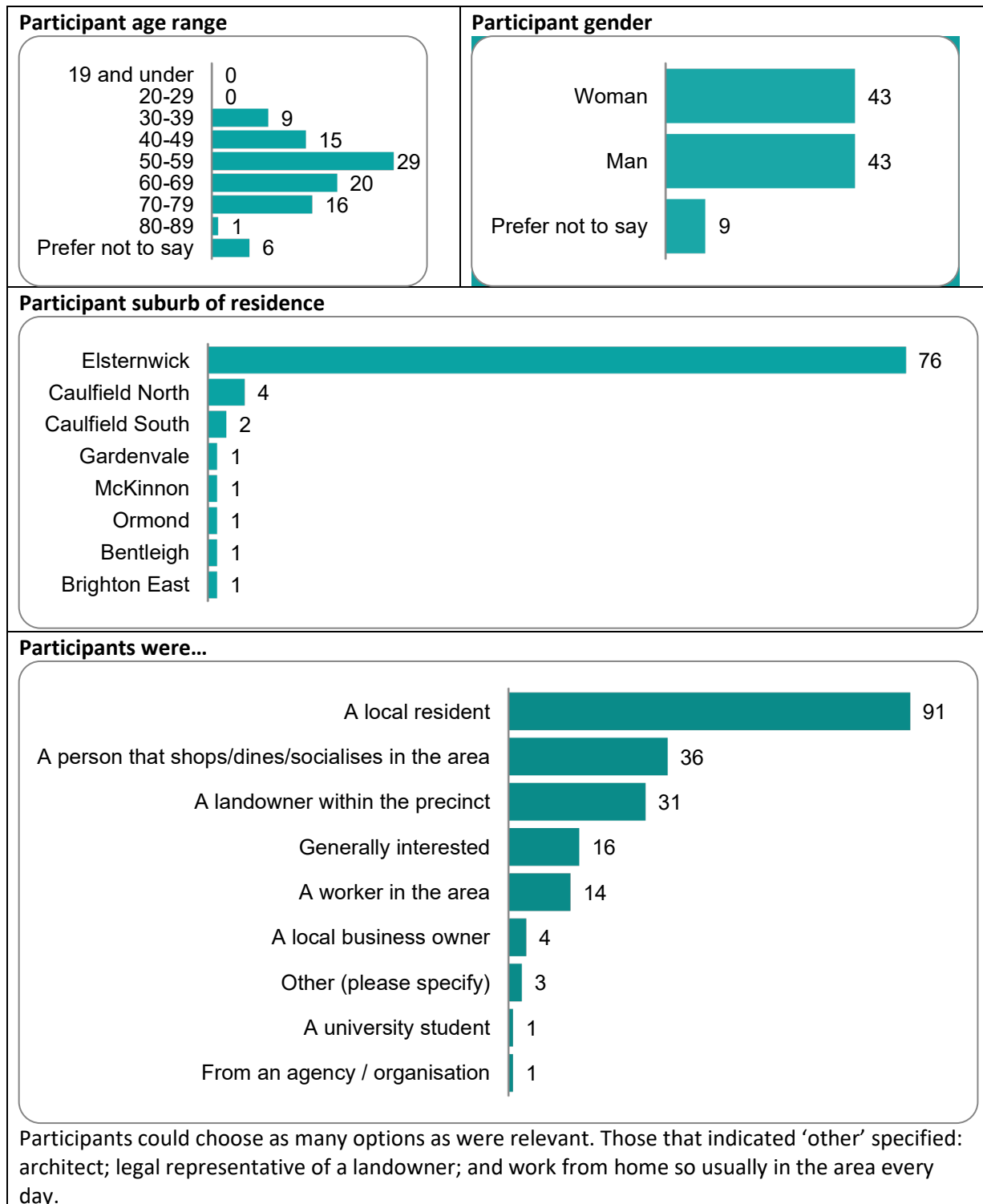
“Outdoor dining - strong agree. It is an incredibly viable and sensible option for all businesses to pursue in our new era of living with Covid, and potential future communicable disease pandemics. It is a decision that protects the businesses revenue stream and provides the consumer with choice.” (Prefer not to say, 30-39, Gardenvale)

“The proposed height limits along Glenhuntly Rd and Hotham Street west of the railway line are not competent with the overall objectives of the Elsternwick Plan.” (Man, 50-59, Elsternwick)

“More trees, more open space, more pedestrian crossings and more cycle lanes please.” (Man, 30-39, Elsternwick)

WHO PARTICIPATED IN OUR COMMUNITY SURVEY?

Please note that not all participants provided a response to the demographic questions.



EMAILS RECEIVED

Over the community engagement period we received **56 emails** from community members with their feedback and ideas about the draft *Plan*.

The feedback we received via email was similarly themed to the submissions received from the online survey with several emailers also completing the survey.

Some community members who emailed us were unsupportive of the building height limits proposed in the draft *Plan* and provided feedback about their concerns of the effects of taller built form on heritage, village character, residential amenity, sunlight, wind tunnelling and overlooking of private space. Other concerns that people raised were visual bulk, a lack of car parking and increased traffic congestion. Some wanted to see more greens space, more stringent overshadowing requirements and better environmental outcomes for residents today as well as future residents.

Some emails suggested that the draft *Plan* should contain more detailed targets and measures. Others did not agree with the 50:50 mode share target or the assumption that Elsternwick is growing, suggesting that it is already a very busy centre. Some drew comparisons to activity in other suburbs and questioned the power of Council to deliver what the community is seeking considering State Government requirements or the influence of developers.

Some email submissions related to specific properties or locations in the centre such as Ross Street, Maysbury Avenue and May Street. Some expressed opposition to the allowable building heights proposed in these places and subsequent issues that new development could bring, in particular, visual bulk and overshadowing. Some stressed the importance of good quality amenity for current residents at these locations. Some pointed to past VCAT decisions in support of their arguments.

Some emails were supportive of what was envisioned in the *Structure Plan* around their property or were seeking even greater flexibility in building height. (Please note that demographic details for emails are not available, as there is no requirement for email submitters to include this information.)

Key comments included:

“As residents of Elsternwick for thirty years we greatly appreciate the amenities and convenience of the area, and do not object to increasing the number of residents who can enjoy the same. However, we begin to wonder what powers Council has to determine the future of our suburb. Have real planning powers been handed to government bodies and developers?”

“There is no proactive requirement in the Structure Plan for greening up areas directly earmarked for multi storey developments. What about a requirement of an avenues of trees to be planted along the fronts and backs of such constructions? Keeping only the facades of heritage buildings and constructing high rises behind the facades is a mockery of retaining heritage character. Heritage buildings must be properly protected. The focus of the future of Elsternwick should be: more open space; recovering tree canopy loss; combating effects of climate change; sustainability; reducing traffic congestion for healthy living.”

“I would firstly like to say thank you for lowering the heights to two stories in the area of Stanley Street and Orrong Road, it was like a breath of fresh air.”

*“There are many positive elements in the plan and the Vision and Objectives are particularly commendable. **12 stories on Horne St is totally inappropriate!** It needs to be revisited so the Structure Plan can get the balance right and live up to its vision and objectives!”*

*“We **support the proposal to increase height limits on Ross Street**. Our position that increasing density on Ross Street from 4-6 levels is predicated on the need to consider Horne & Ross Street development potential collectively. We request that Council undertake detailed Urban Design and Built Form analysis.”*

DROP IN INFORMATION SESSIONS

There were **five drop-in sessions** held during the engagement session. Four of these occurred at Glen Eira Town Hall and one of these occurred at Elsternwick Library once works had been completed.

A total of **34 community members attended** these face-to-face sessions and spoke with strategic planners about the draft *Elsternwick Structure Plan*. Questions asked were generally of a personal nature and how the draft Plan would impact their property.

Themes covered in discussions at these sessions included:

- concerns about provision of on-street parking
- interest in development potential in specific areas
- clarification about heritage overlays in area
- the future of the Elsternwick Library site
- height limits and setbacks, generally and in particular locations
- character and heritage protection
- preservation of trees and open green space
- environmental protection.

PHONE CALLS

Council received **10 phone calls** from community members about the draft *Plan*. They spoke with a strategic planner generally seeking clarification on a number of aspects of the draft *Plan*.

The themes covered included:

- timelines
- proposed rezoning and height limits
- Elsternwick Library site
- traffic and congestion.

ONLINE INFORMATION SESSION

The online information session was booked by 27 community members, but only **17 attended**. This session involved a presentation by Council about the draft *Plan* followed by a discussion.

All community member comments were noted, and Council provided a Question and Answer document afterwards responding to community questions.

A recording of the session was made available on the online engagement page for community members who were unable to attend but wanted to watch at a later time.

The themes that were raised included:

- height limits and risk of overshadowing
- population growth and pressures
- character and heritage protection
- affordable housing
- traffic flow
- creation of open space around train station.

Please view Appendix 1 below for the [Question and Answer document](#).

APPENDIX I: Draft Elsternwick Structure Plan online information session: Q and A

24 November 2022 6:30-7:30 pm

What justification is there to allow development up to 5 storeys above the Scout Hall?

The Scout Hall at 2 Miller St is currently zoned Residential Growth Zone (RGZ) with a 4-storey height limit. Redevelopment above is already allowed. The draft *Structure Plan* recommends rezoning this site to a Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) and increasing the height allowance to 5 storeys. The heritage overlay does not prevent new development above this building, but it requires that any new development apply for a permit. The application would be reviewed by Council's heritage consultant to ensure the heritage value of the building is retained if development were to occur. The height limit is drawn from the urban design analysis, regardless of ownership, and would be applied if development were proposed.

What justification is there for 8-12 storeys?

Elsternwick is growing and there is demand for new dwellings and employment space into the future. State planning policy directs growth to activity centres. The draft *Structure Plan* aims to balance growth with protecting heritage and other characteristics valued by the community. While there are areas proposed to allow 8- 12 storeys to accommodate some of this growth, taller built form is restricted to a small part of Elsternwick, close to the train station and Nepean Highway. At the same time, the draft *Structure Plan* is proposing a considerable amount of downzoning from 4 storeys to 2, to protect residential heritage. Most of Elsternwick is proposed to remain low scale.

The draft *Structure Plan* and subsequent Planning Scheme amendment aim to secure permanent height restrictions in a major activity centre (MAC). Council must demonstrate to an independent Planning Panel and to State Government why anything higher than 12 storeys should not be allowed in Elsternwick MAC.

Where is the infrastructure to support additional development?

Improvements to the transport network and new open space to accommodate a growing population are proposed in the draft *Structure Plan*, consistent with other Council strategies like the *Open Space Strategy*. Future community infrastructure needs will be assessed and improved as required. This is an ongoing process with or without a structure plan in place.

Has Amendment C239 progressed?

This is an amendment proposing heritage protection for additional properties in Elsternwick. Council sought authorisation to exhibit the amendment from the Minister for Planning in April 2022. This request has been rejected and additional heritage will not be considered in Elsternwick until a structure plan has been adopted.

What impacts would adjacent development have on St Clement's church?

St Clements Church (205 Glenhuntly Rd) is proposed to be rezoned from residential to commercial along with the surrounding properties. It is protected by an individual heritage

overlay and is proposed to remain unchanged, despite rezoning. However, development can occur adjacent to the church provided the church is treated as a sensitive interface with appropriate setbacks. Development applications adjacent to the site would be reviewed by Council's heritage consultant.

What precedent is there for Council developing affordable housing?

Council's adopted [Social and Affordable Housing Strategy](#) lists 'provide' as one of the four themes to address unmet needs for social and affordable housing, including identifying opportunities to provide affordable housing on Council land. Council already does provide a limited amount of affordable housing which is rented to financially disadvantaged older residents.

Past documentation (for example, referral responses to the development proposal at 10-16 Selwyn St in 2019) indicated housing targets could be achieved with less intensive development. Why is it more intensive now?

The draft *Structure Plan* does not have a housing target. It aims to ensure there are good outcomes for sustainability, heritage and amenity as development occurs, and to ensure the centre performs its role as a MAC by providing the right land use mix for future employment and housing diversity needs. The *Structure Plan* guides growth and development to the right locations.

Are proposed height limits mandatory or discretionary?

Building heights proposed for heritage properties in the Main Retail precinct along Glenhuntly Road are mandatory. Building heights proposed for other commercial and mixed-use land is discretionary. Building heights on residential land are mandatory.

Which streets will take the delivery trucks for the new supermarket?

Site-specific impacts and responses are analysed in detail as part of the development application process, such as was done for the future supermarket site at 10-16 Selwyn Street. Broader transport analysis for the whole MAC is embedded into the draft *Structure Plan*.

How much of this *Structure Plan* depends on which government we have?

The draft *Structure Plan* aligns not with a party but with State planning policy as outlined in [Plan Melbourne 2017-2050](#). If that should change, structure planning would also change. Funding of projects is largely Council's responsibility and worked into annual budgets, so changes at other levels of government will not affect that. However, components such as public transport are the responsibility of State Government. Council's role there is to advocate for the changes proposed in the draft. Council will also seek funding support from other levels of government for local projects wherever possible.

How can Council protect heritage shops from overdevelopment and disrepair?

Redevelopment of a building in a heritage precinct requires a planning permit, so all proposals for change in these areas are assessed against relevant heritage controls and policies. Maintenance and repairs of private property are the responsibility of landowners.

What protection will there be to avoid blocking of winter sun from the southern footpath of Glenhuntly Road?

The draft *Structure Plan* identifies Elsternwick Plaza and Hopetoun Gardens as key public spaces to protect with a winter shadow control, as well as potential new open spaces at the former ABC site on Gordon Street and at the Elsternwick Library. The southern footpath of Glenhuntly Road was not identified as a key public space that must be protected from winter shadowing because it is already in the shadow of existing buildings in winter, including 2-storey heritage buildings. An equinox shadow control is proposed for the southern footpath of Glenhuntly Road for heritage properties in the Main Retail precinct.

Reference to other documents such as the Urban Design Guidelines, peer reviews of previous work and Planning Panel reports.

The draft *Structure Plan* is based on current independent urban design advice with input from economics, transport and heritage expertise. Broad State planning policy, Planning Practice Notes, recent planning panel reports and VCAT decisions, as well as previous Council work were all taken into consideration and helped to inform the analysis that underpins the draft *Structure Plan*.

How does this *Structure Plan* allow for ideal open space provision (example provided of 2ha per 1000 people)?

Glen Eira's [Open Space Strategy Refresh 2020](#) outlines Council's intentions for future public open space throughout Glen Eira. For Elsternwick, Council will seek a contribution of new public open space as part of the redevelopment of the former ABC site on Gordon Street. Council may purchase land for additional open space in suitable locations of Elsternwick where possible. Council may consider future uses of some at-grade car parking for public open space, subject to feasibility and further decisions of Council.

Why do other suburbs have greater height restrictions?

All activity centres are different and must be treated in context of the municipality and its network of activity centres. There are some centres with lower height restrictions but there are others throughout metro Melbourne with more generous provisions that allow taller built form. The draft *Structure Plan* strikes a balance between managing growth and change in the MAC while also protecting valued heritage and amenity.

Can the proposed *Structure Plan* include overshadowing diagrams on open space?

An overshadowing diagram is provided on page 41 of the draft *Structure Plan*. Additional imagery in the final *Plan* will be considered.

Has Council considered covering the rail line to create new open space or parking?

This idea was proposed in the previous *Structure Plan*. However, the cost is too great for Council to commit, so it has not been included in the 2022 draft.

Why is there so much discretion?

The draft *Structure Plan* must work within the Victorian planning system, which is generally discretionary, especially for commercial areas. Discretionary provisions are flexible and take the context of the centre and development site into consideration which can accommodate more innovative design than a prescriptive planning system.

Have you considered congestion around new development at Orrong Rd?

The transport analysis looked at the MAC as a whole rather than at specific development sites, which are handled through the development application process. The draft *Structure Plan* makes recommendations for Orrong Road that recognise it as both a high-traffic route and a bicycle route, including safer intersection design for cyclists and pedestrians.

What wind tunnelling analysis has been done?

The urban design analysis addressed wind tunnelling in a very limited way. Wind impacts can be mitigated through building design features such as façade treatments and street tree planting for pedestrian comfort. The cumulative impact of development on wind tunnelling is also assessed through development applications.

Can we be provided with the heritage report?

The heritage advice that Council received was provided to help guide internal decisions and advice, but it was not prepared for public distribution.

Use of the term ‘village’

An urban village provides a range of community facilities. Over time this has been replaced by the term activity centre. The idea of a ‘village feel’ refers to a form of development of narrow shopfronts with no ground-level setbacks that have residences above and high pedestrian activity. This differs from, for example, more contemporary built form commonly found in cities such as large, single-storey shops with at-grade car park frontages and no residential development above, which tend to be more car-oriented.

Note that some trees do not perform well from winter shadowing

Council will choose from a tree palette of appropriate species and recommend species best suited to local conditions.

Why should we think this plan will achieve anything given that the Elsternwick South plan was abandoned?

Council has reset its strategic planning program beginning with the [Housing Strategy](#), which was adopted by Council on 2 November 2022. Council has also recently adopted structure plans for Carnegie, Caulfield and Glen Huntly, as well as Built Form Frameworks for three neighbourhood activity centres. Several planning scheme amendments are underway to begin implementing these plans and frameworks. Elsternwick is on the same trajectory.

Council needs to demand new trams.

Advocacy for increased tram service and improved stops is included in the draft *Plan*.

What is Council proposing for the library site?

The draft *Structure Plan* proposes ongoing provision of library services and carparking plus a new public use such as public open space. (Note that the height limit indicated is provided as part of the urban design assessment only. It is Council-owned land so any proposal for this site is subject to more detailed consultation, feasibility assessment and Council decisions.) This aligns with a proposal for a community hub prepared in 2019. However,

implementation of the hub would not occur for several years due to other Council budget priorities.

Clarify whether mandatory height limits are possible.

Yes, mandatory building height controls are possible where they can be justified. Council intends to seek mandatory height limits on the heritage strip in the Main Retail Precinct because there is a strong strategic basis. The Minister for Planning makes the final decision.

All comments are noted.