Macedon Ranges Open Space Strategy

Planning our shire's **open spaces**

Purpose of the Open Space Strategy

The Open Space Strategy will provide a clear direction to Council on the current and future open space requirements to service the shire's existing and growing community.

Community Assembly Overview

The Open Space Community Assembly took place in May 2022 to deliberate on some of the challenges Council faces in managing and planning for open space. The deliberative process built on feedback from community consultation and the challenges presented in the Macedon Ranges Open Space: Present and Future Consultation Paper that was presented to the community in early 2022.

The Open Space Strategy is a shire-wide project that is central to the identity of Macedon Ranges and affects everyone who lives, works and visits the shire. Given its scale, Council incorporated a deliberative panel into the project to provide the opportunity for the community to have direct influence in Council's decisions.

Twenty-seven community members from across the shire were appointed to the assembly via an independent selection process, managed by deliberative engagement specialists i.e. community.

The Assembly came together over two full days in May to consider the following overarching question:

Given we have limited resources, how should we prioritise our investment in open space across the shire to ensure it aligns with the values and aspirations of our diverse and growing communities?

" I chose to be a part of the Assembly because I think it's important for young people to have a voice in the community. A lot of times the young people seem to be forgotten about. – Kendal, Monnegeeta

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

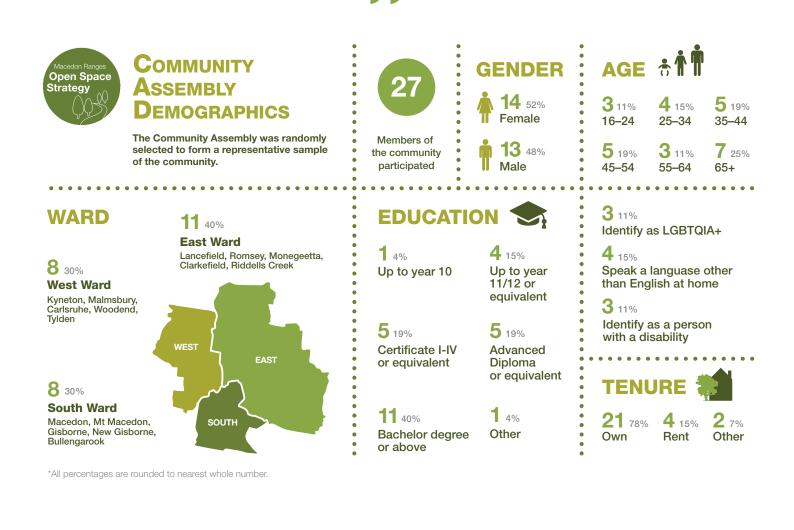i.e. community   xyst   Macedon Ranges Shire Council

Shire-wide priorities

The Assembly were presented with information from community engagement and current open space data, and were introduced to the language and process of open space planning.

The Assembly were tasked with reaching a consensus on what shire-wide priorities should be the focus of the strategy. The top five priorities were supported by 87.5% of the Assembly, meeting the target of 80% broad support.

These were:

1. **Protecting and enhancing biodiversity**
2. **The standard of maintenance**
3. **The type of open space**
4. **Provision of pathways for walking and rolling**
5. **Physical accessibility of open space**

> "I think it's really important as a citizen to be involved in your own democracy. And that doesn't just happen every three years or every four years. Like, it has to be an active part of what you do. – Beth, Kyneton

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COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY DEMOGRAPHICS

The Community Assembly was randomly selected to form a representative sample of the community.

27 Members of the community participated

GENDER
14 52% Female
13 48% Male

AGE
3 11% 16–24
4 15% 25–34
5 19% 35–44
5 19% 45–54
3 11% 55–64
7 25% 65+

3 11% Identify as LGBTQIA+

4 15% Speak a language other than English at home

3 11% Identify as a person with a disability

WARD

11 40% **East Ward**
Lancefield, Romsey, Monegeetta, Clarkefield, Riddells Creek

8 30% **West Ward**
Kyneton, Malmsbury, Carlsruhe, Woodend, Tylden

8 30% **South Ward**
Macedon, Mt Macedon, Gisborne, New Gisborne, Bullengarook

WEST • EAST • SOUTH

EDUCATION

1 4% Up to year 10
4 15% Up to year 11/12 or equivalent
5 19% Certificate I-IV or equivalent
5 19% Advanced Diploma or equivalent
11 40% Bachelor degree or above
1 4% Other

TENURE
21 78% Own
4 15% Rent
2 7% Other

*All percentages are rounded to nearest whole number.

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Decision making framework

The Assembly's second task was to develop the community criteria for a decision-making framework. The question put to the group was:

What are the key factors Council should consider from a community perspective when making decisions about investment in open space?

The Assembly's votes resulted in a clear top four criteria:

1

How does open space deliver on the shire-wide priorities?

2

How will Council support and sustain local community groups or committees of management to help design and maintain the open space, and implement the Open Space Strategy?

3

How will the open space contribute to the adaptation and mitigation of climate change and Council's Climate Change Strategy?

4

How will development respond to local environmental character (pre and post settlement), town culture and identity?

"

In coming up with our final response, we have to agree this group of people has to kind of reach a consensus about what's important so you have to kind of give and take a little. – Steven, Gisborne

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Townships in the strategy

The Assembly were introduced to nine posters which presented information on townships across the shire. The task was to explore the unique elements of the township, current open space, trends and developments and consultation outcomes. The Assembly reviewed the posters and provided their input on trends and developments that need to be considered and general community feedback.

Township scenarios

The final activity of the Community Assembly was to draw on the information provided in the township exercise and using their local knowledge and the draft decision-making framework, guide recommendations on the future direction of open space using scenario planning in three sample townships (Gisborne, Woodend and Romsey).

The "scenarios" were prepared to describe the look and feel of open space in the town. They describe the priorities, values, and functions of open space in a way that help Council to make decisions about what good service looks like. The resultant "scenario" statements for each town will be published in the Open Space Strategy.

Where to from here?

Council is committed to considering the community recommendations put forward by the Assembly, and the community will be informed about how the recommendations have influenced the strategy.

Stay informed

For project updates, visit **mrsc.vic.gov.au/open-space** contact Strategic Planning on **(03) 5422 0333** or email **strategicplanning@mrsc.vic.gov.au**

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