

NORTH WEST CITY NEWS

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Puzzles & Trivia P22



▲ MAMA co-founders Jan Ireland and Kelly Langford have launched a crowdfunding campaign to save their clinic. Photo: Murray Enders.

Council set to take state government to task over Arden plan after recommendations “ignored”

The City of Melbourne is preparing to challenge the state government for an explanation as to why various recommendations were largely “ignored” in its approval of the Arden precinct redevelopment plan, including affordable housing not being made mandatory.

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PLANNING

The release of the planning scheme amendment in July, which will guide the precinct’s Arden Structure Plan over the next 30 years, left one councillor blindsided, with the differences between the council’s position and the approved provisions considered to be “vast”.

This included the fact that the plan would “support and encourage” the delivery of only six per cent affordable housing rather than it being required, despite estimates the precinct would be home to 15,000 residents.

“The extent to which the state government has ignored its own expert advisory panel, and through it the City of Melbourne and local community, is staggering,” Cr Rohan Leppert said, who leads the council’s sustainable building portfolio and is deputy chair of planning.

“If the government can’t require a measly six per cent affordable housing requirement on land it owns and will sell, then where on earth will it do so? To say I’m disappointed is an understatement.”

In response, the council has launched an investigation which will be compiled in a report to be considered by councillors in September.

It will analyse how the council had reached such a position, how much it cost, and why most recommendations from the Victorian Planning Authority Projects Standing Advisory Committee were “ignored” and “therefore, most of the work undertaken by the City of Melbourne” in order to, according to Cr Leppert, “avoid this ever happening again”.

In addition to affordable housing not being mandatory, the council, through its report, will review why other provisions in the precinct plan had differed from its stance including:

- Floor area ratio (FAR) controls being too high and not mandatory in the area around the new Arden underground railway station
- No measures in the approved Arden planning controls requiring buildings to ‘achieve world-leading sustainability performance’
- No requirement for developers to meet mandatory car parking rates; and
- No legal requirement for residents to be notified of planning applications

Under the redevelopment plan, Arden will be divided into four sub-precincts, each with a “unique purpose”

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Midwifery clinic turns to crowdfunding to keep doors open

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
HEALTH

A Kensington family clinic which provides pregnancy and postnatal support has launched a crowdfunding campaign to keep its doors open as the City of Melbourne looks to sell the building.

Midwives and Mothers Australia (MAMA) has operated out of 30-38 Gatehouse Drive since 2011 after it became the state’s first private midwifery clinic, with services including acupuncture, physiotherapy, chiropractic care, aromatherapy, baby massage, and breastfeeding support among others.

But the council, which owns the building, has announced its intention to sell the property, along with three others in the municipality, as they do not support “future needs, meet the standards for accessibility or align

with the strategic objectives”.

The council sought community feedback on the proposal from July 4 to August 7 with a report to come back in September before a decision is made at a council meeting. Should the property be put on the market, the sale process would begin in October.

MAMA co-founder Kelly Langford said the council’s reasoning so far was that there was a maternal child health service nearby, but that “gave us a very clear idea that they don’t know what services we provide”.

“We are quite separate to the [government-run] maternal and child health services and while both have an overlap it is a completely separate scope of practice,” she said.

“I know that it’s nothing personal against us or our services in closing the building, but I do wish that was more forethought in the proposal around the services it provides the community.”

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The deadline for the September edition is September 8.

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Midwifery clinic turns to crowdfunding to keep doors open

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In a last-ditch attempt to keep their facility running, MAMA has launched a change.org petition which has garnered almost 2500 signatures so far.

Among their supportive clients is mother-to-be Freya Van Oosten of Essendon, who said having a comforting environment “where I can really get to know my care providers and have that consistency” was invaluable.

“It’s a wonderful model of care and I think it would be really sad to lose this intuition,” she said.

“When the council and government are saying that they want to improve maternal health outcomes and outcomes for children, and yet they’re taking away these resources, it doesn’t make sense.”

Another expectant mother Beth Harvey, 34, who began using MAMA’s services in 2019 after her first baby was born, said their support had been “amazing”, particularly during a time when she suffered post-natal anxiety.

“After I had [my daughter], I went to some of their allied services like mums’ and bubs’ yoga and they had Friday breastfeeding drop-ins where women would gather and the midwives would make us a tea, and we would just be able to talk which is perhaps critical for new mums trying to figure it all out,” she said.

“There really is nothing else like it. It would be such a shame for so many women to miss out.”

Ms Langford said the MAMA clinic, which stayed open during COVID-19 lockdowns, had supported more than 2000 women in the past decade through its continuity of care model.

“All of the practitioners [who] come to work in the building all have a drive for one reason or another to provide families with really, really good care in whatever area they’re in,” she said.



▲ A session hosted by MAMA at its Kensington clinic.

Ms Langford said while they had a smaller clinic in Hampton, it “barely caters for the people that we’ve got southside”, and the affordability of moving the business elsewhere would be out of reach.

“We have always struggled to inflate our prices. We just don’t want the service to be unaffordable to people and that really affects how much we charge.” ●



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Council blueprint predicts boom growth in Arden, Macaulay

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

Arden and Macaulay will boom in the next 20 years and see a huge growth in residents and workers according to a once-per-decade strategy released by the City of Melbourne.

The council's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS), last updated in 2010, includes an updated city vision that focused on big expansion in areas north-west of the CBD.

According to the strategy, industrial and former industrial areas like Arden and Macaulay (plus Fishermans Bend) were "undergoing significant change in function, form and character" and would "accommodate a significant portion of the growth and change in the municipality over the next 20 years".

West Melbourne would also be transformed in the next two decades and is proposed to become "the new Fitzroy or Collingwood for the west of the city".

"The growth of the municipality is now moving west, onto the lower, wetter plains," the strategy stated.

"The urban renewal precincts of the city which are transforming from industrial areas to mixed use areas offer unparalleled opportunities to reimagine our future landscapes and built form."

By 2040, Arden's local population will increase more than tenfold, from 441 (recorded in 2020) to 5061, while worker numbers will similarly surge, from 1761 to 9896.

In Macaulay, resident numbers will rise from 2725 to 9311, while local workers will swell from 2821 to 7517.

Across the two urban renewal areas, nestled in between North Melbourne and Kensington, the number of residents and workers will surge by almost 25,000 compared to present figures.

The MPS, which introduces policies that guide both land use and development decisions, included an updated vision on all suburbs within the City of Melbourne.

While neighbourhoods like North Melbourne and Kensington were "established areas" that would "continue to be nurtured as high amenity inner urban neighbourhoods", the strategy had a distinct focus on areas west and northwest of the CBD.

It predicted that Arden would gain a reputation as a "highly liveable and sustainable precinct will make it a magnet for innovative industries".

"It will have a lively public realm, high quality and affordable places to live, community hubs, a new primary school, diverse open spaces, and a walking and cycling network centred on the new Arden Station," it stated.

The vision for Macaulay was similarly ambitious, predicting it would become a "compact, mid-rise, walkable neighbourhood".

"Resilient natural systems will feature, with a revitalised Moonee Ponds Creek and a network of people-focused streets and green spaces. A diversity of uses, in new and adaptively reused buildings, will deliver a thriving neighbourhood supporting a growing population."

The council's planning chair Cr Nicholas Reece predicted West Melbourne would become a mixed-use area that is respectful of its industrial heritage, much like nearby suburbs to the east.

"Suburbs like West Melbourne will transition," he said.

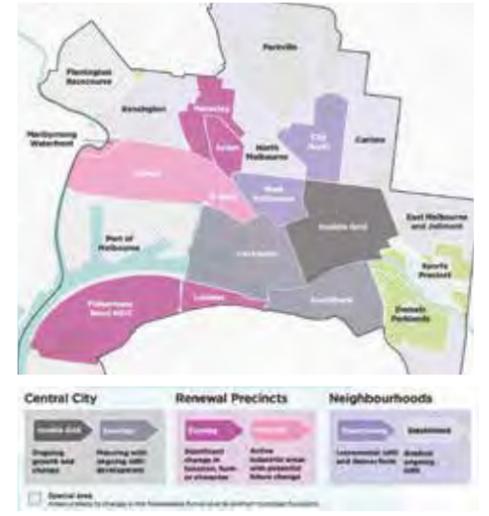
"They've got a strong industrial history — they'll continue to be a place where a lot of people are employed but will also take on a much more residential character, becoming like the new Fitzroy or Collingwood for the west of the city."

Population projections within the strategy predicted West Melbourne's resident numbers to more than double, from 8262 to 17,156 in 2040, while workers would also swell from 4783 to 7772.

While not introducing an entirely new vision for the future of the city, the MPS rather consolidates the council's already-endorsed

Arden seems really nice, and the new station will be a small walk from our new home!

Yesss!!!
And there's a dog park in Macaulay...
Time to adopt?



▲ A suburb-by-suburb map of the Municipal Planning Strategy, noting the key renewal precincts of Arden and Macaulay.

policies (from recent years) related to planning matters, such as the Affordable Housing Strategy and the Transport Strategy 2030.

The council's planning chair Cr Nicholas Reece said the MPS was a "once in a decade opportunity to chart a course for what Melbourne will look like in the decades ahead."

"We're planning out to 2040," Cr Reece said. "Modern Melbourne, as we know it, is not just a city that happened by magic. It's the result of very deliberate, and strategic, decision-making by the city and by the state. It's the product of one good decision building on another."

Deputy planning chair Cr Rohan Leppert said the strategy would play a hugely influential role in upcoming planning matters and meant that the "unholy friction" between local and state governments planning agendas could be managed.

"[That relationship] can be managed in a way that there's some certainty and some

understanding by all parties in the planning system, especially local residents of the City of Melbourne, as to what the government's agenda is and why, and how these different pieces come together," Cr Leppert said.

"If you think about how much the city has changed in the past 10 years, it's that second role — not the 'here's our ambitious statement for the future' — but how do we consolidate all of those policies and tell the clearest narrative that we possibly can about where development goes across the municipality and why."

The council will now seek authorisation from the new Minister for Planning Lizzie Blandthorn before commencing public exhibition and will seek input from community members across the municipality.

"We're expecting bouquets [but] we're probably expecting brickbats as well — that's the nature of community consultation and it's so important that we get it on this exercise," the Deputy Lord Mayor said. ●

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Labor candidate begins campaign to claw back Melbourne from Greens

Kensington resident and former journalist Rebecca Thistleton will attempt to unseat Greens incumbent Ellen Sandell and wrestle the seat of Melbourne back into Labor hands at the November state election.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
POLITICS

A public servant who also served as a media advisor for recently retired planning minister Richard Wynne, Ms Thistleton was Labor's sole pre-selection nominee for Melbourne.

The seat has been held by The Greens since 2014 when the party prevailed in the electorate for the first time, before narrowly holding onto the seat in 2018 when Ms Sandell secured a second term.

The Greens now gunning for a third, Labor candidate Ms Thistleton has been tasked with shaking things up.

The 37-year-old began campaigning in July ahead of the November 26 election and said a number of issues had emerged in door-knocking and speaking with locals on the street.

"The hospital and hospitality workers around the city feel like they'll be locked out of the rental market here or have to live with sub-standard conditions," she told *North West City News*.

"Labor's new rental standards and rule changes have made a big difference, such as allowing for 10-year leases and making it easier to rent with pets. But there is still more work to be done and more awareness of renters' rights and landlords' responsibilities."

Ms Thistleton said that the environment was another key issue heading into the election



▲ Labor's candidate for Melbourne, Rebecca Thistleton, with eldest child Tommy.

and was adamant that electing a member for Melbourne who was part of the government in power could deliver tangible change.

"Without the effort from Victorian Labor, national emission reductions would be far less than they are," she said.

"The Greens have been sitting in the federal parliament and the state parliament all that time and have done nothing to help make that happen. You have to be in government. That's what I want to do for the voters of Melbourne."

The mother-of-two grew up in Goulburn, NSW, and studied journalism in Canberra before moving to Melbourne in 2009.

After working as a property journalist at the *Australian Financial Review*, in 2015 she shifted to the other side of the media landscape to work as an advisor for Mr Wynne.

Since the start of 2020 she has worked for Cladding Safety Victoria, the government

agency tasked with rectifying residential apartment buildings affected by high-risk combustible cladding.

Ms Thistleton credits her journalism days as crucial to her political outlook.

"[I was] looking at market drivers and how planning and building policies shape cities and development," she said.

"My reporting experiences brought me to this point because I've witnessed how people live their lives at the margins or are doing it tougher than they should be. How we live is changing and I want to be a strong voice in those changes."

Ms Thistleton said that, as a young mother, the decision to run in Melbourne was not an easy one but pledged to give everything to unseat what she claimed was an ineffective Greens party.

"I have two small kids, so I've had to think

carefully, particularly as the underdog in the race. But no matter the result, I'll know I've worked as hard as I can to be the Member for Melbourne. The Greens couldn't name five tangible things they've done for the inner city in almost eight years. I get out and talk to people, I listen, and I want to be inside the government that gets things done."

An issue that continues to emerge in Melbourne is where Labor will locate the state's second safe injecting room, after a 2020 independent report advised that the North Richmond facility had saved at least 21 lives in its first 18 months and required help dealing with demand.

The government had promised that former police commissioner Ken Lay would table a report by the end of 2020 that recommended the most appropriate CBD site to house the facility.

However, on August 12 Mr Andrews said this report now wouldn't be ready until 2023, which would represent a delay of more than two years.

Ms Thistleton said she could understand the frustration of locals and business owners who would like an answer.

"All options must be thoroughly investigated to give a new injection centre the best chance of success. Traders and residents are frustrated, as are the social services and ambos who deal with people overdosing," she said.

With around three months to go until election day, Ms Thistleton said she presented as a strong option for local voters to make a difference.

"I'm listening to people, but I want to be a big voice for them inside that government. Working with the decision-makers is how I can push for change." ●



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What People say about us:



Parkville Gardens local makes finals of Westfield Local Heroes awards

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
COMMUNITY

Emily Unity from Parkville Gardens has made it as a finalist in the 2022 Westfield Airport West Local Heroes Awards, and her nominated organisation to support is Headspace.

Westfield Local Heroes is an awards program that spotlights individuals and their elected organisations in Australia and New Zealand and, in its fifth year of running, Emily was nominated anonymously.

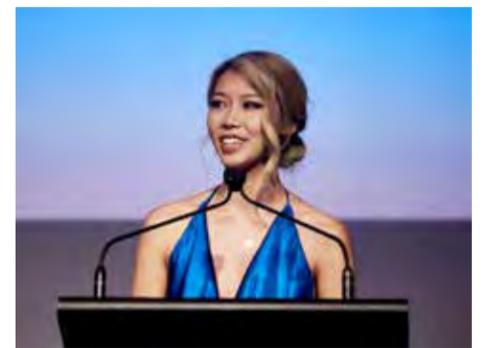
As a Headspace peer support worker in Melbourne's north-west, she is recognised for connecting with young and diverse people and supporting them through their mental health journeys. Emily came to Headspace after she saw the positive impact the organisation had on her own life following her mental health diagnosis at 12, and she said it had been one of the most "fulfilling roles" she'd ever had.

"I have been through a lot of traditional types of help-seeking in terms of talking to psychologists and trying medications and they definitely helped to a certain extent, but the key thing for me was finding people who understood what I was feeling because they were living through it at the same time as me," she said.

"I later learned that what that is called is peer support, and I feel incredibly lucky to now be in the position that other people were in when they first helped me. It's come full circle."

Equipped to find her sense of purpose and place, when so many others sadly fell through the cracks, Emily has learnt from her own struggles and made it her mission to make a difference and give back.

As one of three finalists for the Westfield Airport West award, Emily is now waiting on public votes that will then determine who will receive a \$20,000 award for their nominated organisation.



The voting will close on August 22 and the Westfield Local Heroes will be announced on September 13, and the other two finalists still receive a \$5000 grant for their organisations.

"It is an absolute privilege and honour to be nominated, and it's so exciting to know that the work we have done will be recognised and help to continue these programs," she said.

One program in particular that Headspace is working on, that Emily said she wished she knew about years ago when she really needed it, was the *Visible* project.

"It is a project that is encouraging people to connect with themselves and others through arts, and it's about raising mental health awareness through artwork. It's the most brilliant thing I have worked on," she said.

The work Emily does for the mental health sector also stretches further than Headspace, and she is involved with numerous other organisations, like The Royal Children's Hospital.

She is also in the midst of completing a 12-month program at UNICEF Australia after being selected as the 2022 Young Ambassador last year.

To support Emily in the work she does at Headspace for Melbourne's north west and for more information on the Westfield Local Heroes, visit westfield.com.au/local-heroes ●

North-West Melbourne small businesses celebrated for milestones

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
 PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Murray Enders*
 BUSINESS

Kensington, West Melbourne and North Melbourne small businesses are being celebrated in all categories of the 2022 Lord Mayor's Small Business Awards.

Previously known as the Lord Mayor's Commendations Awards, the awards recognise 49 small businesses that are determined contributors to the city's culture and economic prosperity.

In addition to North Melbourne boutique wallpaper art and signage business Grafico Group taking home the top award, numerous other North-west Melbourne small businesses have been acknowledged for their commitment for more than 10, 20 and 40 years.

Celebrating a triumphant effort of reaching 40-plus years in business is Michael Cardamone of Amiconi Restaurant, and his business partners Joe Muso and Vince Alfonso who came onboard 15 years ago.

"Now that I am in the over-40 category, it is an honour to be recognised," Mr Cardamone said.

"In the good old days, at 40 years most people [and businesses] were on the last legs of their life, because 40 years is a long time to be consistent in one area. But when you do something you like doing, it's not a job, it's more of a vocation."

Starting as a family-run business, the West Melbourne restaurant sticks true to its roots of being a reliable hospitality venue for the community, something Mr Cardamone said was not always the case today.

"The meaning of hospitality in our industry today has been lost due to everything being computerised and fast food, and we have forgotten that customers are going out to have dinner and to be entertained," he said.

"I always say that our industry is hospitality focused on entertainment because people go



▲ Amiconi Restaurant owner Michael Cardamone.

out to have a good time and the essence of a restaurant is for people to have a great experience when dining, and that includes interactions with staff and chefs."

Although already a restaurant people can rely on for an experience, in a suburb that is "really coming into its own", Mr Cardamone said the recognition was "great".

"Small businesses are the backbone of the economy, and the government should understand small businesses need support more than the large multinationals," he said.

The West Melbourne Calmatronics team and owner Phil Calvert are also celebrating being recognised within the 20-plus category, after running for more than 30 years.

As a hardware store ready to help people



▲ Calmatronics owner Phil Calvert.

when they are in need of any lighting supplies, Mr Calvert's store has been the go-to spot for many locals.

"You just feel like you are part of the community because you know people who are walking down the street every week, and you get to help out the locals," Mr Calvert said.

As a walk-in retailer and wholesaler, Calmatronics is also online and available to always help not only its direct community but also those in the wider community.

Among the other small businesses recognised are Kensington's Rendina Real Estate and Jissara Hair, and North Melbourne's Twenty & Six Espresso for their 10-plus years of service.

The small businesses recognised all play a part in continuing to prove their importance in a city that is built on independent and unique stores.

Following the award show that took place

late July, the council's small business portfolio lead Cr Jason Chang said small businesses were critical to Melbourne's economy and contributed to the buzz of the city.

"These awards are a celebration of many years of hard work, often building a small business from the ground up, establishing a loyal customer base and adding real flair and character," Cr Chang said.

The Lord Mayor's Small Business Awards have been celebrating the small businesses that make up the city since 2005. ●



Kaylah-Joelle Baker
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The Lord Mayor's Small Business Awards acknowledge and celebrate Melbourne's longstanding independent small businesses, and the people who run them.

Each year we say thank you for the significant contribution they make to the city's culture, economic prosperity and liveability.

The awards honour the achievements of small businesses who have been operating in the City of Melbourne for milestones of 10+, 20+, 40+ years.

The inaugural Small Business of the Year Award recognises one outstanding business that has demonstrated excellence across all areas of their business, such as sustainability, innovation and customer care.



Lord Mayor Sally Capp with 10-year Achievement Award recipients Adjii Baskoro and Yudo Baskoro of Koskosan

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS

Congratulations to all our Achievement Award winners.

These small businesses have stood the test of time in the city for 10+, 20+ and 40+ years. Don't miss the stunning photography exhibition to celebrate some of our city's most iconic small businesses. The exhibition runs in the Bourke Street Mall from mid-August to mid-September, featuring portraits of each small business at work.

40+ years

- Michael Cardamone - Amiconi Restaurant
- Alan Adler - Alan Adler Mobile Amusements
- Grant Hamid - Hamid Bros
- Terry O'Halloran - Sole Motive
- Andrew Georgiou - Victoria Market Gifts
- Helen Cacopardo - You Day Spa

20+ years

- Eileen Carney - American Rag
- Brendan Dwyer - Brendan Dwyer Custom
- Phil Calvert - calmatronics
- Sandy Tsindos - Charles Elena Design
- David Neilson - Charles Elena Design
- Christine Barro - CHRISTINE
- Adam Pickett - Dungeon of Magic
- Vivian Dourali - Eimai Melbourne
- Tony Pierrakos - Intone Photography
- Samson Brian Pereira - Nikee Business Group
- Martin Pirc - Punch Lane Wine Bar and Restaurant
- Lou Rendina - Rendina Real Estate
- Janine Hunt - The Chicken Pantry
- Lisa Hong - Wild Wombats Australia
- Julie Fong - Your Jeweller
- Jimmy Fong - Your Jeweller

10+ years

- Stewart Koziara - Asian Beer Cafe
- Anna Carosa - Asian Beer Cafe
- Melanie Ashe - Clementine's
- Dr Leila Zamani - Dr Zamani Dental Practice
- Stewart Koziara - Father's Office
- Anna Carosa - Father's Office
- Adam Ong - Golden Monkey
- David Man Kit Yu - Golden Square Car Park
- Damian Corney - Grafico Group
- Jeff Harper - IGA Express Southbank
- Kelly Gissara - Jissara Hair
- Jimmy Kosan - JKN Migration Consultant
- Adjii Baskoro - Koskosan
- Yudo Baskoro - Koskosan
- Roger O'Toole - Melbourne Headache Centre
- Yik Muoa Hong - Motion City Development
- Dave Parker - San Telmo
- Jason McConnell - San Telmo
- Linda Dugan - Petal Back Clothing
- Marshall Waters - ReWine
- Yogesh Gupta - Tax Planners
- Michael Wright - True Thai Massage
- Tae Panuktong - True Thai Massage
- Rongrong Wang - Twenty & Six Espresso
- Wendy Scully - Wendy Scully Millinery
- Nikki Vriends - Zip Zip Wax

Small Business of the Year winner GRAFICO GROUP



Every wall, car and building is a potential canvas for graphic design company Grafico Group.

Maybe it's a panel of custom-printed Italian mosaic tiles. Or wallpaper on an epic scale that adds instant drama to a room... and episodes of The Block.

Maybe you've seen Grafico's wares wrapped around a fleet of vehicles, zipping across the city in sleek custom signage.

From humble beginnings in 2004, this creative services agency has grown rapidly under the eye of Damian Corney to specialise in auto, walls and signage.

Grafico's North Melbourne warehouse is staffed with graphic designers and signage specialists. Together, they serve commercial and domestic markets across the country.

Established by the son of Italian migrants - at first in a garage, Grafico has grown into a business with an innovative range of new products and creative marketing.

It's also working on innovative approaches to minimise impact on the environment, partnering with Werribee Zoo to recycle cardboard cylinders.

Congratulations to Grafico Group on being named 2022 Lord Mayor's Small Business of the Year.

Small Business of the Year finalist MAKE DESIGNED OBJECTS



Every beautiful product on the shelves at this retail store has earned its place amid other thoughtfully designed homewares, clothing and accessories.

MAKE Designed Objects owner Patrick Coppel and his team have carefully crafted an ethos around what belongs in their two-storey terrace shop in Carlton.

To be selected, a product must first be considered 'good'. It needs to be functional as well as aesthetically appealing. Durable and useful. Tread lightly on the earth. And if it has a sense of humour, all the better.

There's a big range of products from Scandinavian countries with a strong

design culture, such as Denmark and Finland.

Where Australian designers hold their own on the global stage, their products too are welcome. Since 2003, MAKE has infused 'good' design into homes in Melbourne and beyond.

Some items are so beautiful they're even held in galleries and private collections worldwide.

MAKE was named a Small Business of the Year finalist for its lovely relationship with the community. MAKE is a Carlton institution, but it's also a successful online business that has built up an extensive, loyal following by email list.

Small Business of the Year finalist KNOVUS



At the nexus of design, innovation and manufacturing, you'll find knitting house Knovus.

Investing in the latest zero-waste knit technology, Knovus has explored, researched and developed sustainable knitwear manufacturing processes since 1999.

Knovus has built up a wealth of knit products such as medical device components, furniture, sports accessories and fashion.

The crew also prototypes technology and helps other businesses get to

market quickly and effectively.

Owner Patricia Chircop and the team are also dedicated to sharing decades of experience with others, offering tailored workshops to improve knit knowledge and efficiency.

Knovus was named a Small Business of the Year finalist for its highly innovative approach to the design and manufacture of knitted products, ranging from fashion to medical technology, and investment in cutting-edge technology and knowledge

To read more about the recipients, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/smallbusinessawards

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▲ North Melbourne resident Brendan Gleeson hopes the future of a guard hut, a heritage building once used as part of a gas distribution site, can be restored.

Historic gas building undergoes a clean-up after being targeted by graffiti vandals

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
HERITAGE

A heritage building that has remained a remnant of a larger town gas distribution site in North Melbourne is undergoing a clean-up after having recently become a graffiti-stained eyesore.

Known as the Gas Regulating House, the site at 60-96 Macaulay Rd was built in 1887 and formerly used by the Melbourne Gas Company's large plant in West Melbourne as a distribution point for town and natural gas for 100 years.

The historic buildings, which are listed of "historical significance" on the Victorian Heritage Register, are now used as apartments, with additional residential units constructed on site.

However, an adjacent brick building which has been retained after being part of the Gas Regulating House, has become a target for graffiti vandals.

Its dilapidated state in recent months has prompted concerns from the community with questions raised about its future retention.

However, the Public Record Office of Victoria (PROV), which confirmed it owned the building (also known as a guard hut) at the end of the car park entrance on Macaulay Rd, said work was being undertaken to maintain it.

In a statement the PROV said 80 per cent of the graffiti had been removed with a building engineer's report in progress to assist in how it

moved forward with other repairs.

"We will also work through any required repairs with council. We thank our local community for their patience as we work through this process," the PROV said.

North Melbourne resident and Professor of Urban Planning at the University of Melbourne Brendan Gleeson said he was glad to hear the building was being maintained as the graffiti canvas was "not a good look".

"At the very least, emergency works should be undertaken to ensure that the building does not deteriorate further, whilst its regeneration and reuse is contemplated," he said.

"This must surely mean ensuring that it is waterproof. The guttering is pretty much destroyed, and the condition of the roof is hard to assess from ground level. Surely it is within the PROV's capacities to do this emergency work?"

As a significant community asset in an area that continued to grow, Mr Gleeson believed the guard hut should be restored and returned to some form of public use, "perhaps even jointly with a private sector or NGO body to assist with the funding of this".

The Gas Regulating House is considered of "historical significance" on the state's heritage register due to it being a "rare surviving example of a 19th century gas regulator" with "its importance compounded by the survival of some of its early regulating valves".

A statement from a Heritage Victoria spokesperson said there had been no reports of unauthorised works or failure to maintain relating to

the property.

However, Heritage Victoria will inspect the site and discuss the condition of the building with the owner.

"Owners of state-listed places and objects are legally required to ensure that they do not fall into disrepair and are maintained," the spokesperson said.

Simon Ambrose, CEO of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), said it was pleasing to see that graffiti has been removed and encouraged its ongoing care.

"The National Trust supports the ongoing maintenance and conservation of heritage buildings, acknowledging the challenges of issues such as vandalism that are faced by property owners," he said.

According to the Victorian Heritage Database, only one other metropolitan regulating house known to survive is on St Kilda Rd, but it has no equipment and is much smaller.

The site at Macaulay Rd was decommissioned in 1957 and dismantled in 1986. New equipment was installed to ensure it was used as a distribution point for natural gas until the late 1990s. ●



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▲ Lord Mayor Sally Capp and Cr Rohan Leppert.

Provost St planting program underway

COUNCIL AFFAIRS

The City of Melbourne has kicked off works to green Provost and Little Provost streets in North Melbourne.

The greening works are part of the council's Provost Street Greening Plan, which were suggested by local residents and business owners.

The project includes 41 new trees (24 on Provost St and 17 on Little Provost St), installing permeable ground for natural rainwater absorption and filtration, a new underground drainage system and creating a wider and more pedestrian-friendly footpath.

The changes will also see the road narrowed to reduce the number and speed of "throughway" vehicles.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the greening plan was an important project, which would help provide additional canopy cover and streetscape upgrades.

The council's environment portfolio lead Cr Rohan Leppert, who consulted closely with locals to bring the project to the council's attention, said it represented "another step forward" in the council's "ambitious" urban forest strategy.

"Local residents asked for this project, we co-designed it with them, and I'm so delighted that these improvements are being delivered," Cr Leppert said.

"City greening projects like this are essential to help support Melbourne's diverse urban forest, increase canopy cover and keep our city cool in a warming climate." ●



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New artist chosen for Arden station wants to bring communities together

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
ARTS & CULTURE

The artist chosen to create an installation piece for the new Arden underground railway station says his work will capture the essence of different communities “coming together”.

Sydney-based Abdul Abdullah is a multi-disciplinary Australian artist whose work focuses on the ideas of otherness and the experiences of marginalised communities.

The 36-year-old, who has previously lived in Melbourne, said he was “very happy and honoured” to be announced as the artist to deliver the permanent art installation for Arden Station which will be located near the corner of Arden and Laurens streets.

“What’s particularly exciting to me about Arden Station and where it’s located is how it’s going to serve as a whole lot of different communities,” he said.

“That’s going to be a point which everyone travels through, and to welcome new communities and to encourage the idea of coming together; that idea of different communities from different walks of life or merging into one space.”

The project is still in the development phase, a process involving a team of architects and engineers, with the final art piece expected to be revealed before the opening of the Metro Tunnel in 2025.

Abdul, a seventh-generation Muslim Australian with Malay/Indonesian and convict/settler Australian heritage, said he would draw inspiration from North Melbourne’s rich industrial history and pre-colonial period while celebrating the area’s natural environment.

“Looking at the role of art in very specific ways is like having a responsibility to the society that it serves so that’s what drives my art practice, and that idea of working in a public sphere and that scale is very exciting,” he said.

“I spent so much time on public transport as a young person and I want to make those spaces as welcoming as possible.”



▲ Sydney-based Abdul Abdullah wants his artwork at Arden Station to bring communities together.

Abdul’s work has been featured in numerous exhibitions including at the National Gallery of Australia, Queensland Art Gallery, Gallery of Modern Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Art. In 2019, he was awarded the inaugural Australian Muslim Artist Art Prize.

He mainly works as a painter, but also dabbles in sculpture, embroidery, photography, and occasionally, performance.

The artwork for Arden Station and its architectural design features has been touted to become a new landmark. The station will include a café with terraces for outdoor dining as well as public seating, garden beds and lawn areas.

Abdul, along with five other world-class artists, were invited to create artworks for each of the Metro Tunnel’s new underground stations following a rigorous process by an expert advisory panel including leading figures from Victoria’s creative industries.

They join Yorta Yorta/Wamba Wamba/Mutti Mutti/Boonwurrung artist Maree Clarke, who was announced in 2020 as the artist commissioned for a work spanning all five new underground stations.

“It’s one of things until we actually start making it, it doesn’t feel real,” Abdul said. “It feels like an abstract thing at the moment, but all the gears are turning and I’m looking forward to starting production.” ●

Plant giveaway for residents impacted by West Gate Tunnel works

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
ENVIRONMENT

West Melbourne residents impacted by the construction of the West Gate Tunnel Project (WGTP) can collect a free plant or receive a nursery voucher to green their gardens.

As part of the Backyard Planting Program, the WGTP is giving away thousands of plants and shrubs as a show of their appreciation to residents who continued to be affected by construction activity.

Eligible residents can drop into a pop-up shop to collect a free plant from tube varieties or redeem a voucher at their selected local nursery.

The tube stock plants are native to the western suburbs of Melbourne and include Blackwood, Gold Dust Wattle, Swamp Paperbark, and Common Reed among others.

The most significantly impacted residents will be able to obtain vouchers from a local nursery to make improvements to their gardens.

“This is a small way of thanking the community for its patience while this much-needed piece of infrastructure is being built,” a West Gate Tunnel Project spokesperson said.

A pop-up shop was held near Railways Place/Miller St Reserve in West Melbourne (pictured) on August 15 where Sarah, a local resident, took home two plants.

“They’re lovely and apparently, they’re quite wind-tolerant, so I think they’re going to be nice on my



balcony,” she said, adding it was a “great initiative”.

Sarah, who asked not to use her surname, said she was impressed by the number of updates she had received from the WPTP regarding construction activity, including a 24-hour helpline service being available.

“It makes a huge difference to feel like you know what’s happening and how long it’s going to go for.”

However, resident Phillip Symonds was not convinced by what the Backyard Planting Program had to offer.

“They can’t be serious surely,” he said.

“I find the whole idea condescending – can they share their logic in where they think we would all put a native plant?”

Residents must register their interest for the program by calling 1800 105 105 or email info@wgta.vic.gov.au

To find a pop-up shop, visit westgatetunnelproject.vic.gov.au/backyardplanting ●

A street on the mend



Old is meeting new at the Melrose St shopping strip in North Melbourne, or what locals used to call, the “forgotten” street.



WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
BUSINESS

The Twang Brewery just opened next door to the IGA, which has been run for 35 years by the Kuan family from East Timor.

The bar is so new locals say their micro-brewing hasn’t even started yet.

The IGA and some of the other stores are so old they’ve got their scars. “This area is rough,” said son, John Kuan, who grew up in the flats.

“People do burn-outs and you hear the police sirens,” he said. He deferred his studies so he could help his parents in the shop and has moved to Bernside “because it’s quiet.”

Kim from Melrose Hairdressing down a lane beside the IGA says business turned bad when the post office and chemist moved into a new Woolworths shopping centre nearby.

“We don’t have many customers. I’ve had three today,” she said, watching a video on her laptop while waiting. She charges \$18 for a men’s haircut and \$25 for women.

The strip was so neglected that the council didn’t even include it in the original Macauley Plan, even though it’s on the edge of the precinct.

“Council wished it would just go away,” one councillor confided to *North West City News*. It’s

never even had Christmas decorations like the strips in Kensington.

Before the lockdown there were five shops with “for lease” signs in the window, but local traders stayed on, hoping the strip would weather the storm.

That acceptance has paid off. Now all of the shops have been filled and articulate young admirers such as Jeremy Morris who “was born in a ghetto in the States” are having their say.

A new pizza place is going in at the southern end, two new bars have opened plus Melrose Kebabs is opening soon and advertising for staff.

“It’s a slow burn,” said Jeremy, the cook at both the coffee shop Mr Tucker and the brewery.

“This is my neighbourhood. I’ve lived across the road for 10 years,” he said.

“This street is the line between abject poverty and wealth.” Further up the hill are substantial houses while behind the strip are the public housing towers.

“I like the fact that there are real people on both sides of the street,” he said. “I would hate to see the street gentrified.”

The idea of community has taken a lockdown to ram itself into the brains of many Melburnians.

The street has always had its fans, particularly Christine, with her pink hair who came here every day during lockdown to get her cheap cigarettes.

Some might call them desperate times, but she was visiting friends nearby and one who recently died gave her a warm jacket.

“I like looking after people,” she said. “I’ve been coming here for 45 years. The IGA has good specials. Last time a lady paid for my shopping.”

There is so much more that could be said about the scars and the police sirens, but this is a street on the mend. ●



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CSL's new global HQ almost complete

WORDS BY *David Schout*
HEALTH

A new headquarters for the world's third-largest biotech company CSL will open in early 2023, with construction on the City North project almost complete.

A detailed time-lapse of works, on a site at the northern end of Elizabeth St next to Haymarket roundabout, was released by the company in August, revealing swifter-than-expected progress.

Full completion of the new office and laboratory space is now scheduled for early 2023, a year ahead of the original schedule.

The new development will significantly increase the presence of CSL — Australia's leading biotech company — in the Parkville biomedical precinct, and cement Melbourne's place as a world-class research destination.

According to the company, the new facility

will support collaborations between biomedical research and industry and create important links in the "benchtop to bedside" translation of new medicines.

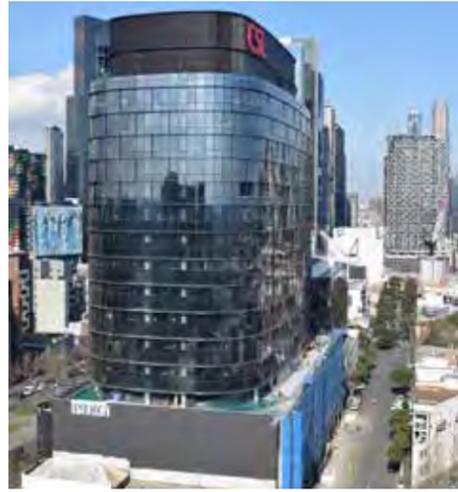
Across 21 levels, it will accommodate more than 800 CSL employees including early-stage research and product development teams, commercial operations, corporate functions and support services.

The facility will also include a dedicated area for research and development of flu vaccines.

Construction on the project began in 2020 and was not adversely affected when builder Probuild went into administration earlier this year.

After a brief pause, work restarted on the project when developer PDG reached an agreement with administrators to fund the \$1 billion construction directly.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece tweeted photos of the large CSL logo being erected at the City North site on August 5.



▲ The nearly complete new CSL headquarters near Haymarket roundabout.

"Building signs are up on @CSL new global headquarters in the Melbourne Biomed Precinct. This will be one of the most high-tech biotech facilities in the world. Opening soon!" he said.

Cr Reece was (and remains) the City of Melbourne's planning chair when the council approved plans for the 86-metre development in September 2019 despite it far exceeding the preferred height limit of 60 metres for Elizabeth St North.

At the time councillors were willing to make exceptions for a project it deemed to have "huge community benefit".

"It's fair to say this development does not strictly comply with the preferred heights and setbacks [of the area]," Cr Reece said.

"However, the land use that is proposed here, being an R&D (research and development) centre means that it will make a very significant contribution to a nationally significant area of economic activity for Australia." ●



North Melbourne man charged with sexual assault of girl

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
CRIME

A 31-year-old man has been charged following an alleged sexual assault of a child in North Melbourne on July 21.

Police and paramedics were called to Boundary Rd near Racecourse Rd just before 2pm where an 11-year-old child was taken to the Royal Children's Hospital.

Detectives from the Melbourne Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team have since charged the accused, a North Melbourne man, with one count of rape.

He was remanded to appear at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court on July 22 where he did not apply for bail.

The court heard the man, who allegedly attacked the 11-year-old girl at random, was a refugee who had a history of suicidal thoughts and substance abuse.

He will appear at the next hearing on October 20 for a committal mention. ●

Complaints about irritating smoke

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
HEALTH

Something needs to be done about the smoke drifting into a resident's apartment in Haines St, North Melbourne.

It wouldn't bother Jan Lacey if the smoke from the nearby chimney was occasional.

And she's not saying that all domestic wood fires should be banned.

But in some weeks during last winter her neighbours lit a fire first thing every morning.

Ms Lacey has written to the City of Melbourne about the issue. Her first email was a year ago. She wants them to do an inspection.

Up until this month the council was unwilling to exercise the power it had to investigate a nuisance.

Now, according to Ms Lacey, the council's health and wellbeing team has finally agreed to send someone out. "I got a phone call they'd send someone out to make an assessment," she said.

Ms Lacey has been so worn down by the process she said she was willing to let it go until next winter. "This time of the year it's all over," she said.

When *North West City News* visited on a Sunday at 4pm the smoke was visible and it had infiltrated the flat through a screen door.

Ms Lacey has just got over COVID and has underlying respiratory issues, asthma and bronchitis.

"I've got a lot on my plate," she said. "I'm not



feeling that well."

Ms Lacey is a veteran campaigner. She worked for trade unions and is on a committee looking at social housing in the area. She's surprised that the council has been so unresponsive.

"They've fobbed me off for a year. They need a policy on wood fires."

She has a sheaf of correspondence but doesn't want to embarrass officers by quoting directly from it.

Suffice to say, the emails claim there has not

been enough complaints to council about wood burning in fireplaces to warrant a policy.

Ms Lacey says that other councils have policies and the EPA has confirmed the council could order that an unsafe fire be modified.

The chimney is just a few metres to the west of the door to Ms Lacey's second-floor flat and the smoke catches the prevailing wind.

The smoke is irritating and she's adamant that the council at least needs a policy about how it handles such complaints. ●



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Threatened grasshopper jumps into new habitat

WORDS BY *Carol Saffer*
ENVIRONMENT

The Matchstick Grasshopper is an example of a “morabine” grasshopper, an Australian family of flightless grasshoppers found nowhere else in the world.

Until Wednesday, August 10, they were extinct in the City of Melbourne and most parts of the Australian continent.

The City of Melbourne partnered with the University of Melbourne to restore the local population of Matchstick Grasshoppers by releasing hundreds of them in Parkville’s Royal Park.

The remainder of the three thousand matchstick grasshoppers collected by researchers will be reintroduced to suitable new habitats in Melbourne, including Burnley and the Bayside area, as part of a pilot project addressing the biodiversity emergency.

The Matchstick Grasshopper Renaturing project is led by The University of Melbourne and supported by the City of Melbourne.

The University of Melbourne Biosciences Professor Michael Kearney said, “Matchstick grasshoppers were a major focus of evolutionary research at The University of Melbourne in the 1960s.”

“We have been able to build on this past work to help save these grasshoppers from extinction around Melbourne.”

These little critters have not had an easy life. Once found in an area covering nearly 16,000 square kilometres, in 2019 it was established the Matchstick Grasshopper then occupied only 68 square kilometres; a loss of 96 per cent of its range.

Some of this is its own fault. As a flightless insect, it doesn’t go very far, a couple of metres if lucky, during its lifecycle.

So, it gets trapped in small, ever-diminished patches based on its favourite food, everlasting daisy and native grasses.

The Matchstick Grasshopper is trapped when land clearing causes the loss of its habitat.

Destined to live in small, inbred populations makes it highly susceptible to local extinction if a fire or other catastrophes affect their habitats.

To make matters worse, if that is possible, instead of spending the winter as an egg underground like other grasshoppers, the Matchstick Grasshopper can be found as an immature grasshopper (a nymph) above ground.



▲ Lord Mayor Sally Capp with Professor Michael Kearney.

A dangerous, life-threatening place when winter control burns occur regularly.

Professor Michael Kearney said, “Before European settlement, these grasshoppers would have been common and widespread in the grassy areas of Melbourne that the Wurundjeri Willam managed with fire.”

“It’s great to be able to renature Royal Park this way,” he said.

Insects like grasshoppers play an essential role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem and are an abundant food source for larger animals such as praying mantis, lizards, and birds.

The University of Melbourne Chair of Ecological Genetics, Biosciences, Professor Ary Hoffmann, said, “the Matchstick Grasshopper represents a uniquely Australian species that has been a part of Melbourne’s natural environment for hundreds of thousands of years.”

“It’s exciting to see these harmless and charismatic insects returned to the city as the Council recreates new natural environments that can support them,” Professor Hoffman said.



▲ Bakery Hill Whisky’s David Baker (left) and Andrew Baker (right)



“We look forward to these introductions being the start of a process to restore many other invertebrates that formerly called the city home.”

The project brings together researchers, scientists, community groups and land managers to support biodiversity.

Community planting days created the grasshoppers’ new habitat sites.

The collaborative approach facilitates longer-term testing and adaptive management through experimental plots designed as public amenities with aesthetics and park function in mind.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said protecting and enhancing locally endangered creatures in our ecosystem could not be more important.

“We are proud to be working with the University of Melbourne to reintroduce Matchstick Grasshoppers to our wonderful city,” Cr Capp said. “We’re calling on Melburnians to look out for these tiny creepy crawlies and become citizen scientists to help us gather information to protect and restore their population.” ●

Crowdfunding campaign gives green light for local whisky distillery

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*
BUSINESS

Kensington will soon be home to its first whisky distillery after a huge crowdfunding campaign raised \$700,000 in just nine days.

Last month, Bakery Hill Whisky, mainland Australia’s first whisky distillers, called on its enthusiastic and loyal supporter base to be part of an equity crowdfunding campaign to turn their new Macaulay Rd dream into reality.

The campaign saw 326 new co-owners contribute the funds needed to move the distillery from its previous home in Bayswater to Kensington, and with it, a whole new opportunity for customer and community interaction.

“It blew us away. We couldn’t believe the amount of interest and the amount of people out there, even some we have never even heard, who got behind us,” Bakery Hill business development manager Andrew Baker said.

“We could have gone down the bank path or to private high net-worth investors, but because we have a such a great following of fans, we thought it was a great opportunity to allow them to have a little connection and ownership of Bakery Hill.”

While doubling down with their bank wasn’t an easy option, Mr Baker said, the banks weren’t brand ambassadors for them, you can’t have a beer with the bank, and you certainly can’t share a glass of whisky with them!

The crowdfunded equity campaign was an idea spurred by the hugely active Bakery Hill Whisky Enthusiasts Facebook page and will grant new co-owners early access to special release whiskies, suggestions for new release ideas, label design contribution and an active part of the teams vision going forward.

“We will be delving into a lot of different areas in our new Kensington home with a new hospitality offering, enhanced presence and marketing, bringing that network of co-owners on board to build and grow the brand,” Mr Baker said.

“We love collaborating with like-minded, independent, craft businesses that have a similar methodology and ideals to us.”

“Beer and whisky go hand in hand, so when we set up Kensington we will have Bonehead Brewing, Hopnation and hopefully Henry St Brewhouse beers available, local wines, and cheeseboards and charcuterie which we would love to partner with local gourmet food providers. We want our cellar door to be a reflection of the inner north-west community.”

Mr Baker is hoping to have all operations moved from Bayswater to Kensington by the end of October, and to open, firstly, to their loyal co-owners and supporter base with special events and tours before Christmas, and to open their cellar door from Thursday to Sunday early next year. ●

For more information:
bakeryhill.com

Getting it right in Macauley

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
PLANNING

Factories with saw-toothed roofs, empty floodplains and huge development sites present some of the tests for the Macauley Structure Plan passed recently by the City of Melbourne.

Cr Rohan Leppert was a local resident who fell for the undeveloped magic of the area before getting on council in 2012.

“We wrote pages of submissions,” he said. “But it was clear the councillors didn’t read them.”

At the age of 23 he stood for council and was beaten. He didn’t give up. A few years later he was elected and has been working on the planning for this vast urban renewal program ever since.

The issue, Cr Leppert said, was getting a workable balance between community values and developers’ egos and that hasn’t been easy.

“We’ve had some abominations,” he said. “They ended up at VCAT and the tribunal was supportive.”

The solution has been to set a yield for each site with a ratio of one to four a standard.

Many eyes glaze over when planners begin talking about technicalities, yet a city like Barcelona is working proof of the power of “socialist” town planning.

Height limits, laneways, and squares within developments are some of the mandates that make the city so intimate for the pedestrian. Developers identify with the design image of the city and seem to conform.



Could Macauley become Melbourne’s Barcelona? Or is our construction industry too dollar-driven?

Cr Leppert concedes that the Macauley Plan offers more flexibility than Barcelona by allowing developers to vary the building footprint and gain credits in terms of height. He said the limit was seven storeys, but balconies had not been proscribed nor had squares.

He said that developers here expected to stamp their personalities on their projects but that mandates were specific in terms of community advantage. If heights are increased that means more space at ground level for communal activity.

At a recent committee meeting in North Melbourne when the Macauley Plan was discussed, he did express concern about the way flexibility could be interpreted and how

the old planning laws were too crude for large sites.

“When [former Minister for Planning] Richard Wynne introduced a yield in the CBD, it paved the way for this,” he said.

The plan is still in its early stages and yet to be advertised, let alone go through the State Government’s planning panel.

One thing is for sure – Cr Leppert has devoted 10 years to the precinct and is fascinated by the former industrial built-form situated alongside the Moonee Ponds Creek in terms of its aesthetic and environmental potential.

He’s done a Masters of Planning and Heritage at RMIT and wants to get it right with heritage overlays as well as open space.

“I love the saw-toothed factories. I want to see them converted and a linear park along the flood plain.” ●

Council set to take state government to task over Arden plan after recommendations “ignored”

Continued from page 1.

and character”, including Arden Central (innovation), Arden Central (mixed-use), Arden North (arts, cultural and community hub), and Laurens St (mixed-use).

It would see 12 hectares (nearly a third of the precinct) dedicated to open space including a new 0.66ha Capital City open space. Planning controls for the 44-hectare site would ensure development “complements and builds on” North Melbourne’s existing character.

The plan would also see a new major health institution embedded in the precinct with a new government primary school and a community centre also being proposed.

The Arden flood management strategy will install below-ground flood storages at the North Melbourne Recreation Reserve oval as well as raising and extending the levees for the Moonee Ponds Creek. The plan states that the “creek corridor will be revitalised as a new green spine for Melbourne”.

However, the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek have expressed alarm that the embankment of the creek

would be “trashed” if culverts were installed.

“To have an existing 20-year-old area biodiversity with grown trees, lovely vegetation, and the open space to be trashed for culverts is totally unacceptable,” Kaye Oddie, a member of the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek, said, adding they were also concerned about a proposal to build flood walls by up to a metre or more by the creek.

In other controversial measures, the Lost Dogs’ Home would have to relocate from its North Melbourne site, with the Greens vowing to ensure the “support and resources they need to continue their work for animals” would be delivered in a new location.

Chairman of the North and West Melbourne Association and a former Melbourne Lord Mayor Kevin Chamberlin said the discretionary height limit of 40 storeys meant “we have ended up with an attempt to relocate the Docklands to North Melbourne, West Melbourne, and Kensington ... thanks to the council and the state government”.

“It’s disappointing that the council and state government continue to promote excessive high-rise

development in moderate- and low-rise communities,” he said.

“The council, in particular, are a great disappointment; this was an opportunity to have a really good, sustainable development of human scale.”

This sentiment was shared by Patrick Fensham, an urban planning consultant and committee member of the Planning Institute of Australia, who said “indicative” building heights and scale would allow discretion for taller buildings to be considered, which he believed “doesn’t give much certainty to either the community or even the development sector”.

“It sets up the scope for non-transparent negotiations for extra height at the approvals stage,” he said.

According to the council, the density controls in Arden range from 4:1 to 17:1 but are mostly discretionary, with the height guidelines of up to 40 storeys being “all discretionary”.

Mr Fensham said the community also deserved a “more explicit rationale” as to why the plan didn’t require social or affordable housing to be delivered.

“That needs to be more transparent. This is a big and long-term

project so you would think it would be a reasonable thing to think about housing diversity and social mix and just addressing what is a major problem,” he said.

Furthermore, Mr Fensham questioned why “there hasn’t been any consideration given or any public explanation or exposure” of what the effective value uplift in land would be as development occurred, and how this could fund infrastructure projects or even affordable housing.

Value uplift capture is when governments impose a levy on a share of the increase in land value that occurs when land is rezoned to a higher value use such as residential, as would be the case for Arden.

North Melbourne resident Brendan Gleeson, who is a professor of urban planning at the University of Melbourne, said while the generous provision of public open space was “very welcome” he believed the failure to include mandatory provisions for public and affordable housing “is very disappointing and hard to understand given the city’s housing crisis”.

“The government should tax some of the value of the uplift it is creating

for developers through the plan and use this to fund social housing,” he said.

He also added the building heights planned for some parts of the precinct were “far too generous and will likely lead to vertical sprawl”.

Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan said the precinct plan would be a “tremendous opportunity to grow Victoria’s knowledge economy” with Arden to also become a destination with the completion of the Metro Tunnel and new Arden Station by 2025.

“The Arden Structure Plan outlines how underutilised industrial land in Melbourne’s inner north will be transformed into a thriving centre for Victoria’s knowledge industries, with around 15,000 residents and 34,000 workers,” she said in a statement.

Leader of the Victorian Greens Samantha Ratnam said a six per cent social housing target was “unacceptable when we are experiencing a housing crisis”.

“It once again demonstrates that this government allows property developers to get away with not paying their fair share towards more affordable housing,” she said. ●

Looking back on technical school history to better understand its importance

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
EDUCATION

To celebrate 150 years of the *Education Act* being passed in the state, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) is holding a *Tech School* photographic exhibition and looking back at the importance of public education.

Passed in 1872, the Act allowed for free, secular and compulsory education to take place, allowing the hands-on learning at technical schools to play a pivotal role in shaping the lives of many.

Co-curated by archivists Natasha Cantwell and Kate Follington, the exhibition opened on Thursday, August 11 at North Melbourne’s Victorian Archives Centre Gallery and will continue until October.

“It is important to show the full journey [of technical schools] and that this is not a story that has ended, but to instead show the way they were, their place in the 20th century and to show its future,” Ms Cantwell said.

“There are about 25 images and apart from an image of Monash Tech School which shows what is currently happening there, the rest of the images are from our archival collection here at Public Record Office Victoria.”

Some of the archived images displayed also show the tech schools being built and explore how architect Percy Edgar Everett helped create a new model for school buildings with lights and big windows in order to “create a really



positive atmosphere”.

The idea for the exhibition came about after PROV recently digitised a lot of the images and collections that were transferred to them for preservation following the closure and phasing out of technical schools in the 1990s.

The digitisation of the images now means anyone can access high-resolution images online, but for Ms Cantwell and Ms Follington the exhibition now provides a chance for stories to be told.

“The images are chronological and each of the

stories are unique and individual to the times, and we wanted to tell diverse stories and look at them from different angles,” Ms Cantwell said.

“The process was an interesting combination of going through our images and finding the beautiful images, but then also finding amazing stories and trying to find images that would highlight those stories.”

As part of the process in finding the stories, photographs were uploaded to Facebook alumni groups which allowed for past students to respond and give insight into their time at the



tech schools.

“We discovered that when the boys’ and girls’ Preston Technical Schools were situated quite close together they had a 50-metre ‘No Man’s Land’ across the oval in order to keep them separated, and so students would throw love letters with rocks across the land to flirt,” Ms Follington said.

“It’s been a nice journey to discover these stories and most of the ex-students have fond memories of their time and are very much of the view that hands-on learning played a huge part in their ability to succeed in life.”

To allow the space at the exhibition to become a place where stories can be shared and remembered, a blackboard will be set up for people to write their memories.

Tech School exhibition is open Monday to Friday from 10am to 4.30pm, and every second and last Saturday of the month and is free and open to all. The PROV is located at 99 Shiel St, North Melbourne. ●



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TO END HOMELESSNESS WE NEED A PLAN: MAKE ROOM WILL HELP



Artist's impression of the refurbished building at 602 Little Bourke Street Melbourne

Finding safe accommodation is the first step on the way out of homelessness. Peer educator Lisa Townsend shares her story for Homelessness Week.

After contending with the daily grind of homelessness on and off for more than 20 years, Lisa Townsend thought she'd heard it all.

Then one question changed everything. A case worker sat beside her and asked: 'How do you want to do this? What are your goals?'

Lisa had just inched her way into a private rental after a four-year stretch of sleeping rough on the streets of Melbourne.

To have someone ask her what she needed was overwhelming.

'I'd lost sight of what I wanted to do in life. What my passions were. I remember saying, "Can you leave it with me?" because I had to think about it.'

Over the years, her many abrupt interactions with homelessness services had left her with what she describes as 'system fatigue'.

'For whatever reason I thought I didn't deserve the support. Didn't deserve a home.'

The memory of that conversation still brings up strong emotions. Even now that she's got a roof over her head, and purpose in her life.

As a member of the Peer Education Support Program at the Council to Homeless Persons, Lisa channels that emotion into being an advocate for change in the sector.

But before she could figure out what came next, Lisa had to put herself right. Poor mental health, addiction, sickness, family violence and unresolved troubles with the court were weighing her down.

'Everything gets put on the backburner when you're constantly chasing food and shelter.'

'When you get a chance to stop, that's when you find yourself looking at the issues that led you to homelessness. That's when the real work begins.'

This is where City of Melbourne's new Make Room project comes in. It's designed to step in and break the cycle that perpetuates homelessness.

Make Room puts people first

We're teaming up with expert partners to transform a Council-owned building

valued at \$12 million into specialist supported accommodation for up to 50 residents, for up to 12 months.

Make Room will help people reclaim their lives. Wraparound services will help each person recover and heal their own way. That might be anything from mental health support to help with legal issues.

As a person with a lived experience of homelessness, Lisa supports the Make Room model.

'Make Room would have been useful to me, 100 per cent. Especially the way it's set up, putting a roof over your head then bringing in the wraparound services like mental health and dental and legal. Those are the game changers.'

'It means people will get a chance to sit down somewhere safe and have time to themselves. And because they won't be constantly chasing food, warmth, accommodation, they can start to recover from trauma and find a sense of self again.'

Make Room is a unique partnership between the City of Melbourne, the Victorian Government, Unison Housing, and the philanthropic and corporate sectors.

Unison Housing recently signed the lease agreement to convert the six-storey building at 602 Little Bourke Street.

'This is an ambitious project that will help people break the cycle of homelessness and take the first crucial step to securing long-term housing,' Unison Housing CEO James King said.

One step at a time

Lisa knows that even when accommodation becomes available, there's still a long road ahead. Finding the right support is crucial at each step along the way.

'When I first moved into my place I didn't know how to get back to normality.'

'It took me months to actually sleep in my bedroom. Or realise I could eat something after 5 o'clock, or have a shower at midnight. When you're on the street everything shuts at 5, so you condition yourself.'

'The Make Room project is brilliant and everything like that, giving people housing for up to a year. The next thing is where do they go when they get to the end of their stay? We need more affordable housing. Bottom line.'

That's why she's lending her voice to the conversation.

'Because of my lived experience, and the advocacy work that I do, I think I've found my path. It can be confronting talking about difficult situations again and again, but it's an exciting time, knowing that people want to listen.'

Find out more about Make Room at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/make-room

Donate to Make Room mcf.org.au/makeroom



HOW WE HELP

Reducing homelessness is a priority for the City of Melbourne. As well as Make Room, we invest in many initiatives to improve pathways out of homelessness.

- Our **daily support team** supports people who are experiencing homelessness to access services that coordinate housing and health intervention.
- We convene the **Melbourne Service Coordination Project**, which brings together 14 partner agencies to provide a tailored response for people sleeping rough.
- A dedicated **library social worker** provides support services to people experiencing homelessness.
- We established **Homes Melbourne** to improve housing access and affordability in the city, and deliver housing developments on City of Melbourne land and underused properties.



Lisa Townsend, Lord Mayor Sally Capp, Luis Irineo, Councillor Dr Olivia Ball, and Councillor Jamal Hakim at the Make Room launch in 2021.

MOBILE LIBRARY DRIVES DIGITAL LITERACY



The City of Melbourne has launched its first mobile library van – and it might just be popping up near you. ‘Mel-van’ has hit the road, making it even easier for Melburnians to access books and resources, Wi-Fi and digital support.

The colourful van will visit those who may find it difficult to access Council’s six library branches, including school children, the elderly and culturally diverse communities – popping up at neighbourhood houses, community centres, parks, and festivals and events.

With a collection of books, technology, craft supplies and games, handpicked for the communities en route, Mel-van also offers a publicly accessible Wi-Fi hotspot, enabling library staff to connect community members with online resources including the City of Melbourne’s digital library collection.

Mel-van is part of our pop-up library series, joining a food-themed library in the Queen Victoria Market precinct, a library for kids at Fed Square, the Express Book Bar for



city workers on Little Collins Street, the Lygon Street Biblioteca for enthusiastic writers and the Bourke Street Micro-Lab.

The initiative is part of the \$200 million Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund – a joint partnership between the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Government.

To find out more about our new library on wheels – as well as what’s on at our other six library branches across the city – visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/libraries

HAVE YOUR SAY ON GREENLINE

The Greenline project will transform the north bank of the Yarra River all the way from Birrarung Marr to Bolte Bridge.

We’re inviting the community to share their thoughts on the first project in Birrarung Marr which will kickstart in 2023.

To have your say from 1 August, visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/greenline

REPORT IT ONLINE

From graffiti to abandoned vehicles, you can report amenity issues online, around the clock. Get in touch from your smartphone when it suits you and we’ll get on the case.

Find out more at melbourne.vic.gov.au/contactus

FOOD AND GARDEN ORGANICS SERVICE

New bins for food and garden waste have been rolled out to more than 23,000 homes across the city, and we’ve already collected more than a thousand tonnes of organic waste and diverted it from landfill – that’s the equivalent weight of 46 trams!

Find out how you can help by visiting melbourne.vic.gov.au/foodgardenwaste

BUSINESS SUPPORT

Do you run a local business? For one-on-one advice, contact our Business Concierge team on **9658 9658** (press 1 for business) or enquire online, and subscribe to our Business in Melbourne newsletter for regular updates, opportunities and activities for city businesses.

Sign up at melbourne.vic.gov.au/business

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Watch meetings live from wherever you are thanks to our live-streaming capability. Tune in live or catch up later.

Find all the details about Council and committee meetings at melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutcouncil

COUNCIL BACKS BINS4BLOKES TRIAL

One in 10 men across Australia are living with some form of incontinence.

Melbourne is set to be the first capital city in Australia to trial the installation of incontinence product disposal bins in its facilities.

The BINS4Blokes initiative will see bins installed in male and all gendered toilets across six Council-owned facilities, including libraries and hubs, recreation centres, and community baths.

The City of Melbourne is an inclusive and accessible city and we want people who experience incontinence to have access to services so they can manage their needs without shame or stigma.

Councillor Jamal Hakim said it’s important more people have access to proper disposal bins for their incontinence products – particularly given many instances of incontinence can be much better managed with the right resources.

“With the proper facilities to dispose products, we hope those living with incontinence can continue getting out and about, and doing what they love when they’re here in the City of Melbourne,” Cr Hakim said.

“The trial will not only showcase a practical solution for those living with incontinence, but importantly, raise awareness and facilitate a much-needed conversation on the topic,” he said.



The BINS4Blokes initiative led by the Continence Foundation of Australia will also serve the important purpose of reducing the stigma around bladder and bowel control health. The stigmatisation of incontinence can affect the emotional and physical health of people and prevent them from attending school or work, participating in sport and engaging socially.

Like our pilot program to provide free period products in a range of locations across the city, this trial will also be used to provide options on the expansion of the program across City of Melbourne facilities and offices.

Endorsed unanimously by Council in May, the trial will begin on 1 September.

For the trial period, bins will be installed at:

- Library at the Dock
- City Library

- Carlton Baths
- Melbourne Town Hall public toilets (on Collins Street)
- North Melbourne Community Centre
- Kathleen Syme Community Centre.

Users will be able to locate the disposal bins via the National Public Toilet Map, a web-based map and phone app that shows the location of more than 19,000 public and private public toilet facilities across Australia. Users will be able to highlight the location of toilets that have incontinence product disposal bins.

To find a toilet near you, visit toiletmap.gov.au



[FACT] 1.34 million Australian boys and men experience incontinence



If you experience incontinence and want to learn more about how to manage it, contact the National Continence Helpline on 1800 33 00 66 or at helpline@continence.org.au

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Historic West Melbourne pub under threat from development

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
HERITAGE

A heritage pub in West Melbourne that dates back to the gold rush era is under threat after a proposal was submitted to convert the building into apartments.

The Royal Standard Hotel has stood at the corner of William and Walsh streets since 1865, but under a planning proposal to be considered by the City of Melbourne, the building could be partially demolished to make way for five apartments across four storeys, with a ground level restaurant plus basement.

This is despite the building being considered “significant” under the City of Melbourne’s Heritage Places Inventory 2020, and thus subject to heritage overlay.

If given the green light, the \$4.8 million development would result in the rear brick addition of the hotel demolished together with the existing internal walls and floors.

The heritage-listed façade would be “retained and renewed to better reflect its heritage status” while the existing roof and chimney would be removed and reinstated following the construction of a basement level.

The existing bar and restaurant would continue to operate in its current space.

But the proposal has sparked alarm among community members who fear another historic pub would be lost to apartments.

Chairman of the North and West Melbourne Association and a former Melbourne Lord Mayor Kevin Chamberlin said the community

was “very concerned that an application like this should even be permitted by the planning scheme”.

“Destroying our heritage should be prohibited and the council and state government have a lot to answer for if this proposal proceeds,” he said. “Heritage plays a very important part in the life of inner Melbourne and the council and state government should protect it at all costs, and not offer it up for desecration by the developers.”

“The destruction of our heritage is truly alarming and reflects badly on both the council and the state government for their pro-development stance for West Melbourne.”

However, Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece maintained the plans for the hotel at 333 – 337 William St would be “very, very, carefully considered” as “protecting heritage pubs is important”.

Cr Reece, who is currently supporting a campaign to save the historic John Curtin Hotel in Carlton from demolition after it was bought by an overseas-based investor, said the Royal Standard Hotel “is among the earliest examples of the pub hotel in Melbourne”.

“Built in 1865 it has been a William St icon for more than 150 years and has been rightly recognised as a significant heritage place within the City of Melbourne’s heritage overlay.”

However, Cr Reece noted West Melbourne was like the “next Fitzroy or Collingwood” as it was a “hot spot for new development due to its enviable inner-city lifestyle and easy access to everything Melbourne has to offer.”

“While it’s encouraging that we continue



to see strong development interest in West Melbourne, these applications must be carefully weighed against these heritage considerations, planning controls and the West Melbourne Structure Plan,” he said.

The Royal Historical Society of Victoria’s (RHSV) said in a statement that it was “very much concerned” about the future of the hotel, which was “remarkably intact and still functioning”.

“The City of Melbourne has a shocking record in allowing the demolition of historic hotels, most recently in granting a permit to demolish the 1864-built Great Western Hotel, which the RHSV protested in the strongest terms. The Royal Standard must not suffer the same fate,” it said.

Simon Ambrose, CEO of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), said the Royal Standard Hotel was among the first buildings classified by the National Trust following its establishment

in 1956.

“It has served as a meeting place for generations of customers, but like many corner pubs in Melbourne, it is now under threat,” he said.

“Our heritage laws protect the facades of these historic pubs, but in their current form they can’t protect what is really important – the role of these buildings as community gathering places.”

Mr Ambrose said the National Trust raised this urgent issue as part of the current Parliamentary Inquiry into Protections Within the Victorian Planning Framework, calling for stronger protections to safeguard places of social significance to communities.

“We will continue to pursue this in the lead-up to the State election in November.”

According to the application by Melbourne architects Lovell Chen, three stories will be constructed above the restaurant, one within the existing heritage façade and two above. ●

New wave of activations to hit North and West Melbourne

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
EVENTS

Melbourne is set to continue in its rapid re-awakening as the weather warms up, with 18 activations soon to be popping up in and around the city.

Among the recipients of the latest city activation grant round, which will see more than \$800,000 go towards supporting the upcoming events and pop-ups, is the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association.

As the only precinct association to receive the grant, it’s currently working hard on what it plans to do this October.

“The North and West Melbourne Precinct Association, together with The Place Agency, have been working hard designing a creative activation to be launched in Spring,” a spokesperson for North and West Melbourne Precinct Association said.

“The activation *Dance This Way* aims to attract new audiences and to surprise and delight locals, and the team have been busy creating a series of performances, installations and giveaways to attract traffic to the area and promote local business.”

The \$1.75 million grant program is part of the joint City of Melbourne and Victorian Government’s \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund, and successful grant recipients will receive up to \$50,000 to support the delivery of their idea.

Winter Sessions at the Queen Victoria Market precinct, Lygon St and Alexandra Gardens will farewell the wintry season this month with live music from emerging and established Melbourne musicians.

Spring will then be celebrated with *Florals by the Docklands* and *Bike Valet* which will turn the precinct into a floral wonderland with street art installations and encourage people to ride their bikes.

People can also make the most of celebrating the weather with dance and music through the *Salsa in City* sessions at Queensbridge Square, Dukes Walk and Collins Landing.

An augmented reality experience of the past and future of Melbourne will also be seen through *Remember the Wild*, and *Creek Chat* will acknowledge the underground Williams Creek through a sound-based public art intervention. ●

Sixty-eight-year-old Kensington salon faces heartbreaking closure

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
BUSINESS

Long-standing Kensington salon Jissara Hair has been forced to make the tough decision to once again close its doors due to the pandemic’s lasting impact.

Established in 1954 by Ray Jissara and taken over by son John Jissara and his wife Kelly in 1998, the salon has not only been a special part of the local community but also the family’s lives.

“It’s not just a business in any area. I grew up in Kensington and went to school in the area and the area means so much to me,” John Jissara told *North West City News*.

“Everyone knew us, and we knew everyone, it was like one big happy family.”

Not wanting to sell up, but also not knowing when and if the doors will open again, Mr Jissara said the lack of staff in the industry at this time had proven too difficult to navigate while open.

“There are no hairdressers coming into Australia on working visas currently and the hairdressers here have left the industry or started their own mobile businesses after COVID made them rethink what they want to do,” Mr Jissara said.

“The whole industry has been affected and we have tried to look for hairdressers but have now stopped.”

As a common follower of hairdressing Facebook forums, Mrs Jissara said one hairdressing forum of 9000 members had “over 200 posts from Australian businesses looking for hairdressers” within a few days.

The desperation of the job advertisements has only continued to prove a struggle within the industry at this time, and Jissara is battling the complicated dilemma of finding long-term committed staff and having the clientele and hours to support the staff.

Mr Jissara said the past five-kilometre radius restrictions kept many of their loyal customers away and played a big part in some of their customers seeking more convenient locations to this day.

“A lot of our clientele used to live in Kensington but don’t anymore, so when the government put the five-kilometre restrictions in place people couldn’t come and see us and started going elsewhere, even though they came here all their lives,” Mr Jissara said.



▲ John and Kelly Jissara.

Photo: Murray Enders.

“The government grants were also helping us, and our staff keep afloat before, but now that has gone away and small businesses are strictly relying on people coming in now more than before.”

Believing the downfall for their business was people not realising that established businesses were also at threat of closing, the couple is hoping that speaking up about their experience will motivate the community to support small businesses that little bit more.

Especially now after Jissara’s Hair was recognised for the recent Lord Mayor’s Small Business Awards – an award that recognises the small businesses that make up the City of Melbourne – despite already being closed when announced.

“It’s not always as it seems and every local business needs people in the area to support them,” Mr Jissara said.

“Even if it costs them 50 cents or a dollar more, they need to look at the bigger picture of if they want the business to be there for them in the future otherwise every second door is going to close.”

Jissara is not the only long standing hairdressing salon in Kensington to recently close, with Twiggy’s men’s hair salon also permanently closing during the past 12 months.

The struggle has for now left Mr and Mrs Jissara unsure of what more can be done to save their beloved shop, so they are instead turning their attention to their new hairdressing supply store business Everything Hair and Beauty.

“

It’s not always as it seems and every local business needs people in the area to support them.

”

Located in Keilor Park and active on social media under the business’s name, they sell hair, beauty and salon supplies to hairdressing salons and also open their showroom doors to the public.

While excited about where this business will take them, the couple told *North West City News* that they wanted to let all their old customers, all of whom they know on a first-name basis, that they miss them and are always thinking of them.

“We would love to see all of the old faces again,” Mrs Jissara said.

“We still go to the store to clean up, and our youngest son had a tear in his eye because they grew up there. The salon is a huge part of our lives, and it is heartbreaking for us.”

“But we need people to understand that it is still really hard times and shopping strips like this one in Kensington are still really affected.” ●

Recognising nearly 25 years in local real estate

There's few who can profess to know more about real estate in Kensington than Lou Rendina.

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

Opening the suburb's first agency, Rendina Real Estate, on Macaulay Rd back in 1998, Mr Rendina has forged a long and respected career in the industry spanning almost a quarter of a century.

Now, he has been recognised by the City of Melbourne with a Lord Mayor's Small Business Achievement Award for 20-plus years of service to the community.

"Now that I reflect on it, it's a great achievement for someone to be in business for so long and going through so much over that time," Mr Rendina said.

"Running a business these days isn't easy, for anyone or any industry. But, as I have, you get through these times, and if we can get through this period, we can get through anything."

During his time in the industry, Mr Rendina has been thrown almost every curveball, from the 2008 Global Financial Crisis to a global pandemic. Throughout that time his infectious positivity and energy for local real estate has been the unwavering cornerstone underpinning his success.

That same sense of positivity is felt when he thinks about the future of Kensington.

"Kensington still has that village feel where everyone is waving hello – it's a great atmosphere to have so close to the city," he said.

"I can only see it getting better over the next five to 10 years, when the population grows it provides an opportunity for local businesses to step up and be supported by this growing community."

"We are spoilt for choice, it's all in our backyard. You have the showgrounds, Flemington Racecourse, incredible eateries, parklands, hospitals, public transport, and more."

With Kensington's proximity to Melbourne's

CBD, Mr Rendina said the area presented as one of Melbourne's most affordable and well serviced suburbs.

According to Mr Rendina, buyers can purchase detached homes from anywhere between \$800,000 to \$900,000 unrenovated, or needing small amount of work for \$1million, and even homes that were fully renovated for \$1.2million.

"The area is becoming a blue-chip, bullet-proof suburb in terms of property prices," he said.

"I put that down to a small selection of property available; people know it is a great suburb to be living in, not just in Kensington but the surrounds."

"After seeing two-and-a-half decades in Kensington, this current market won't last very long. You get a window for six months, where people think the market is going to tumble, and all of a sudden, they begin to go up again."

Mr Rendina has seen a seismic shift in demographics from the working-class days of the 1990s, with what he described as an "older guard" of residents, to a growing number of young professionals deciding to move their families into the area because of the access to education and healthcare.

Looking to the future of Kensington, Mr Rendina emphasised the importance of maintaining heritage and a village feel for the rapidly growing suburb.

"Graffiti has been an issue over the past five years. I'd like to see that removed on the top of all buildings, not just on street level; [the] council has big a responsibility there," Mr Rendina said.

"I think we can improve signage and keep that heritage flavour in the village with few modifications the main strip; buildings should be restored to tuckpointed brickwork, the canopies that are quintessentially Kensington reinstated, colours should be a uniform throughout the strip with a bit of brightness."

"Between our traders and the City of Melbourne, I'm sure a voice can be found to continue the improvement of this great suburb." ●



▲ Rendina Real Estate founder and director, Lou Rendina.

Photo: Murray Enders.

Moulding the next generation of Aussie talent

“

For Lindsay Saddington, teaching young Australian actors has been a life's work.

”

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

As owner, founder and artistic director of Raglan St's Australian Centre of Performing Arts (ACOPA), his teaching philosophy has never just gravitated around reading Australian talent for screen or stage, but to use the "creative process to assist people in understanding who they are and helping them on their journey through life."

"When it comes to teaching, it is not about us parting all our knowledge on to a student, it's about finding where the student is at, not just their creative ability, but their personality too, and working with them in developing characters," Mr Saddington said. "What may work for one student may not work for another."

"My aim with ACOPA has always been to create a space where people can study, work on their own projects and assist them into developing a career."

"It's not just about training students and at



▲ ACOPA founder and artistic director, Lindsay Saddington.

the end saying goodbye, it's about us being there for them for whether it's going for an audition, whether it's developing a theatrical project or creating a film."



Photos: Murray Enders.

theatrical production, cabaret and music videos.

Mr Saddington has had a long career working and teaching in the arts as an actor in film, television, and theatre, as a director of theatre and music video productions, and as a producer of theatre, music video, and film.

With his formative acting years spent between the William Bates Academy of Performing Arts to teaching at Deakin's Victoria College Toorak campus, his decision to open ACOPA was based on a need to offer a more holistic journey for young creatives.

"It is important for us all to have creative outlet, we were born with a natural desire to explore, invent and challenge ourselves. As children it is educated out of us as they are caught up in the 'system,'" he said.

"If after the course acting isn't for you, that's fine, because the creative process is about learning about yourself and understanding who you are what you want to be doing in life."

"If you decide you'd prefer to be a doctor or scientist that's great, because working from a creative process it assists people in understanding who they really are and what they want to do."

Aspiring performers are invited to attend ACOPA's 2022 open day Sunday, September 25 from 1pm to 4pm to learn about courses, meet their teachers and be entertained with impromptu performance by teach and guest artists. ●

For more information:
acopa.com.au

NORTH WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION TRADER PROFILE

FEDERAL MP

Discovering something new in your own back yard at Mr Tucker



Iconic North Melbourne café, Mr Tucker, may be a regular for some locals and at the same time a complete surprise for others.



WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*

Tucked away on Melrose St, the seeds of Mr Tucker were sown with a gamble on a hole in the wall commercial vacancy, quickly turning into a North Melbourne institution.

Mr Tucker's owner, Jacob Stammers, remembers the days of Pocket Café, a little adjunct off Melrose St with capacity for four people inside and 10 outside, with a gleaming smile.

"It was a very risky thing at the time because this strip was full of high-vis filled takeaway shops and that's about it," Mr Stammers said.

"Locals seemed to really enjoy what we offered, and we outgrew that space in a couple of years. So, we got our new space just on five years ago which turned into Mr Tucker, and then took over the adjoining shopfront and opened in February."

From that little corporate lease which fit just 14 patrons, then Pocket Café, and now Mr

Tucker, has grown to a capacity of 130 with a fully serviced kitchen open seven days a week, serving brunch from Thursday to Saturday, and a brand-new night-time offering from Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

"The area has been asking for somewhere to come locally to drink and hang out," Mr Stammers said.

"With the brewery popping up next door, new owners for the kebab shop, a catering business opening soon, and, of course, our new dining offering, there are lots of things happening on Melrose St these days."

"We have designed a substantial snacking menu from lunch 'til late, but at 5pm the kitchen opens fully with Sicilian-based pizzas (the sexy big slabs), ricotta gnocchi and some rotating specials; we are going for a bit of an Italian or European vibe."

Mr Stammers said after a few years which saw businesses leaving the strip, namely the pharmacy and post office, it was spiriting to see Melrose St in a process of revitalisation.

With Twang Brewing, a microbrewery and bar with an in-house brewery system; Mr Gonzo, a quaint Columbian restaurant on the corner of Melrose and Erskine St, and, of course, Mr Tucker, this once-forgotten shopping strip is slowly becoming a food and beverage oasis in the heart of residential North Melbourne.

The challenge Mr Tucker, and Melrose St, faces now, and as it always has, is raising its profile to envelop more than just those locals.

It was a challenge, Mr Stammers said, which would be made much easier by trying to "build this area as a collective," so much so, he even wrote a letter of support for planning to the City of Melbourne for his new brewing buddies because "this is exactly what this area needs."

"We have always been determined to be that



▲ Mr Tucker owner and founder Jacob Stammers.

place where everyone knows your name," Mr Stammers said.

"It's the neighbourhood local that people might not have discovered. Everyone that comes through the door enjoys it, but we still have people living a few hundred metres away that haven't heard of us."

With a soft opening for dinner dining now complete and a booking system up and firing, Mr Tucker is primed for its next iteration. ●

For more information:
mrtucker.com.au

Getting on with serving Melbourne



In 2010, our community made history when we turned Melbourne Green for the first time. In May, I was extremely humbled to be re-elected as your representative in the Federal Parliament, joined by the largest ever Greens team in Canberra.



Over the next term of government, I will continue to be your strong, independent voice for Melbourne. In Parliament and in the community, we will be fighting for everyone's future.

The climate crisis is caused by mining and burning coal and gas. We cannot end the climate wars and keep approving more coal and gas. At the May election, the Australian community sent more pro-climate MPs to Canberra than ever before. There is so much support for real climate action in our parliament. As your representative and as the leader of the Australian Greens, I will be pushing Labor further and faster to tackle the climate crisis. This starts with fighting to stop every single one of the 114 new Labor-backed coal and gas projects currently in the pipeline, because you can't put out the fire while you're pouring petrol on it.

Many people across Melbourne are doing it tough. The cost of living is through the roof, and inequality is at record high. But this is our chance to make people's lives better. Labor is proposing to make inequality worse, by locking in tax cuts for billionaires like Clive Palmer in its first Budget. The Greens will push Labor to ditch these unfair tax cuts and instead invest in the things that will help everyone live a good life, like getting dental into Medicare for everyone, free childcare, tackling the housing affordability crisis and raising Centrelink payments.

Sadly, much of what we love about Melbourne is under threat. We've been hard hit by the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, especially the arts, entertainment and creative industries. We need to rebuild our community, not just our economy. The Greens and I have a plan to revitalise our city, with rent reductions for innovative and creative businesses and steps to protect liveability.

As Melbourne experiences another cold, wet winter, I want to pay a special tribute to our health care workers who are under immense pressure to keep our community safe as COVID-19 and flu cases rise. I encourage all of you to do your part to keep our community safe, get your COVID-19 booster, mask up when you're indoors and stay home when you're feeling unwell. We'll continue to fight for sick pay for everyone, so no one has to choose between protecting those around them and being able to pay the bills.

This next term of parliament has incredible potential. I'm excited to continue to represent you and to fight for the values of compassion and fairness that our community holds so dear. As your local MP, my team and I are here to help you. You can contact my office for assistance on issues such as immigration, Centrelink, housing and dealing with other government agencies or Ministers, or to seek support for community projects and campaigning on local issues.

I look forward to seeing you around, Melbourne. ●



Adam Bandt
FEDERAL MP FOR MELBOURNE
ADAM.BANDT.MP@APH.GOV.AU

healthcare and support for you and your family (plus, there is free parking available too!).

So yes, it takes a village to raise a child, and so too, it takes an amazing team to keep a business running through a pandemic ... how lucky we are to have access to both in our wonderful north-west pocket of this great city. ●

For more information:
permierhealthpartners.com.au

NORTH WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION

A premier team supporting our community

We're all familiar with the saying, "it takes a village to raise a child" ... well, the same could be said for running a business during the past few challenging years. For owner and director of Premier Health Partners Paul O'Keefe, he would tell you that "it takes an amazing team to keep a business running!"

WORDS BY *Emily Jones*

Premier Health Partners (PHP) is a family medical and allied health clinic based in the newly established Wominjeka Walk in West Melbourne.

It's no secret that the past few years have wreaked havoc on most, and that our health professionals and small businesses in particular have been radically impacted.

Paul, who lives locally with his young family, attributes PHP's ability to have endured the past few years to his fantastic team of like-minded, passionate, and dedicated staff, admin/reception and practitioners alike.

The team, like most in the healthcare industry, has worked tirelessly to ensure PHP could continue supporting patients and our local community throughout the chaos and uncertainty of the pandemic.

Paul said that he couldn't be more grateful to and for his team, "my village", which had

navigated the changes, unpredictability, new processes and regulations, and even moving to a new clinic, all while maintaining the level of support and compassion their patients had come to expect.

"We are proud of the strong family and community values that we have developed throughout our practice. Our supportive, collaborative, and nurturing culture has helped us all get through," he said.

As we look towards a brighter future easing into the post-pandemic "new normal", PHP is excited by future growth and opportunities within its family clinic.

Paul shared proudly that his "team's dedication hasn't waned, [its] practitioners' passion hasn't faded, and [the] clinic's commitment to supporting the community has never been stronger."

PHP continues to welcome new practitioners and services to its team, stressing a commitment to providing holistic healthcare to all. The cooperative environment at PHP encourages patients to seek the most appropriate care for their specific needs.

The practitioner team currently includes an osteopath, a myotherapist, exercise physiologists, three general practitioners, and a clinic nurse. They have also partnered with off-site practitioners including a speech pathologist, an occupational therapist, and a psychologist to provide further support for patients.

Premier Health Partners recently relocated into a stunning new clinic featuring purpose-built spaces for practitioner services, as well as beautiful open waiting areas, and a striking reception space.

Aptly located on the impressive Wominjeka Way, the clinic is a welcoming space with a warm and compassionate reception team ready to greet you and support you in getting the best



Move to a less energy-intensive lifestyle

The answer to create the change we need is not in technocratic solutions to sustain our current lifestyles; it is in changing our human behaviour.

If you have reached a point of knowing that relying only on government and big business to lead the way is abdicating your self-responsibility, here are some actions and steps to consider to reduce your energy usage.

Take it slow and undertake small steps; fundamental and holding change takes time.

An important concept to understand in energy dynamics is **embodied energy**. Embodied energy is the sum of all the energy required to produce any goods or services and get it to your doorstep. For more detailed information on energy laws scan the QR code:



Reconsider buying new things and services

Every dollar you spend has an impact on the planet. Why am I purchasing this? Where does this come from, how is it made, where will it end up?

We have to overcome many years of conditioning, with massive advertising campaigns that have screamed at us from our lounge rooms, big billboards, at footy games that we are not enough and need things, and that there isn't enough, creating fear and scarcity. You are enough and there is enough and what you do matters.

You drive demand for goods and services. To navigate the green washing and what is best you may need help. The **Ethical Consumer Group** is a community based, not-for-profit organisation and network, set up to help facilitate more sustainable purchasing practices for the everyday consumer. Visit their website: ethical.org.au/3.4.2/

Alternatives to buying include recycle boutiques, clothes swaps, opp shops and repair cafes.



Kensington Repair Hub is on at McCracken Street Church, 1pm to 4pm, on Sunday, August 21, September 18, October 16, November 20 and December 18.

Learn more at reuse.org.au and buynothingnew.com.au

Grow your own food

Growing your own food cuts greenhouse gas emissions by 25 per cent.

By growing your own food, you are helping to reduce the high amounts of burning fossil fuels that fill our environment as a direct result of conventional farming and importing foods from commercial farmers. You also are reducing waste from food packaging materials such as man-made plastics and cardboard, that travels hundreds and thousands of miles and is full of embodied energy.

Conventional farming utilises an extreme amount of pesticides and synthetic fertilisers, heavily reliant on fossil fuel.

Grow your own food in your backyard, on nature strips, your balcony/roof and/or join a community garden.

Buy locally-grown food

If you don't have space to grow your own

food, support local produce markets and urban farms. It is estimated that an average distance of 1500 miles is travelled before the food is consumed. Large-scale, long-distance transportation of food relies heavily on the energy from burning fossil fuels.

Local chemical-free grown produce (not for profit) is for sale on Sunday, August 21 at McCracken Street Church alongside The Repair Hub 1pm to 4pm.

Reduce your meat intake

The livestock industry is one of the most significant contributors to global warming, loss of fresh water, rainforest destruction, air and water pollution, and loss of habitat.

One of the most effective things you can do to reduce your energy footprint is to reduce your meat and dairy consumption.

Learn more at WhyVeg.com

Use your car less

Go plastic free

The production of plastics such as polyethylene and polypropylene which make up the bulk of plastic production, is heavily reliant on fossil fuel usage in all its production steps from;

extraction and refining, production of naphtha; production of olefins; polymerisation and finally; extrusion, injection moulding, product manufacturing.

There is enough research; data and evidence to show us why we need to *just stop using plastic*.

Go organic

Organic farmers severely restrict the use of synthetic chemicals, pesticides and fertilisers used in growing food, and the use of drugs commonly used in intensive livestock farming.

Choose certified organic or biodynamic. For more information: australianorganicdirectory.com.au

Choose fruits and veggies that are low in pesticide use when organic isn't available visit ewg.org/foodnews

Use less energy at home

Reduce heating and air conditioning use. Use passive heating using sun rather than gas and electricity – use an efficient fireplace that can use cuttings from your tree prunings. Curtains and strategically planted trees can keep a house cooler in summer and warmer in winter.

Rethink energy appliances.

Consider a rocket stove. Most of our household energy requirements and bills are for heating our homes, cooking or heating water. Rocket stoves are an example of appropriate technology which can cover all of those needs, cost you next to nothing to build, and just a few sticks to run.

For more information: permacultureprinciples.com/post/rocket-stoves/

This is not new information.

If you choose to take responsibility for your lifestyle and impact on this planet, you are not alone, join the many movements and groups that are creating fundamental change at the grass roots.

In the future when your grandchildren may ask what you did during this time of climate crises? What will be your reply?

Knowing is not doing. ●



Jacqui van Heerden
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KENSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

Sing your way to good health

If you're passing by Christ Church Kensington on Tuesday nights, you might notice the warm glow of stained glass in the dark and hear murmurs of song drifting from the building.

From 7.30pm to 9pm, rain, hail or shine, members of the "Kensingers" Community Choir meet to sing their hearts out.

The choir has been running in one form or another since 1996 and pre-COVID would often perform at local events and community festivals.

These days, they are slowly settling into novelty of singing together in person after two years online.

While many of us are happy singing in the shower or humming along to the car radio, singing in a group has a special kind of magic.

For starters, singing in a choir has huge mental health benefits. Choral singing has been shown to enhance brain function, strengthen feelings of belonging, and release endorphins and oxytocin resulting in reduced stress and depression. Not bad for something that is also heaps of fun.



Maybe doctors should be prescribing singing instead of Prozac!

Singing in a group gives you confidence, especially if you've been told you "can't sing" in the past. In a choir, everyone has a part. You

have permission to make a noise as part of the group and the combined voices carry you along. Performing on stage as part of a choir can be life changing.

If improved mental health and confidence

aren't enough of a reason to sing, how about improved fitness? Seriously. Singing for an hour or so is a wonderful workout for the lungs. Breathing fully oxygenates the blood. Breathing slows and deepens, creating a profound sense of wellbeing, and singing improves your posture and tones your stomach muscles.

The Kensingers is a no-audition community choir and new members are welcome at any time. With her trusty guitar in hand, choir leader, Anne Vercoe encourages a range of different song styles so there's something for everyone.

The Kensingers Community Choir runs on Tuesday evenings from 7.30pm to 9pm during school terms. All welcome. ●

For more information:
kensingtonneighbourhoodhouse.com.au or call 9376 6366



Rebecca Smith
MANAGER KENSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE
INFO@KENHOUSE.ORG.AU

PARKVILLE GARDENS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

ARTS HOUSE

Parkville Gardens AGM

First things first – a calendar entry. Parkville Gardens residents, please book yourself up for our annual general meeting (AGM).

We're having it earlier this year – on Thursday, September 8 at 6.30pm in the Reggio Calabria Club. It's open to all residents, but you'll have to be a paid-up member to vote. Come along, meet your neighbours, hear what's happening and have your say.

The Parkville Gardens Residents' Association (PGRA) wants to hear from you and work with you to make the neighbourhood an even better place to live. You'll have the option of staying on after the meeting, treating yourself to a very reasonably priced meal at the bistro, and enjoying good company.

Current and prospective members alike are strongly encouraged to consider joining the committee. We'd love to see some new faces. All positions become vacant at the AGM so here's your chance to offer yourself, your energy and ideas to serve the local community – and enjoy yourself in the process.

PGRA members are gently reminded that they need to pay their annual renewal fee of \$5 to maintain their membership and voting rights. New members are most welcome. Contact us via members@pgra.org.au and we'll send you the application form. The joining fee is a modest \$20.

Looking back briefly, a very worthwhile meeting took place at The Park Club off Galada Ave on July 27. Arranged by Kylie Osborne, the community development person for Frasers Property, it brought together a range of stakeholders with interests in the apartment buildings along Galada Ave. Attendees included representatives from Frasers, the owners' corporations (OC), The Knight (the OC managers), Housing First (the owners and managers of the social housing complex currently under construction), Melbourne Building Management and PGRA. It was a great opportunity to share information and ideas about collaboration and communication.

Construction of the social housing building on Galada Ave continues apace. It is on track to be completed by mid-2023 and to have residents in place around September. Roadworks at the intersection of Oak St and Galada Ave have now been completed. The entrance has been narrowed for safety's sake and a zebra crossing installed. Just beyond the boundaries of Parkville Gardens, the footpath on the eastern



side of Oak St is currently being resurfaced.

Further afield again, Public Transport Victoria is holding information sessions about the Route 58 tram service. One is from 2.30pm to 5.30pm on Wednesday, August 17, the other from 10am to 1pm on Saturday, August 20, both at Royal Park Station.

And just nearby in the park, walkers, joggers and cyclists are being treated to the rare sight of goats! There are some small fenced-off areas where the goats are contributing to an experimental weed control program.

Back in Parkville Gardens, residents have the prospect of a second café, this one to be operated by Mercy Health. Work on the space at Mercy Place in Willam St is underway. More details to follow as they become available.

To finish on the same note with which we began, please make a note of Sunday, October



23. Subject to funding being secured, PGRA plans to stage a children's event that morning. Hopefully there'll be good news about that in the next edition (and good weather on the day!). ●

Residents can find us:
[facebook.com/groups/pgrass](https://www.facebook.com/groups/pgrass) or
[email secretary@pgra.org.au](mailto:secretary@pgra.org.au).



Tom Knowles

TOM KNOWLES IS THE PRESIDENT OF PARKVILLE GARDENS ASSOCIATION.
PRESIDENT@PGRA.ORG.AU



The “daring new concept” premiering at Arts House

Leading arts organisation Speak Percussion is coming to the Arts House on August 18 for the world premiere of their latest work Scream Star.

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*

Commissioning renowned international composers Matthew Shlomowitz, Johannes Kreidler and Jessie Marino to work together for the first time, the piece will involve a collision of sound, screen, projection and percussion.

The on-stage percussionists bringing the experimental performance to life will be Eugene Ughetti, Kaylie Melville and Hamish Upton.

As someone who has a longstanding love of music, new sounds and percussion, Mr Upton said it had been “an absolutely amazing feeling” to work so closely with Speak Percussion’s artistic director Mr Ughetti and assistant artistic director Ms Melville.

“Scream Star is a daring new concept and it has been amazing to work closely with composers, lighting designers and film archivists to create these new works together,” Mr Upton said.

“There has been a lot of collaboration to bring these visions to life.”

Described as a wildly imaginative and playful work, *Scream Star* will use a combination of canned laughter, green screens, Foley artists and house bands to dig into the visual unconscious shared by people raised on a diet of television and film.

All aspects of the recent work are based on the specialised and unique works of the composers involved, making the collaboration an unexpected example of sonic experimentation.

“Something Speak Percussion does really well is take risks on a large scale and work with composers that speak to our time and find ways to express contemporary living,” Mr Upton said.

“In *Scream Star* each piece features interactions between the percussionists, projections and screens. Audiences will see percussionists not only playing traditional percussion instruments but also pushing the boundaries of sound.”

One of the non-traditional works in particular will feature the percussionists as a camera crew operating live cameras onstage that are then being fed to large projection screens.

Speaking on the performance, which will be onstage for four nights only, Mr Upton said as well as the drawback of music, audiences could expect a “beautiful and quite stunning” visual appeal at the concert.

Speak Percussion has commissioned and premiered more than 130 percussion works in the past.

Their work also continues to receive recognition from the Australian Performing Right Association (APRA) and Australian Music Centre (AMC) awards, and they were recently awarded the Sidney Myer Performing Arts Group Award late last year. ●

For more information:
artshouse.com.au

METRO TUNNEL

Metro Tunnel lets the robo-dog off the leash



It's not Bring Your Dog to Work Day, but Metro Tunnel Project crews have been joined by a four-legged friend all the same.



In a first for Victoria, a robot dog named Spot has joined the Metro Tunnel team as part of a cutting-edge technology trial to scan the project's new tunnels and collect data for quality control.

Designed to be a fully autonomous coworker on major construction projects, Spot can move and navigate almost like a normal dog, meaning it can cruise over gravel, loose obstacles and even climb flights of stairs.

The 30kg Spot is about the size of a Labrador and navigates via 360-degree vision and a light detection and ranging sensor.

This makes traversing the complex underground tunnels and platforms of the Metro Tunnel Project a breeze, steering clear of workers while capturing data in real-time to document progress during the project's critical tunnel fit-out stage.

And unlike our furrer four-legged friends, it always follows every command, comes when it's called and doesn't need to be kept on a lead.

Spot is also smart enough to recognise when its batteries need to be recharged. It then makes its way to its docking station, where it can upload data in real time while charging. It can

typically cover between six and eight kilometres – or about 90 minutes – before it needs recharging.

Designed to survive dusty and wet conditions, Spot is no slouch either. It's an all-weather performer able to work in temperatures that would make even the hardiest tradie call in sick – anything from -20 to 45 degrees Celsius.

And Metro Tunnel isn't the only place benefiting from a new best friend – the technology by US robotics company Boston Dynamics is already being rolled out overseas, with another pup from Spot's litter recently inspecting the ancient Roman city of Pompeii for safety and structural issues.

Spot's help will be invaluable as the Metro Tunnel team gets on with working towards a huge program of train testing in the tunnels next year to ensure services are ready for passengers when the Metro Tunnel opens in 2025.

The project's twin nine-kilometre tunnels were completed last year, and the five new underground stations are taking shape, including Arden Station, where the signature arched brick entrance is close to completion and work is continuing below ground on platform construction and mechanical, electrical and plumbing service installation. ●

That feeling – powerlessness



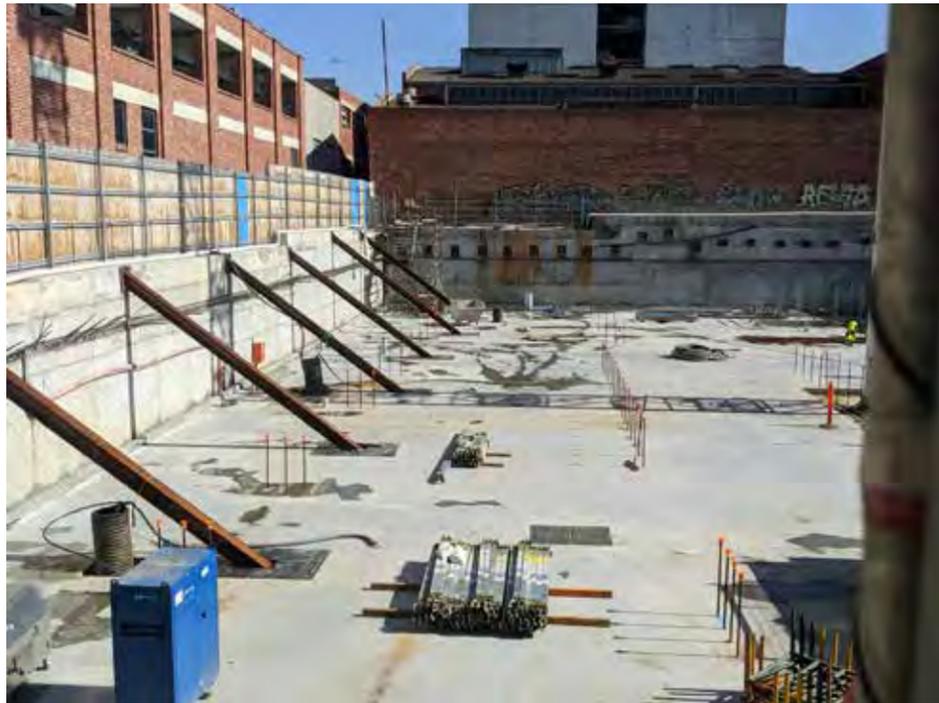
It must be terrifying to stand on the shore and watch a tsunami approaching! What can I do? What can I do to protect myself, my family, my community? So little time! A feeling of powerlessness to confront or respond to a force of nature.



At the risk of over-dramatising, I felt the same powerless feeling on my walk this afternoon. Let me explain; please come on the walk with me, it's along Macaulay Rd.

Note to readers – it might be useful to follow our walk with a Google Map as reference, or better still, actually do the walk – it is actually quite confronting (Lifeline 13 11 14).

We'll start from the narrow heritage bridge across Moonee Ponds Creek and head west towards Kensington Village. Immediately to our right we can see the partly demolished ex-Vision Australia building stretching along Stubbs St, almost to Robertson St. This corner is soon to feature a gigantic eight-storey block of 450-plus build-to-rent (BTR) apartments. Immediately on our left, south of Macaulay Rd, we can see the scaffolding-lined "Little Hardiman Lofts" building site (347-367), which runs about 60m from Bent St towards Albermarle St. This is at present populated by one very lonely crane, a very high-maintenance resident that has been sitting idle for months while various owner/builders weather their crises. In time this lonely crane will also make way for an eight-storey apartment block. The



next block on the south (369-391 Macaulay Rd) is a two-storey building, stretching about 40m up to the imposing eight-storey Assemble (73 apartments) development on the eastern corner of Albermarle St (393 Macaulay).

Let's pause here. First, what will be the fate of that two-storey building? Perhaps it has already been "harvested"? Will it be another six-



eight-storey apartment block? It certainly could be!

Let's also look over the road. On the north side we are looking at 352-400 Macaulay Rd, the second largest of the four mega sites in this block (at present The Northside Industrial Estate). This is subject to a development application by the Greystar development group, for

an eight-storey building of 427 BTR apartments. The third (most western) site on this block facing onto Macaulay Rd already has development approval, also being developed by Assemble; it has three buildings comprising 426 BTR apartments.

Let's turn back and look at the south side again. After Albermarle St we see another low-rise building (W.B.Wragg) with a 35m frontage onto Macaulay Rd. What will happen to this building? Has it already been "harvested" as well!?

Continuing up this south side, we have another six-storey apartment development (415-423 Macaulay) followed by a series of other properties, ripe for harvest, stretching over about 75m up to the super-ugly Macro apartments facing Barnett St.

Let's take stock. We've passed three mega apartment developments on the north side of Macaulay Rd, and three very substantial apartment developments on the south side. On the south, the developed and developing frontage is about 145m; the undeveloped frontage (yet to be harvested) is about 155m. The north side will comprise about 250m of six-storey frontage apartments, with eight storeys close behind.

Perhaps readers can begin to appreciate my tsunami analogy. As chairperson of the Kensington Association, I feel a sense of responsibility, because we try to protect the amenity and liveability of Kensington. I feel we are powerless to stop this tsunami (albeit, very slow moving) of development, no matter how much "noise" we make. What will transpire with the 155m of undeveloped frontage on the south of Macaulay Rd? Sometime ago someone in the Kensington Association coined the term "Macaulay Canyons!" How apt!

One thing is certain, whatever happens, when this development wave has passed through, this part of Kensington will be changed forever. ●



Simon Harvey
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STATE MP

A day in the life of a Greens MP staffer

If you've ever called, emailed, or popped into Ellen's office, there's a good chance you've spoken to one of us.

WORDS BY *Jordy, Fern and Amy*

With Ellen on a short period of maternity leave, we thought we'd share a bit about what we do and what we can help you with.

An MP's day is almost as varied as it gets. When Ellen is not at the Victorian Parliament, fighting for climate, affordable housing, and integrity, she can often be found at community events, celebrating our community's diversity and connection; at local schools, learning about what needs to be fixed to give our kids the best possible education; and meeting with other MPs, councillors and community groups to achieve local wins.

Meanwhile, our small team is behind the scenes supporting Ellen and our community.

Jordy is our go-to person for support for residents. She knows all the ins and outs of getting local issues resolved.

"Every day is different – that's what I love about this job. You'll often find me on the phone with Ministers' advisors, the council, schools, local organisations, and residents. I do a lot of work with public housing residents on maintenance issues in their home



▲ *Ellen's team, from left to right: Amy, Fern, Ellen and Jordy.*

or following up housing and transfer applications with the department to make sure people live in a house that is right for them. I also stay on top of local issues, regularly meeting with local community groups and supporting them however we can. For example, I'm currently working with artists and residents in the Nicholas Building to support their campaign to stay in the building which is being sold. I'm also working with staff at Docklands Primary School to help them get

much-needed safety upgrades."

Fern is our policy expert. Her head is filled with information about renewable energy and threats to nature.

"Right now, I'm working on the Greens' climate and environment policies as we head toward a state election in November. This involves researching renewable energy technologies, like batteries and offshore wind farms, and working with stakeholders – such as environment groups, coal workers, and scientists – to

ensure our policies reflect the changes we need to tackle the climate crisis. My job also involves meeting with local environment groups from right across Victoria. I love supporting these groups to get environmental issues raised in the State Parliament. It's so satisfying when these campaigns get great outcomes. Earlier this year, I was thrilled when East Gippsland residents stopped a giant mineral sands mine, which threatened local farms, rivers, and wildlife."

Amy makes sure all the great things Ellen does for our community are shared through Ellen's website, emails, and social media.

"My day could include going to parliament or community events with Ellen and taking photographs, preparing petition pages on local issues, pitching stories to local newspapers (like this one), sending emails to our supporters, and designing flyers, stickers or posters. Today I'm working on a plan to spread the word about the awesome climate initiatives that Ellen and Fern have been working hard on. Did you know that the Greens have a plan to help one million Victorian families get their homes off gas?"

Our team is always available to help local residents. If there is ever anything we can do to support you, please do not hesitate to get in touch! ●

To contact Ellen's team:
office@ellensandell.com

NATURE

Busy little biter

The bull ant in the pic, photographed in the Flagstaff Gardens, is like any you might find in your back yard. He looks ferocious and dangerous, and he's rather pleased you think so.

WORDS BY *Howard Birnstihl*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Howard Birnstihl*

He'll give you a nip which hurts like billyo, but only when you intrude into his space. He's far more interested in getting on with his work, and as Sundance might say, work is what ants are good at.

Like bees and termites, ants are great co-operators. Selflessly, they work for the good of the community, and for some sterile males it's all work and no play as their whole life is spent foraging, nest-building and child-minding. Eat your hearts out ladies.

Royalty is not for weaklings and the Queen ant is no exception. Prepared to rough it, and perhaps to show off, she mates on the wing, and upon landing, like that classic tough guy who reckons he can beat anyone in the bar, she proceeds to knock off her wings on any available surface.

Excavating a small chamber in the ground, she holes up on her own 'til the next year, her eggs hatching to produce worker ants which she feeds on her own body fluids. She finds this rather depleting of course but these tough Queens can survive for up to 15 years of this rigorous lifestyle. Later as adults, the ants will survive on nectar and small insects.

Proud housekeepers and excellent parents, ants will move their eggs from place to place, ensuring they're constantly at the optimum

temperature and humidity. As if this wasn't enough, they continually lick the eggs to ensure they are free of fungus. And some dads balk at changing nappies!

Excellent navigators, ants use a variety of means to find their way home. Experiments where ants were placed on turntables to disorient them have shown some of these intrepid insects can navigate even in the dark, following scent trails. Others depended on light to achieve the same end. Although their sight is limited, ants use the general light of the sun to guide them, always taking the 15-degree movement of the sun per hour into account.

By the way, the reason the ant bite feels so severe is not so much the actual nip from its impressive mandibles, the real ouch factor comes when a chemical concoction is injected into the puncture made by the sting on the ant's abdomen. A common habit of many insects and spiders, the fluid helps in the digestive process. This fluid is not dangerous to humans but as we all know, it will cause a red swelling and an annoying itch.

For years it was thought to be a simple formic acid but recent research has shown it is far more complex, similar to that of wasps and bees and therefore probably developing from a common ancestor. Studies of this venom will no doubt contribute to the understanding of the physiology of pain and may, in the future, lead to improvements in pain treatments.

Colonies of bull ants tend to be much smaller



than those of other ant species, but typically, their nests are fearlessly protected. Prepared to attack intruders of any size, the bull ants usually succeed in driving them off, for like you and me, those intruders will probably have strong memories of their last sting.

There are about 100 known species of bull ant in Australia, Europeans first discovering them in 1770 (Joseph Banks – probably on a picnic). Joseph may have noticed the outside pair of jaws being used to carry off his choice bits of tucker, the inner pair for chewing it.

Growing to about 40 mm, they appear clumsy because even though, as stated, they have reasonable sight, they communicate through smell and touch. Unlike a bee, the sting has no barbs and can be used again [and again and ...] as you will have noticed if you've ever had one caught down your strides.

Echidnas as we know are ant eaters, but it's the larvae they seek rather than the adults. Still courageous however, they do suffer many stings while at their supper. I imagine the researchers have thought of it too, but perhaps a study of the echidna would also be an ideal way to develop a better understanding of pain control ... mind you, I'd watch those spines, or it could be pain rather than pain control being studied.

If you would like to see more of my work, scan the QR code below, or check my Youtube channel under my name. ●



WE LIVE HERE

New report: it's curtains for some owners

“

Another major fire risk has been uncovered in Melbourne – curtain walls containing flammable aluminium composite cladding (ACP).

”

At least 10 residential buildings in Melbourne have a type of curtain wall with flammable cladding concealed within the wall cavity, according to a report by a high-profile fire safety consulting firm.

A curtain wall is a window system positioned externally to the building structure, spanning multiple levels and forming a continuous facade.

This curtain wall fire risk is a late discovery, outside the original scope of Cladding Safety Victoria (CSV). Affected apartment owners are facing insuperable remediation bills in the tens of millions and sometimes more than \$100 million.

We Live Here has seen a copy of the alarming fire expert report, entitled *Preliminary Overview of Melbourne City Buildings with Non-Compliant Curtain Walls*. At the date of going to press, the report is yet to be released. When released, we expect it should set off alarm bells for the state government.

The consultants' report was triggered by the discovery of a staggering quantity of cladding in a curtain wall of an inner-city Melbourne apartment building. Previous investigations by others had failed to discover much of the cladding concealed in the curtain wall.

The consultants found the vertically connected curtain wall system posed a credible risk of rapid fire spread over multiple storeys.

Including the additional flammable material uncovered, the total area of flammable cladding in the building is an astonishing 50,000 square metres. This Melbourne building now holds the unenviable record for the largest cladding project in Australia – easily surpassing the previous record held by a Perth building with 28,000 square metres.

The consultants have warned the owners that the issue is serious:

“With the building in its current state, [this firm] is of the opinion that the City of Melbourne's initial evaluation that the building is a danger to the life, safety or health to members of the public and to any person using the building or to any property; is indeed correct.”

Extending their research, the consultants found several other high-rise buildings in the Melbourne CBD fitted with the same curtain wall system from the same overseas manufacturer.

On top of this, the report found that there were several ignition risks within these high-rise buildings that could create fires.

Raining glass shards?

The research by the fire risk consultants includes findings that the extensive presence of ACP within the curtain wall cavity can lead to broken sheet glass falling in the event of a fire.

In contrast, most other windows installed on Melbourne high-rises are fire resistant. In a fire, the outer layer of glass in non-curtain windows will break up into very small pieces and fall. The peculiar construction of the curtain wall, with flammable material immediately behind glass, is prone to make the glass crack and fall in larger pieces.

Out of sight?

How has this issue gone undetected, or at least unreported? The fire consultants explain it may be a case of “out of sight, out of mind”.

The ACP panels within these buildings' curtain wall cavities are not visually identifiable from outside the buildings. To see the flammable material, you need to undertake “destructive investigation of the external wall system or internal wall linings.”

The expert report paints a disturbing picture for the owners of the building that initiated the study:

“Twenty-six insurers have been approached and denied insurance for the building. A full replacement cost could be in vicinity of \$150 million.”

The consultants add:

“Once the insurers know the full extent of the cladding there is simply no way they will provide cover.”

And we all know that you need insurance to get a loan. With the building unable to source insurance, owners are unable to obtain any funding for remediation works. The owners also risk a fine of \$462,000 if they do not remove the flammable material to satisfy the building order that has been issued by the council.

How many experts know about this fire risk?

The consultants cite engineers and scientists around the world who have been studying the curtain wall fire risk issue for some time now.

A paper published in the *Architecture and Planning Journal* in 2018 analysed how fire spreads in curtain wall facades. The study by Mostafi Elehefnawi was able to demonstrate the behaviour of fire spreading in the gap between a curtain wall and floor structure slab. A further danger was found to arise from secondary fires ignited by burning debris falling from the upper floor levels.

The report also cites a 2020 Australian study by the CSIRO that examined a series of fire incidents involving ACP. For example, the Wooshin Golden Suites apartment building in South Korea was a building that was affected by a combustible curtain wall system. A fire at the building in 2010 started from a spark in an

electrical outlet on the fourth floor. Within 20 minutes the fire spread up the vertical facade to the top floor of the 38-storey building. The vertical fire spread was around one of the building's exterior alcoves. The resultant re-radiation and chimney effect appeared to enhance the fire spread. The fire brigade deployed helicopters to drop water on the building and to evacuate some occupants from the roof. While thankfully there were no fatalities, several people were seriously injured.

So, it appears that a huge, invisible fire risk that has long concerned experts here and overseas is only now being becoming known to the general public.

A plea to government

The consultants conclude their latest report with a statement addressing the role of the state government regarding the several buildings' flammable curtain walls:

“Whilst external wall cladding continues to be rectified, it is of our belief that equal importance should be apportioned to curtain wall systems and their use in high-rise buildings to ensure the safety of dwellings and life. Government intervention will be required to help the owners' corporations deal with the financial burden this will place on the buildings.”

Campaign donations

As a not-for-profit organisation, donations from individuals and buildings keep our campaigns going. To register as a supporter of We Live Here or to donate, please visit welfare.net. We Live Here does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests. ●



Barbara Francis &
Rus Littleton
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The Eight Hour Day movement

The Melbourne General Cemetery is a treasure store of Victoria's history, and it was one of my favourite walks during lockdown.

WORDS BY *Felicity Jack*
HOTHAM HISTORY PROJECT

In the November edition I wrote about Brettana Smyth, pioneer of women's rights, who died in 1893. Later, I discovered her grave in the Melbourne General Cemetery. There was a plaque recording that it had been renovated by the CFMEU. On contacting the union, I found that the renovation had been sponsored by the now defunct Labour Graves Committee and unveiled by Joan Kirner on March 13, 1995.

I also learnt that the committee had sponsored the restoration of the graves of six men, all of whom were involved in the Victoria's Eight Hour Day movement. Besides the three men I have written about here were George Booker, Johnston Ormiston and Freeman Manuel. I will write about Manuel for the next edition.

Conditions for working people in the early days of settlement could be gruellingly hard. A group of men, many of whom were immigrants from the United Kingdom with a history of agitation for reform, got together to lobby for improved conditions. Their plan was to confront employers with their initial demand for an eight-hour day – an equal balance of work, sleep and leisure.

The culmination of their planning took place on April 21, 1856, when a number of masons working in Melbourne downed tools and



marched to Spring St where Parliament House was under construction and where the masons were agitating for better pay. There was much public sympathy for the reform and the workers finally won the day. It was up to each industry to negotiate their own hours and conditions, but the precedent had been set and the eight-hour day soon became an accepted norm as other industries took on the fight. The men who supported the movement were highly respected throughout their lives and many were venerated at the time of their deaths.

One very grand tombstone in the cemetery, not illustrated, is that of James Galloway. He was one of the founders of the eight-hour movement. He died in 1860 at the age of 32. A large, elaborate memorial was paid for by unionists in 1870. It was renovated and unveiled by the



▲ *Thomas Topping's grave.*

Prime Minister Gough Whitlam on March 9, 1992.

Thomas Topping was another important member of the movement. His tombstone records that he was one of the founding fathers of the Eight Hours Movement. When he died in 1895 the Melbourne *Herald* reported that, "The funeral promises to be a very large one, the Trades' Hall Council, Eight Hours' Association and kindred bodies having signified their intention of taking part".

John Hancock (1846-1899) was born in London and migrated to Australia in 1884 where he was prominent in trades union issues and in leadership of the ongoing Eight



▲ *Brettana Smyth's grave.*

Hour Movement. He was elected as a Labor candidate to the Victorian parliament in 1891, having been endorsed by the Trades Hall Council. His gravestone proclaims him "A voice for the working class".

The fight for fair and equitable working rights continues, but it's important to remember those whose vision and dedication began the process. A walk-through Melbourne General Cemetery can remind us of the lives of the men and women who preceded us. ●



For more information:
hothamhistory.org.au



Faces of North West City

Errol St

What's going to happen next?



KOMALA

I'm not sure. It's difficult to say. The stars need to align. One lifetime is not enough.



QUINN

I'm on my way home to do some work admin, but I'm thinking about 18th century lingerie for a performance.



JASPER

I'm trying to decide what colour to dye my hair. I've had this yellow for a long time.



ADRIAN

I need to find ways to interact with the local community. You have people two blocks away I have no interaction with. The desire to move forward is not necessarily matched by purpose.

What's On: August 2022

Community Calendar



UNTIL DEC 18 - FREE
Kensington Market
 Kensington Market is returning to Kensington Town Hall, highlighting the produce and artwork of this wonderful inner-city makers community. Be sure to come down as you'd be sure to find something you love, from designer fashion, homemade treats, coffee, homewares, jewellery, kids wear and art.
Kensington Town Hall
 30-34 Bellair St, Kensington 3031



The Centre
 The Centre is a not-for-profit offering programs and activities that respond to the needs of the North & West Melbourne community, providing an accessible and inclusive agenda which fosters belonging and community spirit.
 58 Errol St, North Melbourne
centre.org.au

Songbirds at North Melbourne Library
 Songs, rhymes and stories will engage your budding bookworm's mind and introduce them to the fun and rhythm of language. For babies and toddlers to 18 months old; no bookings necessary.
North Melbourne Library
 66 Errol St, North Melbourne



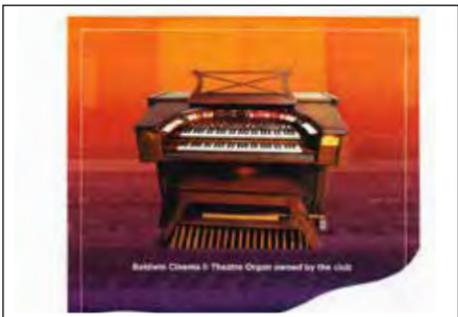
UNTIL DEC 1 - FREE
Stompers at North Melbourne Library
 Come along for an energetic 30 minutes of stories, songs, rhymes, music and most of all, fun. Ages 18 months to 3 years; no bookings necessary.
North Melbourne Library
 66 Errol St, North Melbourne



UNTIL DEC 9 - FREE
French Club
 Run fortnightly at North Melbourne Library, the French Club is an opportunity to explore French culture, improve your French language skills and make new friends.
North Melbourne Library
 66 Errol St, North Melbourne



FORTNIGHTLY, TUESDAYS 5-6PM
Trans and gender diverse writing group
 Online writing group via Zoom for trans and gender diverse young people and queer-identified people between the ages of 13 to 25 to connect and get writing.
youngadults@melbourne.vic.gov.au



WESTERN SUBURBS ORGAN CLUB
 Kensington Neighbourhood Centre
 18 Anthony St, Kensington
 August 8 - August 8, 1:45 pm
 2nd Monday of the month (or 3rd Monday if the 2nd Monday is a public holiday). Cost: \$8 includes afternoon tea. Enquiries: Julie, **9307 8207**



Parkville Tennis Club
 Parkville Tennis Club is a small friendly tennis club located just outside the CBD on Royal Parade. Individual, student, concession and family memberships are available.
 151 Royal Parade, Parkville 3052
 Monday - Sunday - 6am - 11pm
tennis.com.au/parkvilletc

Business Directory

Health

STRIDE
HEALTH COLLECTIVE
 CHIROPRACTIC | REMEDIAL MASSAGE | NUTRITION
 Helping people from all walks of life live pain-free & reach their health goals.
 Scan QR code to book online.

Politician

ELLEN SANDELL
STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE
 (03) 9328 4637 office@ellensandell.com 146 Peel Street North Melbourne VIC 3051

Real Estate

Biggin & Scott
 KENSINGTON
 For a clear path to success
 Kylie 0417 960 492
 Simone 0447 022 266
 Trevor 0456 377 780

School

SIMONDS CATHOLIC COLLEGE
 CONTACT US
 Phone: +61 3 9321 9200
 Email: contactus@sccmelb.catholic.edu.au
 Hours: Monday - Friday 8.00am - 4.00pm
 CAMPUSES
 St Mary's 7-9 | 273 Victoria St, West Melbourne VIC 3003
 St Brigid's 10-12 | 20 York St, Fitzroy North VIC 3068

Hospitality

MR TUCKER
 @MRTUCKERMELBOURNE 17 MELROSE ST NORTH MELBOURNE (JUST AROUND FROM WOOLIES AND NEXT TO IGA)
 MRTUCKERMELBOURNE
 03 9328 5108

Precinct

NORTH + WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION

Rendina REAL ESTATE
 9381 6500 rendina.com.au
 519 Macaulay Road, Kensington Vic 3031

Shopping

QUEEN VICTORIA MARKET
 For the best fresh produce, gourmet food and specialty shopping, you can't beat Queen Vic Market.
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 with plenty of affordable parking.
QVM.COM.AU

9381 6500 rendina.com.au
519 Macaulay Road, Kensington Vic 3031



Selling homes in Ascot Vale | Essendon | Flemington | Kensington | Maribyrnong | Moonee Ponds | North Melbourne | Strathmore | West Melbourne



103/30 RANKINS ROAD, KENSINGTON

This modern low maintenance apartment, in a small boutique complex of only 8, is beaming with natural light. Comprising of 2 bedrooms both with BIR's, light filled spacious living area with large north facing balcony great for entertaining, open plan kitchen and meals area including Caesar stone bench tops, stainless steel appliances and dishwasher, central designer bathroom & European style laundry.

2 **1** **1**
AUCTION CONTACT Sat 30th July 11am
Nathan 0418 312 271
Frank 0447 441 950



SOLD
ZOOM AUCTION

5 VINCENT PLACE, KENSINGTON

Delightful and inspiring, this classic three bedroom, two bathroom townhouse faces a leafy park. Offers light-filled living, open plan kitchen/dining, gas/electric appliances, paved courtyard and a versatile studio/home office/gym. Master bedroom with balcony, ensuite, WIR. Complete with central bathroom, heating/cooling, solar panels, floating floors, laundry, third WC, and double garage.

3 **2** **2**
AUCTION CONTACT Saturday 30th July at 12:30pm
Nathan 0447 441 950
Lou 0418 525 415



SOLD
ANYTHING WITH OUR NAME ON IT SELLS

48 CROSS STREET, FOOTSCRAY

Blending sophisticated style with low-maintenance functionality, this three bedroom with option of fourth, two bathroom townhouse is just moments to West Footscray Station, Victoria University and Highpoint. It presents semi-vaulted ceilings, stone-enhanced Blanco kitchen/meals/family, upstairs retreat and r/c double garage. Complete with heating/cooling, master ensuite and alarm.

3 **2** **2**
AUCTION CONTACT Sat 30th July 11am
Nathan 0418 312 271
Simon 0415 034 855



2/19 AFTON STREET, ABERFELDIE

Infused with high-class features near the Maribyrnong River, this four bedroom, three bathroom, three level townhouse is a compilation of enchanting interiors including two living/dining zones, Italian marble kitchen, north-facing courtyard, elegant bathrooms with sub-heated floors, WIRS/BIR, ensuite, two versatile basement rooms, zoned ducted heating/cooling and room for four car spaces.

4 **3** **4**
FOR SALE CONTACT Lou 0418 525 415
Frank 0447 441 950



11 MCCRACKEN STREET, KENSINGTON

You'll love this character filled Hawthorn-brick Victorian showcasing many original period features and future 2nd storey city view potential (STCA). High ceilings, open kitchen/meals/living zone, large double bedrooms and rear bathroom. Highlights include rear ROW.

2 **1**
FOR SALE CONTACT Lou 0418 525 415
Jack 0435 828 955

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